

COME GROW SERVE

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 2025

Lessons & Carols Service

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church!

It's still Christmas! Our celebration of the birth of Jesus continues for a full twelve days, ending on Epiphany, Jan. 5, the day on which we celebrate the "appearing" of the Word made Flesh among us.

Today we sing out our joy as we hear once more the prophecies and the narratives of Advent and Christmas, now brought together in the person of the Baby of Bethlehem! Come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

. Words printed in **bold** are spoken by all. Visitors are invited to sign the guest registry in the Narthex or fill out a pew card and place it in the offering plate.

THIS SERVICE IS LIVE STREAMED. TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

GATHERING

WELCOME

L2: Welcome to those who are joining us online. Welcome to worship at St. Paul's!

PRELUDE

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Carl Schalk

The assembly is invited to stand.

L1: Jesus, the bright Morning Star, shines light in the world.

All: By day and night he shines for all to see.

L2: Jesus was born in the midst of injustice and poverty

All: that the world may see the justice and richness of God

L1: God so loved the world that God sent Jesus,

All: so that all who believe in him may not perish but have eternal life.

L2: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

All: Jesus Christ is the light of our lives.

L1: Sing to God a new song!

All: A song of hope, joy, and peace around the world.

GATHERING CAROL

Joy To The World

ELW 267, v. 1-2, 4

OPENING PRAYER

L1: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

L1: Let us pray.

Gracious God of heaven and earth, you have thrown a lifeline to us in our darkness—a beam of light that shines through Jesus. Though born in a manger, he is the firstborn of all creation. Though crucified on a cross, he is the Lord of life. Fill us with the wonder O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: Amen.

WORD

FIRST LESSON: Genesis: 1:1-5, 14-18

A reading from First Samuel.

¹ When God began to create the heavens and the earth, ² the earth was complete chaos, and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴ And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

¹⁴ And God said, “Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵ and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. ¹⁶ God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. ¹⁷ God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸ to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

Here ends the reading.

CAROL:

Many And Great, O God

ELW 837

SECOND LESSON: Micah 5:2-5a

A reading from Micah.

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,

whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth,
⁵ and he shall be the one of peace.

If the Assyrians come into our land
and tread upon our soil,
we will raise against them seven shepherds
and eight rulers.

Here ends the reading.

CAROL:

Blessed Be The God of Israel

ELW 250, v. 1-2

THIRD LESSON: Luke 1:26-35, 38

A reading from Luke.

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Here ends the reading.

CAROL:

The Angel Gabriel

ELW 265, v. 1-2

FOURTH LESSON: Matthew 1:18-25

A reading from Matthew.

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

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

Here ends the reading.

CAROL:

All Earth is Hopeful

ELW 266, v. 1-2

FIFTH LESSON: Luke 2:8-20

A reading from Luke.

⁸ Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, ¹⁹ and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

Here ends the reading.

SIXTH LESSON: Matthew 2:1-11

A reading from Matthew.

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage.” ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah,
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’ ”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Here ends the reading.

SEVENTH LESSON: John 1: 1-14

A reading from John.

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

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

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But 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.

Here ends the reading.

CAROL:

Of the Father's Love Begotten

ELW 295, v. 1-2

The assembly is invited to stand.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER:

L2: It is you, loving God, who lights our path with truth.

All: Your Word, Jesus, is truth.

L1: In his light, draw all to the manger

All: to gather in wonder with the shepherds.

L2: In his light, draw all to the manger

All: to kneel in reverence with the wise ones.

L1: In his light, draw all to the manger

All: to sing for joy with the angels.

L2: In the brightness of his life

All: cast away the darkness of injustice, poverty, and hunger in the world.

L1: It is you, loving God, who meets us on our way.

All: In the light of Jesus, show the world the way of life. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER.

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.

BLESSING

L1: Praise God, from whom all blessings flow!

All: Praise God, all creatures here below!

L2: You are the shepherds telling the story.

All: We tell it in the streets and across the land.

L1: You are the wise ones worshipping with thanksgiving.
All: **We worship with gifts of song and service, talents and treasures.**

L2: You are the angels announcing peace.
All: **We live with joy and go in peace.**

SENDING

Please be seated for the announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly is invited to stand.

L1: 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.
All: **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Go, Tell It On The Mountain

ELW 290

DISMISSAL

L2: Go in peace. Keep awake.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Noel IV

Louis-Claude Daquin

THANK YOU

To our musicians: Libby Harrison, soprano; Nicholas Marotta, mezzo-soprano.
To everyone who brought leftover Christmas goodies for our coffee fellowship.

PRAYER REQUESTS

For Sue Murphy, as she undergoes chemotherapy for breast cancer.
For Jan Rock, as she recovers from stenoses.
For John Croft, as he mourns the death of his brother-in-law, Earl Pederson.