

4th Sunday of Advent  
December 21, 2025  
10:30 AM



*Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.*

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
4686 E. Walnut Street  
Westerville, OH 43081  
614-882-7601  
@splcwesterville  
[www.splcwesterville.org](http://www.splcwesterville.org)



PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

arr. Cindy Berry

THE COVENTRY CAROL WITH AWAY IN A MANGER

*Philip Cordell, piano*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

INFANT HOLY, INFANT LOWLY

arr. Janet Linker

*Philip Cordell, organ*

+ + + **GATHERING** + + +

*Please stand as you are able.*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose home is heaven and earth,  
whose salvation is sure.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God  
and of one another.

Long-expected God,  
we confess that we look to ourselves  
for the peace and security only you can provide.  
We reach for swords and spears,  
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.  
We become impatient while waiting  
and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance,  
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.  
Increase our trust in God's timing,  
and awaken us to your advent among us,  
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.  
**Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve,  
but according to God's own righteousness.  
✚ You are freed and forgiven,  
saved by grace,  
and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;  
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,  
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

# KYRIE

"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly" ELW 276

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son  
 Lord have mer - cy on us, Lord have mer - cy on us

All  
 Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son  
 Lord have mer - cy on us, Lord have mer - cy on us

Chri - ste e - le - i - son, Chri - ste e - le - i - son  
 Christ have mer - cy on us, Christ have mer - cy on us

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son, Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.  
 Lord have mer - cy on us, Lord have mer - cy on us.

# GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH

Glo - ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a  
 Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed

joy - ful song to the Christ, the Liv - ing Word. Glo - - -  
 up our hearts. Joy has made, in us, a home.

- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o; Glor -

- - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Blessed are you, God of hosts, for you promised to send a son, Emmanuel, who brought your presence among us; and you promise through your Son Jesus to save us from our sin.

As we light these candles, turn again to us in mercy; strengthen our faith in the word spoken by your prophets; restore us and give us life that we may be saved.

O house of David, come,  
**let us rejoice, for the Son of God, Emmanuel,**  
comes to be with us. **Amen.**

## WREATH LIGHTING SONG

ELW 240

### LIGHT ONE CANDLE TO WATCH FOR MESSIAH



- |   |                         |                        |                       |              |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Light one can-dle to    | watch for Mes-si - ah: | let the light ban-ish | dark - ness. |
| 2 | Light two can-dles to   | watch for Mes-si - ah: | let the light ban-ish | dark - ness. |
| 3 | Light three can-dles to | watch for Mes-si - ah: | let the light ban-ish | dark - ness. |
| 4 | Light four can-dles to  | watch for Mes-si - ah: | let the light ban-ish | dark - ness. |



He	shall bring	sal - va - tion	to	Is - ra - el,	God	ful - fills	the	prom - ise.			
He	shall feed	the	flock	like a	shep - herd,	gent - ly	lead	them	home - ward.		
Lift	your heads	and	lift	high	the	gate - way	for	the	King	of	glo - ry.
He	is	com - ing,	tell	the	glad	tid - ings.	Let	your	lights	be	shin - ing!



*Please be seated.*

## FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

<sup>10</sup> The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

## PSALM

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

*The Psalm will be sung responsively.*



- <sup>1</sup> Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph | like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- | on the cherubim.
- <sup>2</sup> In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, | and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and | come to help us.
- <sup>3</sup> Restore | us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.
- <sup>4</sup> O LORD | God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your | people pray?
- <sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the | bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of | tears to drink.
- <sup>6</sup> You have made us the derision | of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh | us to scorn.
- <sup>7</sup> Restore us, O | God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we | shall be saved.

*Continued on the next page*

- <sup>17</sup> Let your hand be upon the one at <sup>1</sup> your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong <sup>1</sup> for yourself.
- <sup>18</sup> And so will we never turn a- <sup>1</sup> way from you;  
give us life, that we may call up- <sup>1</sup> on your name.
- <sup>19</sup> Restore us, O LORD <sup>1</sup> God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we <sup>1</sup> shall be saved.

## SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

*Please stand as you are able.*

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION      HARK, THE GLAD SOUND**

*(Tune: It Came Upon A Midnight Clear)*

Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
the Savior promised long;  
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
and ev'ry voice a song.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,  
your welcome shall proclaim,  
and heav'n's eternal arches ring  
with your beloved name.



The holy gospel according to Matthew.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

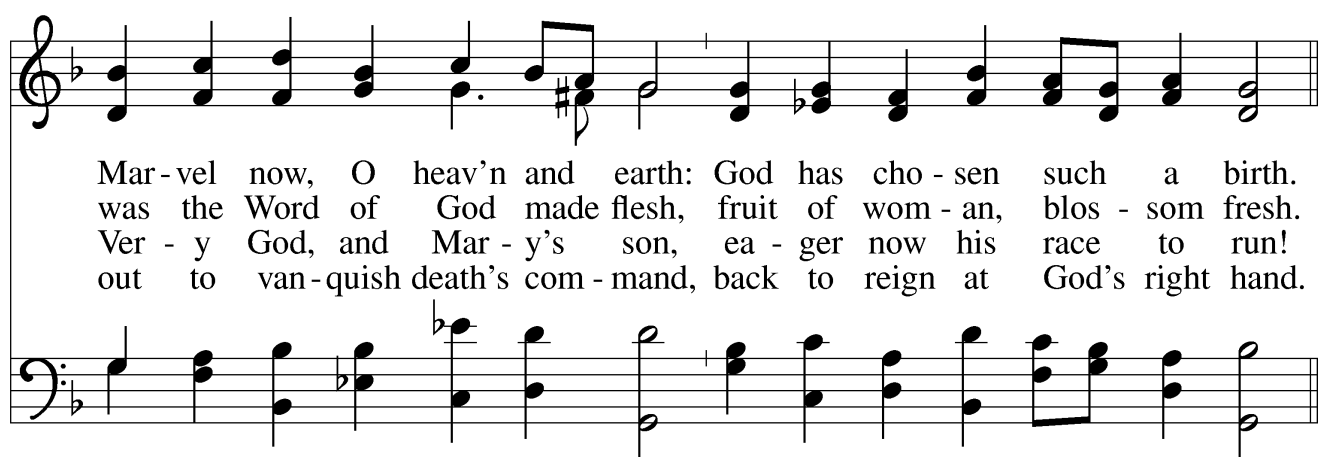
*Please be seated.*

**SERMON**

**Pastor Gary Grieger**



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.  
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,  
3 Won-drous birth—oh, won-drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!  
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path-way leads;



Mar-vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.  
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.  
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!  
out to van-quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

5 Now your manger, shining bright,  
hallows night with newborn light.  
Night cannot this light subdue;  
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,  
virgin's son, incarnate Word!  
To the holy Trinity  
praise we sing eternally!

## NICENE CREED

*With the whole church, let us confess our faith.*

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come.  
Amen.

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*A brief silence.*

In the anticipation of these days, prepare our hearts for your arrival. Stir our spirits through the gifts of artists, musicians, poets, and preachers, as together we proclaim your advent among us. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

The earth breaks forth in singing as it heralds the Messiah's coming. Fill our hearts with wonder as we join heaven and nature in announcing this holy birth. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

You send your saving grace and peace to the nations. Lead us in work for justice and care for the common good. May we meet the Christ-child we seek in the faces of our neighbors. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

When tears of grief, exhaustion, or loneliness come, or physical or emotional hurt overwhelms us, come to our aid. Uphold all who are anxious, who know the challenges of depression, or who are ill especially those we name silently or spoken. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Surround expectant parents and those suffering from infant loss with communities of support. Bless young children and new parents. Guide us in ways that provide safety for all children and those who care for them. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

We give thanks for all who have treasured the gospel and lived in faithful service. Strengthen our earthly journeys until, at the last, your face shines upon us and we are held in your love. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.  
**Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
And also with you.

*Please be seated.*

## OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

### RING WITH THE ANGELS

by Brenda E. Austin

*The Bells of St. Paul*

*Please stand as you are able.*

### OFFERING

### HE CAME DOWN

ELW 253

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;  
2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;  
3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;  
4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;  
he came down that we may have light; hal-le - lu - jah for-ev - er - more.  
he came down that we may have peace;  
he came down that we may have joy;

## OFFERING PRAYER

Nourishing God,  
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.  
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,  
that we may rejoice and be for the world  
signs of your kingdom come.  
Amen.



## GREAT THANKSGIVING

"Of the Father's Love Begotten" ELW 295

Leader Congregation

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Leader Congregation

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Leader Congregation

Let us give thanks to the Lord, to the Lord our God.

All

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

"In the Bleak Midwinter" ELW 294

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry Lord.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Blessed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace.

Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son. Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen.**



## LORD'S PRAYER

*Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.*

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

This is the table, not of the church, but of the Lord  
It is made ready for those who love God  
and for those who want to love God more.

So come, you who have much faith  
and you who have little;  
You who have been here often  
and you who have not been here long;  
You who have tried to follow  
and you who have failed.  
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.

*Please be seated.*

## COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**  
The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

## LAMB OF GOD



Lamb of\_\_\_ God, you take a - way our\_ sin. Lord, have\_ mer-cy



on\_\_\_\_\_ us, and may your peace\_ be with us.



Lamb\_ of\_\_\_ God, you\_ take a - way our\_ sin.

*Refrain*

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o-ver the hills and ev - 'ry - where;



go tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!



- 1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
- 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when, lo, a - bove the earth
- 3 Down in a lone - ly man - ger the hum-ble Christ was born;

*Refrain*

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.



*Please stand as you are able.*

## **POST COMMUNION BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

## **SONG AFTER COMMUNION**

### **LORD, DISMISS US WITH YOUR BLESSING**

*(Tune ELW 275: Angels From the Realms of Glory)*

Lord, dismiss us with your blessing, fill our hearts with joy and peace;  
let us each, your love possessing, triumph in redeeming grace.  
Oh, refresh us; oh, refresh us, trav'ling through this wilderness.

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

God our host,  
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.  
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,  
welcome the stranger,  
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.  
**Amen.**

## **+ + + SENDING + + +**

## **BLESSING**

May God who comes among us,  
Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,  
and good news to share today and always.  
**Amen.**

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

## DISMISSAL

God gives us strength and courage to keep watch for the One who is coming,  
preparing the way for the coming kingdom so all will experience God's Love.  
**Thanks Be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

### WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

arr. Melody Bober

*Philip Cordell, piano*

*(Livestream)*

### HARK! THE HEARLD ANGELS SING

arr. Cindy Berry

*Philip Cordell, piano*

*The altar flowers are given today by Becky Rollo and  
Dan & Pat Hare in memory of their parents.*

Prayer requests may be sent to [prayer@splcwesterville.org](mailto:prayer@splcwesterville.org)

## This Week's Activities at St. Paul

### Sunday, 12/21

- 9 AM: **Praise Worship** (Sanctuary)
- 9 AM: **Adult Forum** (Lower Level)
- 10 AM: **Puppet Posse** (Puppet Room)
- 10:30 AM: **Worship** (Sanctuary)
- 10:30 AM: **Discussions in Today's World**  
(Library)
- 7 PM: **Service of Comfort & Hope**  
(Sanctuary)

### Monday, 12/22

- 11 AM: **Steven Andersen Funeral** (Sanctuary)
- 3 PM: **Music Lessons** (Nursery)
- 5:30 PM: **Yoga** (Fellowship Hall)

### Wednesday, 12/24

- 4:30 PM: **Family Service** (Sanctuary)
- 7:30 PM: **Christmas Eve Worship** (Sanctuary)
- 10:30 PM: **Christmas Eve Worship** (Sanctuary)

### Thursday, 12/25

**Merry Christmas!**

### Saturday, 12/27

- 10 AM: **Martin Meuser Funeral** (Sanctuary)

### Sunday, 12/28

- 10 AM: **Lessons & Carols Worship**  
(Sanctuary)

**SPLC Office & Building Closed: Dec 24, 2025 – January 5, 2026**

## PERMISSIONS

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Glory to God and Lamb of God are from the Everlasting Light liturgy, written and adapted by David Eck, C) 2011.

Kyrie Eleison, Great Thanksgiving and Holy, Holy, Holy are arranged by Cynthia I. Gonzales, Ph.D., Music Director at FLC-San Marcos, TX.

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## Advent & Christmas Worship Times

### Advent

Nov 30 – 9 am, 10:30 am

Dec 7 – 9 am, 10:30 am

Dec 14 – 9 am, 10:30 am

Dec 21 – 9 am, 10:30 am

### Comfort & Hope

Dec. 21 – 7 pm

### Christmas Eve

4:30 pm – Family Service

7:30 pm & 10:30 pm

### Lessons & Carols

Dec. 28 – 10 am

**January 4, 2026**

9 am & 10:30 am



As we cultivate welcoming communities of faith with our neighbors and world, we strive for a world where everyone **"Experiences God's Love"**.

### HOLY COMMUNION

We celebrate Holy Communion at every service. We welcome you to join us at the table of the Lord. Our Communion Bread is gluten, peanut, tree nut, soy, and dairy-free. **White grape juice is always available in the center of the tray.** All are welcome.

### NURSERY

The nursery is located at the top of the ramp of the main entrance to the church. Currently, the nursery is not staffed, however, it is available for you to use with your child. Also, for our young worshippers, please find **Worship Wonder Bags** on the small coat rack in the rear of the sanctuary, untie, and enjoy. After worship, please put the **UNTIED bag back** on the rack to be replenished and cleaned.

Online giving to St. Paul is available: Using your mobile device, scan below or Text **SPLCGIVE** to 73256.

### CONTACTS

Pastor Jonathan Bull, 614-886-5364,  
[jon.bull@splcwesterville.org](mailto:jon.bull@splcwesterville.org)

Pastor Gary Grieger, 989-350-8411,  
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Karla Kruse, 614-882-7601,  
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Zach Ruppel, 614-882-7601,  
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Amy Drake, 614-882-7601,  
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Prayer requests may be sent to  
[prayer@splcwesterville.org](mailto:prayer@splcwesterville.org)

### MUSIC STAFF

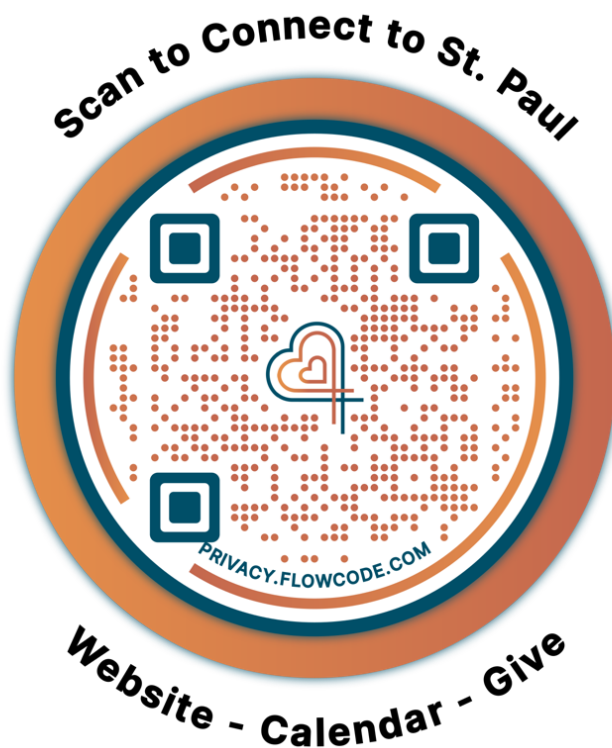
Karla Kruse, Director of Music Ministries

Judy McLeod, Handbell Director

Zach Ruppel, Director of Contemporary Music

Philip Cordell, Organist

Susan Treer, Contemporary Keyboardist



Church Office: M-F 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

Closed for lunch: 12 PM- 1 PM

Please contact us if you have any questions. Check out the web site for more information. St. Paul Lutheran Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.