

Welcome in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ!
Saint Paul's Lutheran Church of Irvine (LCMS)
The Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day)
Thursday, December 25, 2025 – 9:30 am

Divine Service

Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Alfonso O. Espinosa, Ph.D.

Assistant Pastor: Rev. Dr. Steven P. Mueller, Ph.D.

Vicar: Miles Johnson

Organist: Gerald Dahlin

Choir Director: Mark Howard

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Mission: *To foster the freedom and love we share in Christ to the community by nurturing faith in Him through tangible expressions of God's grace.*

Vision: *To share the Truth and Love of Christ to all ages, cultures, and backgrounds.*

Service Offerings

- Sunday Divine Service at 9:30 am & Acapella Service at 2 pm
 - Fellowship in Café 10:30 am
 - Adult Bible Study at 11:00 am

Welcome to Saint Paul's

We praise and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as He comes to serve and bless us through His Word and Sacraments. We follow the ancient liturgy which draws from the Word of God to order and guide our worship. Its biblical structure has been used in the Christian Church before any denominations within Christianity existed. Our worship emphasizes order, beauty, and reverence. We also celebrate the Holy Eucharist and receive the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. We are excited about what the Lord is doing at Saint Paul's, and it is our great joy to serve you!

This is the Saving Gospel/The Good News:

God sent His Son Jesus Christ to take your sin upon Himself and Jesus gave to you His perfect righteousness and holiness. In Christ, it is a fact, and it is reality that your sins are forgiven, covered by His blood. And because Christ defeated death, you too – as you trust in Him alone – have eternal life. This is the Good News. It is so powerful because the Holy Spirit works through it to create and sustain faith in our hearts to hold to our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel costs Jesus everything but costs us nothing. It is yours. It is God's GIFT to you. Hold to it and know that you ARE (present tense) saved from sin, death, and the power of the devil; that you are saved TO (present tense) the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation! That's the Christian, a forgiven sinner who lives for God and loves their neighbor. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

The Lord's Supper

The Holy Sacrament is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, **any who are not yet instructed**, are in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, **are asked first to speak to one of the pastors.**

Prayer Before Divine Service

O Lord, my creator, redeemer, and comforter, as I come to worship You in spirit and in truth, I humbly pray that You would open my heart to the preaching of Your Word so that I may repent of my sins, believe in Jesus Christ as my only Savior, and grow in grace and holiness. Hear me for the sake of His name. Amen.

+ In the Name of Jesus +

Prelude

O Come Little Children – David Cherwien

Entrance Hymn:

379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

sts. 1, ref, 2



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text: tr. Frederick Oakley, 1802–80, alt.
Text and tune: John F. Wade, c. 1711–1786
Text and tune: Public domain

Confession and Absolution

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition.

Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Service of the Word

Hymn of Praise

368 Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



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

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt.
Text and tune: French
Text and tune: Public domain

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of him who brings good news,
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,
who publishes salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice;
together they sing for joy;
for eye to eye they see
the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing,
you waste places of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people;
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

387 Joy to the World

sts. 1–2

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -

King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and

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

sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748
Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.
Text and tune: Public domain

Epistle

Hebrews 1:1–6

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the

prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son,
today I have begotten you”?

Or again,

“I will be to him a father,
and he shall be to me a son”?

⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God’s angels worship him.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Alleluia and Verse



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



C These things are writ - ten that you may be - lieve that



Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.



C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

John 1:1–18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

G Glory to You, O Lord.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵(John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") ¹⁶And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

G Praise to You, O Christ.

Credal Hymn

332 Savior of the Nations, Come

sts. 1-5, 8



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come, Vir - gin's Son, make
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the Spir - it
3 Here a maid was found with child, Yet re - mained a
4 Then stepped forth the Lord of all From His pure and



here Your home! Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth,
of our God, Was the Word of God made flesh—
vir - gin mild. In her womb this truth was shown:
king - ly hall; God of God, yet ful - ly man,



That the Lord chose such a birth.
Wom - an's off - spring, pure and fresh.
God was there up - on His throne.
His he - ro - ic course be - gan.

5 God the Father was His
source,
Back to God He ran His
course.
Into hell His road went down,
Back then to His throne and
crown.

△ 8 Glory to the Father sing,
Glory to the Son, our king,
Glory to the Spirit be
Now and through eternity.

Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; German version, Martin Luther, 1483-1546; (sts. 1-2): tr. William M. Reynolds, 1812-76; (st. 3): tr. Lutheran Service Book, 2006; (sts. 4-5, 8): tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913-2001
Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter
Text (st. 3): © 2006 Concordia Publishing House; (sts. 4-5, 8): © 1978 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000405
Text (sts. 1-2) and tune: Public domain

Sit

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
 Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky — looked down where He lay,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Text (st. 1): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt.
 Tune: James R. Murray, 1841-1905
 Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

“The *Right* to become Children?”

John 14:12-13

Pastor Mueller

Reception of Members by Transfer or Profession of Faith

- P** Beloved in the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ said to His apostles: “Whoever confesses Me before men, I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.” Lift up your hearts, therefore, to the God of all grace and joyfully give answer to what I now ask you in the name of the Lord.
- P** Do you this day in the presence of God and of this congregation acknowledge the gifts that God gave you in your Baptism?
- R** Yes, I do.
- P** Do you renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways?
- R** Yes, I renounce them.

P Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Spirit?

R *Yes, I believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

P Do you hold all the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, drawn from them and confessed in the Small Catechism, to be faithful and true?

R *I do.*

P Do you intend to hear the Word of God and receive the Lord's Supper faithfully?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

P Do you intend to live according to the Word of God, and in faith, word, and deed to remain true to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, even to death?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

P Do you intend to continue steadfast in this confession and Church and to suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?

R *I do, by the grace of God.*

P Do you desire to become a member of this congregation?

R *I do.*

P Will you support the work our gracious Lord has given this congregation with your prayers and the gifts God has given you?

R *I will, with the help of God.*

P Upon this your confession of faith, I acknowledge publicly that you are [a member/members] of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and of this congregation. Receive the Lord's Supper and participate with us in all the blessings of salvation that our Lord has given to His Church, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Stand

P Let us pray.

Lord God, heavenly Father, we thank and praise You for Your great goodness in bringing these Your sons and daughters to the knowledge of Your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ, and enabling them both with the heart to believe and with the mouth to confess His saving name. Grant that by Your Word and Spirit they may continue steadfast in the one true faith in the fellowship of this congregation as together we await the day when all who have fought the good fight of faith shall receive the crown of righteousness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

The pastor may extend the right hand of fellowship, greeting each by name. The rite concludes with the following blessing:

- P** The grace of our † Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
- C** Amen.

The new members return to their places.

Stand

Prayer of the Church

- P** In peace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** In thanksgiving and awe at the Word made flesh, that because He has become our brother we now are His sons and daughters through Baptism, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For families who gather in this holy season, that they may know your abundant blessing. For the lonely, that they may be comforted with Christ's presence and we may extend to them the welcome of our homes and the friendship of His grace. And for those in poverty or need, that they may be helped; that God would increase our generosity, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For the nations of this world, that they would be given a spirit of peace, so that conflicts would cease and all would see in the birth of Jesus the salvation of our God, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For the sick, recovering, grieving and poor in spirit, that they may find comfort and healing in Jesus Christ, the light no darkness can overcome, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** That the Lord would humble our hearts in repentance and give us faith to receive with joy and thanksgiving the precious gift of His body and blood; and that the Lord would grant to His Church unity of faith, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** Hear us, O Lord, for the sake of Your Son, the Word become flesh, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God.
- C** Amen.

Sit



Sing ho - san - na in the high - est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In the beginning You created all things by Your Word; and in the fulness of time Your Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

Let Your Word made flesh dwell richly among us that, faithfully eating His body and drinking His blood, we may receive the fullness of Your grace and truth in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

C **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.**

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My \ddagger body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

G Amen.

Sit

370 What Child Is This

st. 1

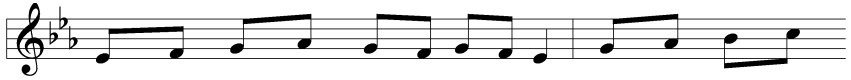
1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98
 Tune: English, 16th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Distribution

Distribution Hymns:

384 Of the Father's Love Begotten



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten Ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, When the vir - gin,
 3 This is He whom seers in old time Chant - ed of with
 4 O ye heights of heav'n, a - dore Him; An - gel hosts, His
 Δ 5 Christ, to Thee, with God the Fa - ther, And, O Ho - ly



gan to be, He is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 one ac - cord, Whom the voic - es of the proph - ets
 prais - es sing. Pow'rs, do - min - ions, bow be - fore Him
 Ghost, to Thee Hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



He the source, the end - ing He, Of the things that are, that
 Bore the Sav - ior of our race, And the babe, the world's Re -
 Prom - ised in their faith - ful word. Now He shines, the long - ex -
 And ex - tol our God and King. Let no tongue on earth be
 And un - end - ing prais - es be, Hon - or, glo - ry, and do -



have been, And that fu - ture years shall see
 deem - er, First re - vealed His sa - cred face
 pect - ed; Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord
 si - lent, Ev - 'ry voice in con - cert ring
 min - ion, And e - ter - nal vic - to - ry



Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more. A - men.

Text: Aurelius Prudentius Clemens, 348-c. 413; (sts. 1-4): tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-66, alt.; (st. 5): tr. Henry W. Baker, 1821-77
 Tune: Plainsong, 13th cent., mode V
 Text and tune: Public domain

393 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, In - fant low - ly, For His bed a cat - tle stall;
 2 Flocks were sleep - ing, Shep - herds keep - ing Vig - il till the morn - ing new



Ox - en low - ing, Lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
 Saw the glo - ry, Heard the sto - ry, Tid - ings of a Gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, An - gels sing - ing, Bells are ring - ing, Tid - ings bring - ing:
 Thus re - joic - ing, Free from sor - row, Prais - es voic - ing, Greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
 Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Text: tr. Edith M. G. Reed, 1885-1933, alt.
 Text and tune: Polish
 Text and tune: Public domain

388 Go Tell It on the Mountain

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;



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.

Text (sts. 1-3): John W. Work II, 1873-1925, alt.
 Text (ref) and tune: African American spiritual
 Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

Post-Communion Canticle 389 Let All Together Praise Our God

sts. 1, 4, 7



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God Be - fore His
4 He un - der - takes a great ex - change, Puts on our
△ 7 Your grace in low - li - ness re - vealed, Lord Je - sus,



glo - rious throne; To - day He o - pens heav'n a - gain To
hu - man frame, And in re - turn gives us His realm, His
we a - dore And praise to God the Fa - ther yield And



give us His own Son, To give us His own Son.
glo - ry, and His name, His glo - ry, and His name.
Spir - it ev - er - more; We praise You ev - er - more.

Text: tr. F. Samuel Janzow, 1913–2001
Text and tune: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561
Text: © 1969 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110000405
Tune: Public domain

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benedicamus

LSB 212

A Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C Amen.

388 Go Tell It on the Mountain

(ref repeat twice)

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!

Text and tune: African American spiritual
Text and tune: Public domain

Postlude

Joy to the World – David Cherwien

Acknowledgments

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