

2nd Sunday of Christmas
January 4, 2026
9 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
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PRE-SERVICE MUSIC JOY TO THE WORLD (UNSPEAKABLE JOY) by Chris Tomlin,
(Livestream & Sanctuary) St. Paul Praise Band Ed Cash, George Frideric Handel,
Isaac Watts & Matt Gilder

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

+ + + GATHERING + + +

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSIO 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.**

Commented [AD1]: OPEN MIC ON

WELCOME SONG

HE HAS COME FOR US

God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay.
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.

He has come for us, this Jesus. He's the hope for all mankind.
He has come for us, the Messiah, born to give us life.

From God our heav'nly Father a blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds brought tidings of the same:
How that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy.
Oh, tidings of comfort and joy.

He has come for us, this Jesus. He's the hope for all mankind.
He has come for us, the Messiah, born to give us life.

All the angels sing, "Hallelujah! Jesus Christ is born!"
All the children sing, "Hallelujah! He is Christ the Lord!"

He has come for us, this Jesus. He's the hope for all mankind.
He has come for us, the Messiah, born to give us life.
He is born to give us life.

All the angels sing, "Hallelujah! Jesus Christ is born! "
All the children sing, "Hallelujah! He is Christ the Lord!"

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.

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

⁷ 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."

⁸ 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.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ 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."

Continued on the next page

- ¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
- ¹² 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.
- 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,
says the LORD.

Word of God. Word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14


³ 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, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ 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, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ 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, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ 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; ¹⁴ 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.


GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH



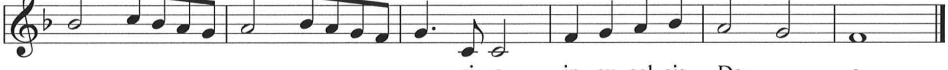
Glo - ry be to God on high. Peace, good-will to all the earth. Let us sing a
Love has come to dwell with us. Light now shines on ev - 'ry - one. Hope has lift - ed



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.

GOSPEL

John 1:1-18

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

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

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

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

¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ (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.' ") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ 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

Please stand as you are able.

SERMON SONG

OFFERING

Over the skies of Bethlehem appeared a star;
While angels sang to lowly shepherds;
Three Wisemen seeking truth, they traveled from afar,
Hoping to find the child from heaven;
Falling on their knees, they bow before the humble Prince of Peace...

We bring an offering of worship to our King;
No one on earth deserves the praises that we sing;
Jesus, may You receive the honor that You're due;
O Lord, we bring an offering to You.

The sun cannot compare to the glory of Your love;
There is no shadow in Your Presence;
No mortal man would dare to stand before Your throne,
Before the Holy One of heaven;

It's only by Your Blood, and it's only through your mercy, Lord, I come.
I bring an offering of worship to my King;
No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing;
Jesus, may You receive the honor that You're due;
O Lord, I bring an offering to You.

I bring an offering of worship to my King;
No one on earth deserves the praises that I sing;
Jesus, may You receive the honor that You're due;
O Lord, I bring an offering to You; *(repeat)*

O Lord, I bring an offering to You;
O Lord, I bring an offering to You.

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

OFFERING SONG

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 ✙ ✙ ✙

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.

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

Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away our sin.
Lord, have mercy on us, and may your peace be with us.
Jesus, Lamb of God, you take away our sin.
Jesus, Lamb of God, grant us all your heavenly peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

BY HIS WOUNDS

He was pierced for our transgressions, and crushed for our sins,
the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him.
And by His wounds, by His wounds we are healed.

We are healed by Your sacrifice and the life that You gave.
We are healed, for You paid the price; by Your grace we are saved, we are saved.

He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our sins,
the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him.
And by His wounds, by His wounds we are healed.

By His wounds, by His wounds.
What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

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.

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.

SENDING SONG

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

CHORUS:

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *(chorus)*

The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *(chorus)*

Down in a lonely manger The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *(chorus)*

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

HE SHALL REIGN FOREVERMORE

by Chris Tomlin &

(Livestream & Sanctuary)

Philip Cordell, piano

Matt Maher

*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 prayer@splcwesterville.org

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 and Holy, Holy, Holy is 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

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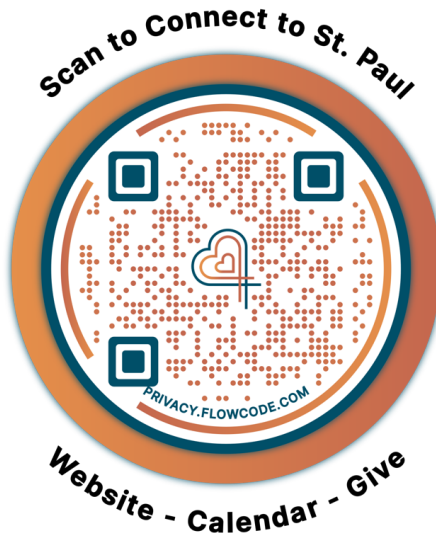
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Prayer requests may be sent to
prayer@splcwesterville.org

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.