# 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas January 4, 2026 10:30 AM



Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

St. Paul Lutheran Church 4686 E. Walnut Street Westerville, OH 43081 614-882-7601 @splcwesterville www.splcwesterville.org

#### IMPROVISATION ON "WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE"

Philip Cordell, organ

#### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE** 

### O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST

arr. Roger C. Wilson

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.

Trusting in God's steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

## Reconciling God,

we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair.

We confess that we have not always prepared

room in our hearts for your love;

we have not always recognized

your presence among us;

we have not always embraced your message of peace.

We cry out, weary with the burden of violence,

oppression, and fear.

We confess our failure to make room

for those seeking refuge;

our participation in violent systems

that harm your innocent ones;

our reluctance to embody your good news.

Be born in us today

and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation.

Amen.

God's grace upon grace flows over you.

+ Christ's presence redeems the whole creation.

Your sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.** 

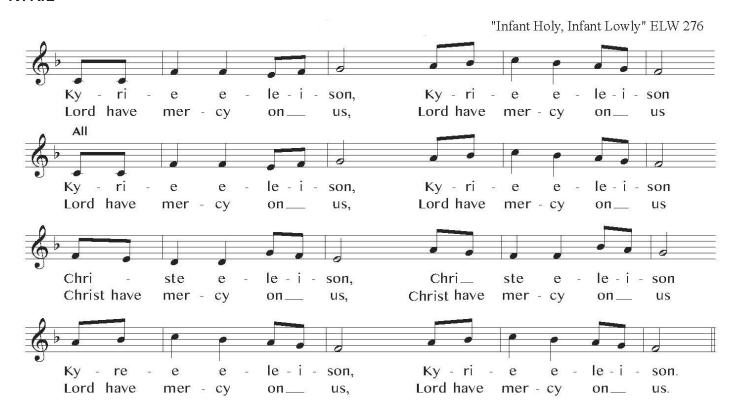


### **GREETING**

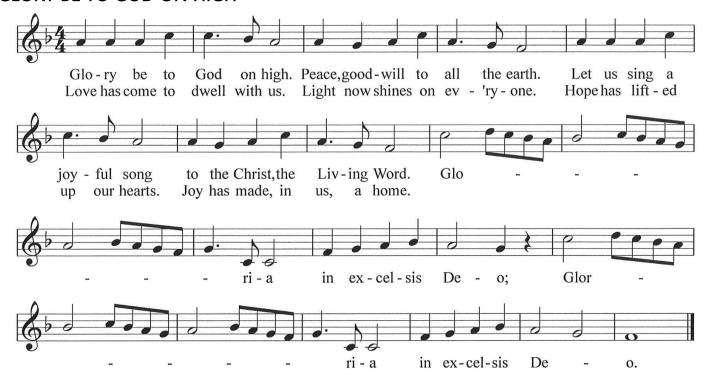
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

# And also with you.

### **KYRIE**



#### GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH



### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

# + + + WORD + + +

Please be seated.

FIRST READING Jeremiah 31:7-14

<sup>7</sup>Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel."

<sup>8</sup> See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here.

- <sup>9</sup> With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn.
- <sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock."
- <sup>11</sup> For the LORD has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
- <sup>12</sup> They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

Continued on the next page

13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy;
I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow.
14 I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

says the LORD.

PSALM Psalm 147:12-20

The Psalm will be sung responsively.



- <sup>12</sup> Worship the LORD, <sup>I</sup> O Jerusalem; praise your <sup>I</sup> God, O Zion,
- <sup>13</sup> who has strengthened the bars <sup>|</sup> of your gates and has blessed your chil- <sup>|</sup> dren within you.
- <sup>14</sup> God has established peace | on your borders and satisfies you with the | finest wheat.
- <sup>15</sup> God sends out a command | to the earth, a word that runs | very swiftly.
- <sup>16</sup> God gives <sup>I</sup> snow like wool, scattering <sup>I</sup> frost like ashes.
- <sup>17</sup> God scatters | hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold?
- <sup>18</sup> The LORD sends forth the <sup>I</sup> word and melts them; the wind blows, and the <sup>I</sup> waters flow.
- <sup>19</sup> God declares the <sup>|</sup> word to Jacob, statutes and judg- <sup>|</sup> ments to Israel.
- <sup>20</sup> The LORD has not done so to any <sup>I</sup> other nation; they do not know God's judgments. <sup>I</sup> Hallelujah!

SECOND READING Ephesians 1:3-14

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup> just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup> He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight 9 he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup> In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup> so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup> this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

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.

GOSPEL John 1:1-18

The holy gospel according to John Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' ") <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The gospel of the Lord.

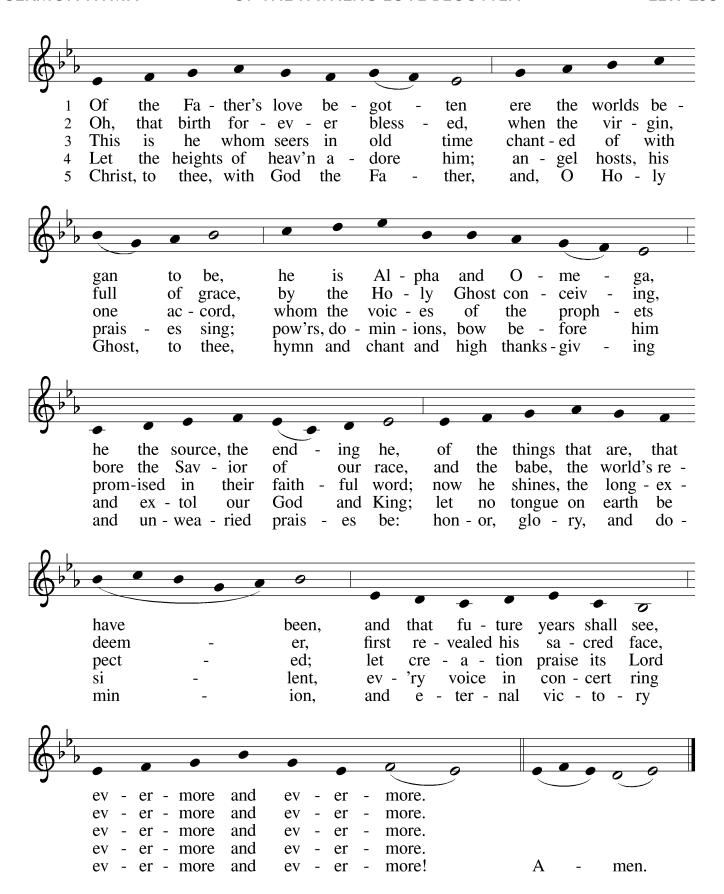
Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

**SERMON** 

**Pastor Jonathan Bull** 

#### OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN



#### 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

Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.

### A brief silence.

O God, you reveal yourself wherever two or three are gathered in your name. Be with us now, not only in the infant Jesus and resurrected Christ, but in the beloved people of this assembly. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in the waters of the womb; in brooks, ponds, and oceans; and in the waters of baptism. Grant us wisdom to tenderly care for the earth as a garden watered by your grace. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in blessed diversity. Help us to look for you in people near and far, in bodies of all kinds, and in kindred young and old. Let us seek you in many places, praising you in many tongues. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in new life. Support those beginning a new job, a new relationship, or a new living situation, especially those displaced because of tragedy or loss. Be with all others who need your life-giving touch this day especially those we name silently or spoken. Hear us, O God.

### Your mercy is great.

You reveal yourself in holy communion. Sustain all who provide food and fellowship in this congregation and in the wider community. Make our tables signs of your welcoming presence among us. Hear us, O God.

## Your mercy is great.

You promise to turn mourning into joy and to comfort those who weep. We remember those who have died and look to being united with them in your glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.** 

With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.** 

#### **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated.

**OFFERING** 

**OFFERTORY** 

RISE UP, SHEPHERD, AND FOLLOW

arr. Lloyd Larson

Zach Ruppel, piano

Please stand as you are able.



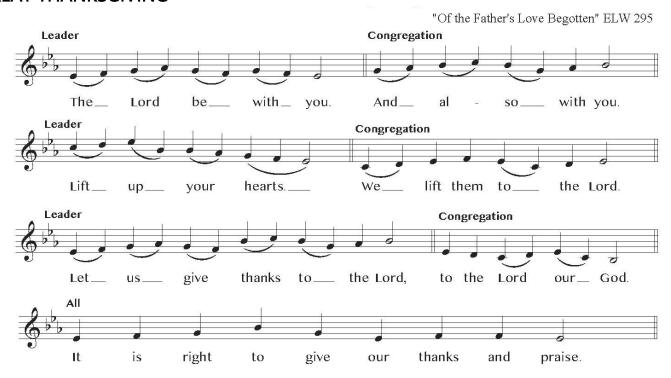
#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

God of glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

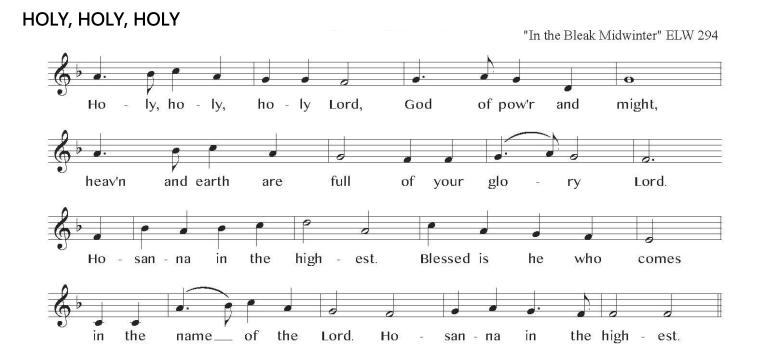
# + + + MEAL + + +

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**



### **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:



#### 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.

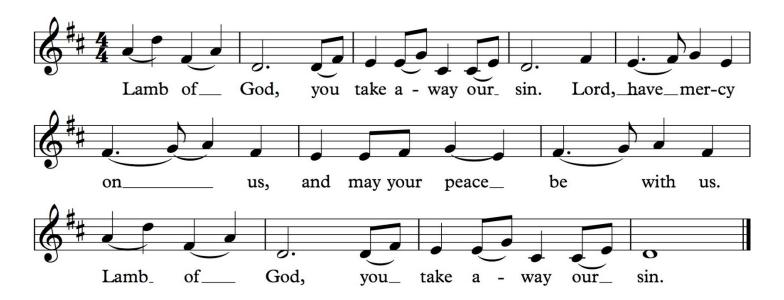
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.

Please be seated.

#### COMMUNION

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

#### LAMB OF GOD



#### COMMUNION

#### HE COMES TO US AS ONE UNKNOWN

**ELW 737** 



- 1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un seen, un -
- 2 He comes when souls in si lence lie and thoughts of day de
- 3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o cean's fume and 4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and
- 5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be lieved, o beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in heart of stone, or a part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a small and still up - on foam; yet breeze, a the bear with - in our mor - tal frame a to dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as

shriv-eled seed in fall - ing star a wind that stirs the life, a death, a yet un - seen, but



dark-ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred. cross the sky of night with-in the heart, of night with-in the heart. tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home. sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth. not un-known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

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

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence.

Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

Amen.

+ + + SENDING + + +

#### **BLESSING**

The triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, 

→ bless you with endless grace, peace, and joy.

Amen.



#### **DISMISSAL**

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to God's people on earth!

Go in joy. Embody God's redeeming grace. Experience God's love!

Thanks Be to God!

POSTLUDE SPIRIT OF PRAISE by E Broughton

Philip Cordell, organ

(Livestream) WORD OF GOD CAME DOWN ON EARTH by

by F. Frahm

Philip Cordell, organ

The altar flowers are given today by Donna Anderson, Remembering her husband, Paul and her son, Nathan as we start the new year.

Prayer requests may be sent to <a href="mailto:prayer@splcwesterville.org">prayer@splcwesterville.org</a>

### This Week's Activities at St. Paul

### Sunday, 1/4

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)

# Monday, 1/5

3 PM: **Music Lessons** (Nursery) 5:30 PM: **Yoga** (Fellowship Hall)

7 PM: Personnel (Library)

# Wednesday, 1/7

9:30 AM: Piece & Sew (Lower Level)

6:30 PM: Vocal Choir Rehearsal (Fellowship

Hall)

7:30 PM: **Praise Team Rehearsal** (Sanctuary)

## Thursday, 1/8

10 AM: PBS(Library)

11 AM: LSS Food Pantry (Westerville Estates) 6:45 PM: Bell Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

7 PM: PBS (Library)

### Saturday, 1/10

8 AM: Men's Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)

#### **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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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

Pastor Gary Grieger, 989-350-8411, gary.grieger@splcwesterville.org

Karla Kruse, 614-882-7601, karla.kruse@splcwesterville.org

Zach Ruppel, 614-882-7601, zach.ruppel@splcwesterville/org

Amy Drake, 614-882-7601, amy.drake@splcwesterville.org

Prayer requests may be sent to 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.