



# St. Paul's

## United Methodist Church

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Christmas Eve

December 24, 2023

7:30 PM



ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
CHRISTMAS EVE

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2023

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**Thank you for worshipping with us tonight.**

*Welcome to St. Paul's, a Reconciling congregation of the United Methodist Church. Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, we invite and affirm you as one of God's children into our community of God's unbounded love. All are celebrated here and all are safe. Please use the black attendance pads in the pews to share your name. Guests are invited to provide contact information so we may welcome you. Additional helpful information can be found following the order of worship.*

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**Prelude – 7:00 PM**

*The community of St. Paul's UMC welcomes you to this celebration of the birth of the Christ Child. The prelude music is offered as an opportunity to reflect, contemplate, or meditate on the wonder of this special moment.*

Denis Bédard	<i>Postlude sur un Noël (Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella)</i>
W. S. Lloyd Webber	<i>Coventry Carol</i>
Phil Lehenbauer	<i>In the Bleak Midwinter</i>
Christopher Tambling	<i>Still, still, still</i>
Maureen Howell	<i>Of the Father's Love Begotten</i>
David Schelat	<i>Adeste fideles (Pastorale)</i>
Aaron David Miller	<i>Go Tell It on the Mountain (Gigue)</i>
Keith Chapman	<i>Angels We Have Heard on High</i> <i>Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine</i>

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# Candlelight Service of Worship – 7:30 PM

(\* - please stand in body or spirit)

## Words of Welcome

Anthem

*Masters in this Hall*  
Sanctuary Choir

Gilbert M. Martin

*Masters in this hall, hear ye news today*

*Brought from oversea, and ever you I pray:*

*Refrain: Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell sing we clear!*

*Holpen are all folk on earth, born is God's son so dear.*

*Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell sing we loud!*

*God today hath poor folk raised and cast a-down the proud.*

*Then to Bethle'm town we went two by two*

*And in a sorry place heard the oxen low. (Refrain.)*

*Therein did we see a sweet and goodly May*

*And a fair old man, upon the straw she lay. (Refrain.)*

*And a little child on her arm had she.*

*"Wot ye who this is?" said the hinds to me. (Refrain.)*

*This is Christ the Lord, Masters be ye glad!*

*Christmas is come in and no folk should be sad. (Refrain.)*

## Proclamation of the Word

Luke 2 :1-7 NRSVUE

*Pew Bible: New Testament p. 58*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.



<sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

Harold Darke

Sanctuary Choir

Noah Beye and Anna Philips-Brown, soloists

*In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.  
Snow had fallen snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak midwinter long ago.*

*Our God, Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain.  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.  
In the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.*

*Enough for him, whom cherubim, worship night and day.  
A breast full of milk and a manger full of hay  
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,  
The ox and ass and camel which adore.*

*What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part,  
Yet what I can I give him, give my heart.*

Pastoral Prayer

\* Hymn #238

*Angels We Have Heard on High*



\* Call to Worship

Lay Reader

Leader: This year, we dreamed of world peace.

**All: We dreamed of deep breaths and restful sleep.**

Leader: We dreamed of love that lasts and suffering that passes.

**All: We dreamed of doors open wide and a cure to disease.**

Leader: We dreamed, because to dream is to believe.

**All: For to dream is to hope; to dream is to see.**

Leader: So make room in your being to dream yet again,

**All: Of a world without fear, and a God that draws near.**

Leader: For it is almost Christmas.

**All: Love is almost here.**

Leader: May we dream to see, and hope to believe.

**All: Let us worship Holy God.**

\* Hymn #245

*The First Noel*

Reading: A Modern Magnificat

Rev. Dr. Patricia Allen

My soul sings in gratitude. I'm dancing in the mystery of God. The light of the Holy One is within me and I am blessed, so truly blessed.

This goes deeper than human thinking. I am filled with awe at Love whose only condition is to be received.

The gift is not for the proud, for they have no room for it. The strong and self-sufficient ones don't have this awareness.

But those who know their emptiness can rejoice in Love's fullness. It's the Love that we are made for, the reason for our being. It fills our inmost heart space and brings to birth in us, the Holy One.

Music

*Mary, Did You Know*

arr. Amy Snyder

Bronwyn, Charlotte, and Ella Weikert

*Mary, did you know?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?*

*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would save our sons and daughters?*

*Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?*

*This child that you've delivered will soon deliver you.*



*Mary, did you know that your baby boy would give sight to a blind man?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy would calm the storm with his hand?  
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?  
When you kiss your little baby you kiss the face of God!  
Mary, did you know?  
The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again.  
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak the praises of the Lamb!  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?  
Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?  
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?  
That sleeping child you're holding is the great "I Am."  
Mary, did you know?*

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Patricia Allen

## **Response to the Word**

Invitation to Giving

Rev. Dr. Patricia Allen

*To contribute to today's Christmas Special Offering, please use the Christmas envelope in today's bulletin or mark the memo of your checks with "Christmas Special Offering." (Please note that other contributions, such as pledges or general offerings, should be made using a different envelope.)*

*As is our tradition, 100% of St. Paul's Christmas Special Offering goes to serve those in need outside our walls. This year's donations will be divided evenly between the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), serving globally those suffering from natural disasters or war, and the Hunger Ministry of St. Paul's, providing groceries for the food insecure throughout the 20895 ZIP code.*

*Offerings by check may be made out to St. Paul's UMC. Scan the QR code here to see online giving options at [stpaulsk.org/giving](http://stpaulsk.org/giving). Thank you for supporting all of St. Paul's efforts to engage in meaningful worship and vibrant ministry in our community.*





Offertory

*Sleeps Judea Fair*  
Sanctuary Choir

Hugh A. MacKinnon

*Sleeps Judea fair, bides the Christ Child there.  
Shepherds, haste ye! Flocks forsaking, swift your way to him be taking,  
Babe of Israel's prayer, babe of Israel's prayer.  
Christ from God is come, choosing earthly home.  
Royal pomp and splendor never, but with love that naught can sever,  
He will heal the dumb, Christ from God is come.  
Lowly bend the knee, thou from sin set free.  
Let the Christ Child, meekly smiling, infant-wise all woe beguiling,  
Grant his grace to thee, grant his grace to thee.*

\*Doxology #95

OLD 100TH

\*Prayer of Dedication

Rev. Dr. Patricia Allen

## **Sending Forth**

\*Hymn #218

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

### Closing Affirmation

Leader: Christmas is the season of affirmation.

**All: I affirm my faith in the little graces of life:  
The urgency of growth, the strength of laughter,  
the vitality of friendship.**

Leader: I affirm my confidence in the dignity of man:

**All: His fortitude in despair, his strength in weakness, his love in hatred.**

Leader: I affirm my joy in the experience of living:

**All: The fragrance of nostalgia, the scattered moments of delight,  
the exhilaration of danger.**

Leader: I affirm my need of my fellows:

**All: The offerings of faiths, the gifts of variety, the quality of difference.**

Leader: I affirm my hunger for God:

**All: The desire for fulfillment, the ache for understanding,  
the sense of peace. Christmas is my season of affirmation.**



## Sending Forth

### Sharing the Light

*As we pass the light, please remember: lighted candles should be held upright at all times. Those receiving the light from ushers or neighbors should tip the unlit candles toward the flame. Glow sticks are available for those who prefer a flame-free option.*

### \*Carol #239

### Silent Night

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;  
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

**Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!**

*The people are invited to depart in the spirit of quiet praise and wonder.*



COMING UP

*Offices closed for winter break December 25-January 1.*

**Sunday Worship - New Year's Eve Day**

**Sunday, December 31, 2023**

**10:30 AM**

Please note there is no 9:00 AM worship service this day.





## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Weekly News** – Visit [stpaulsk.org/community/epistle-weekly-news](http://stpaulsk.org/community/epistle-weekly-news) or scan the QR code to find all the announcements and event details shared in our Weekly News. For questions about announcements, please contact Erin Steele in the church office ([stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org](mailto:stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org)).



**Welcome!** – **Restrooms** including a family restroom with changing table can be found past the church office, near the water fountain. **Children** will be in worship with their families this evening. Busy bags with quiet children's activities are available at the Welcome Desk, and those who need a break may use the Octagon room across from the main Sanctuary door or the Library near the restrooms. Families with infants and preschoolers may make use of the Nursery on the second floor; however, an adult caregiver must stay with the child as there is no nursery staff on duty tonight. To receive Sunday School updates by email, contact Meg Baker at [mbaker@stpaulsk.org](mailto:mbaker@stpaulsk.org). **Large print Bibles and Hymnals** are available from our ushers. **T-coil hearing aids** work in our Sanctuary. **Say Hello!** Please use the attendance pads in the pews to share your name and note your attendance with us today. **Masks** are optional in St. Paul's spaces. Please read more at [stpaulsk.org/worship](http://stpaulsk.org/worship).

### Featured Events and Upcoming Activities

- **Poinsettia Dedications** – Thank you to all who sponsored the beautiful poinsettia (cuetlaxochitl) plants that grace our Sanctuary and lovely door wreaths, given in honor or memory of loved ones. Please find the dedications in the special Poinsettia Bulletin.
- **Pastor Joey Renewal Leave** – Please be in prayer for Pastor Joey as he takes Renewal Leave beginning December 25, and will rejoin us on Easter Sunday. Full announcement at [stpaulsk.org/we-are-all-about/the-pastors-page](http://stpaulsk.org/we-are-all-about/the-pastors-page)
- **Offices Closed for Christmas Break** – Through January 1, 2024, staff will be off for Christmas Break and the building will be closed (except for Sunday worship on Dec. 31 at 10:30 AM). We will not share a Daily Breath or the Weekly News email during the break. St. Paul's returns to regular hours on Tuesday, January 2, 2024.
- **Year-End Giving Deadlines** – Offerings dated December 31, 2023 or earlier, and received in the office or through online/bank transactions by January 2, may be counted toward 2023 giving goals and should appear on Year-End Giving Statements for 2023, which will be mailed at the end of January.
- **Parking Lot Door Hours** – Beginning Sunday January 7, 2024, the parking lot entrance to the building will be locked on Sunday mornings at 11:00 AM as part of an effort to increase building security. After 11:00 AM, please enter through the front doors on Armory Ave. or use the Mitchell St. entrance by the church office. (You may still exit through any door.) If you have questions, please contact Pastor Pat.





## SOURCES AND LICENSING

Livestreaming each week at 10:30 AM at [stpaulsk.org/worship/worship-at-home](http://stpaulsk.org/worship/worship-at-home).

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“A Modern Magnificat” by Joy Cowley, published in the e-newsletter of John Shelby Spong, “A New Christianity for A New World” 19 Dec 2007 and 2012 at <https://progressivechristianity.org/resource/modern-magnificat/> Used by permission.

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\*\* Offertory: *Sleeps Judea Fair* by Hugh A. MacKinnon. Copyright 1924 by H. W. Gray, renewed 1952 by Belwin Inc.

Doxology: *Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow* (OLD 100TH). Words: Thomas Ken (1674). Music: Attr. to Louis Bourgeois (1551). Public domain.

*It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*. Words: Edmund H. Sears (1849). Music: Richard Storrs Willis (1850). Public domain.

Closing Affirmation: by Howard Thurman, from *Meditations of the Heart* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1953), p.153.

*Silent Night, Holy Night*. Words: Joseph Mohr (1818), trans. John F. Young. Music: Franz Gruber (1818). Public domain.





## LEADING AND SERVING

**Senior Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Patricia Allen, [pallen@stpaulsk.org](mailto:pallen@stpaulsk.org)

**Associate Pastor:** Rev. Joey Heath-Mason, [joeyhm@stpaulsk.org](mailto:joeyhm@stpaulsk.org)

**Music Director:** Mr. N. Thomas Pedersen, [tpedersen@stpaulsk.org](mailto:tpedersen@stpaulsk.org)

**Organist:** Mr. Marvin Mills, [mmills@stpaulsk.org](mailto:mmills@stpaulsk.org)

**Facilities:** Ms. Tracey Furman, [tfurman@stpaulsk.org](mailto:tfurman@stpaulsk.org)

**Minister of Spiritual Care & Formation:** Dr. Meg Baker, [mbaker@stpaulsk.org](mailto:mbaker@stpaulsk.org)

**Communications & Administration:** Dr. Erin Bone Steele, [stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org](mailto:stpaulsunited@stpaulsk.org)

**A/V Team:** John & Biljana Regan; John Stephens

**Children's Choir Director:** Christina Griffin

**Lay Leader:** Marge Higgins

**Usher Coordinator:** Nathan Bazawada

**Lay Reader:** Cathy Knepper

