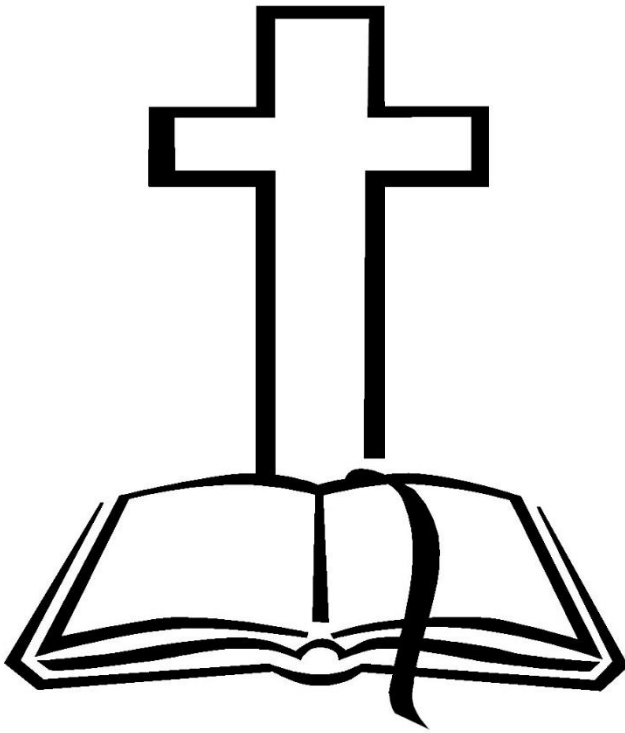


\_\_\_\_\_New Year's Eve\_\_\_\_\_

# A New Year's Service of Meditation and Praise



December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

— MINISTRIES —

CHURCH • SCHOOL • CHILDCARE



# ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

## — MINISTRIES —

CHURCH • SCHOOL • CHILDCARE

*As Christians united in common faith, St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to nurture believers and bring the lost to faith in Jesus through God's Holy Word and Sacraments.*

### ***Welcome!***

- All worshipers are asked to complete an online 'Connection Card' on our website [www.stpaulappletonwi.com](http://www.stpaulappletonwi.com).
- Restrooms are in the church basement located just at the bottom of the front stairs. Changing tables are available to parents.
- An elevator is available on the north side of the church entrance.
- The basement is available to parents needing to quiet small children. The area is equipped with closed circuit TV.
- Out of respect for all who worship today, please silence all electronic devices.

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### **Those wishing to attend Holy Communion**

Lutherans understand Holy Communion as, among other things, a statement of agreement with the church's teachings. For this reason, you will not want to commune with us until you have had a chance to compare your beliefs with our church's. Please speak to our pastor about this before receiving communion with us.

## A New Year's Service of Meditation and Praise

### WELCOME!

At this transition to a New Year we are gathered together to meditate on the goodness of our God during the past year and to pray for his grace for the future. As most years of our lives, this past one has likely been a year of joys and a year of sadness. There have been days when all has worked out well and days when it seems nothing could go right. We have laughed at times, cried at times, contemplated at times, and sometimes just sat back in wonder at life. Such is life in this imperfect world.

Yet in the midst of uncertainty we have turned again and again to the Lord our God who does not change. His Word has been our fortress and our Rock of refuge in all times. So as we approach the New Year we turn again to that Word – to its revelation and its promises. It helps us to know God better. It will direct our prayers. It will fill us with hope. It will remind us of the forgiveness which we have in Jesus for our failures. May the Lord bless our meditation and grant us a blessed New Year – connected with Jesus Christ, our Savior.

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### OPENING HYMN

Come, Christians, Join to Sing - **CW 599**

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

**C: Amen.**

P: God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

**C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you. During the past year my mind has entertained thoughts that it should not, my lips have spoken words that would have better been left unsaid, my hands and feet have done things and gone places where they ought not to have been. I am unworthy of anything good from you. I deserve to be punished for what I have done—not just in this life, but also for all eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior, Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

P: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son, born to a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit, to live and then to die as the sacrifice of reconciliation for our sins. Therefore, as

a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Lord our God, as one year ends and a new year begins, give us hope.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: God our Father, you look upon us with compassion, receive our prayer.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: God our Father, you take upon yourself our burdens, fill us with your peace.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: God our Father, in the silence of meditation on your Truth, we are led to you; sustain us by your Word.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: God our Father, love is a witness of discipleship, fill us with love for you and for one another.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

P: God our Father, kindle a new brightness in our night, shine your light on us.

**C: Lord, have mercy. Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P: Eternal Father, before whom all generations rise and fall, teach us to think earnestly on the brevity of our lives and on the immensity of your goodness. Help us to enter the New Year trusting in the name of your Son and walking in the way of his peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **FIRST LESSON**

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them"—<sup>2</sup> before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds return after the rain; <sup>3</sup> when the keepers

of the house tremble, and the strong men stoop, when the grinders cease because they are few, and those looking through the windows grow dim; <sup>4</sup> when the doors to the street are closed and the sound of grinding fades; when people rise up at the sound of birds, but all their songs grow faint; <sup>5</sup> when people are afraid of heights and of dangers in the streets; when the almond tree blossoms and the grasshopper drags itself along and desire no longer is stirred. Then people go to their eternal home and mourners go about the streets. <sup>6</sup> Remember him—before the silver cord is severed, and the golden bowl is broken; before the pitcher is shattered at the spring, and the wheel broken at the well, <sup>7</sup> and the dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

## PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 90D (*Psalter p. 462*)

## SECOND LESSON

1 Peter 2:22-25

Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for each other, love one another deeply, from the heart. <sup>23</sup> For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. <sup>24</sup> For, "All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, <sup>25</sup> but the word of the Lord endures forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

P: Alleluia. Your word is a lamp to my feet

**C: and a light for my path. Alleluia.** (*Psalm 119:105*)

## GOSPEL LESSON AND SERMON TEXT

Luke 13:6-9

Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. <sup>7</sup> So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' <sup>8</sup> "Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. <sup>9</sup> If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'"

## HYMN

Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year – **CW 368**

## SERMON

Pastor Kenneth Frey

## OFFERING

## DEPARTED MEMBERS REMEMBERED

*In this New Years' service, we remember the Christian brothers and sisters whom the Lord has welcomed home to heaven in this past year.*

## HYMN

Across the Sky the Shades of Night - **CW 367 v. 1-3**

P: Moses has written about our God, "You turn mortals back to dust. You sweep them away in the sleep of death. ... The length of our days is seventy years—eighty years if we have the strength. Yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom" (*Psalms 90*).

We celebrate our family members who have escaped the sorrows of this world and now, because Jesus is their Savior, enjoy the eternal pleasures of the next world: *Myrtle Potter, Timothy Zander, Doris Felzer, Ann Kracht, Irene Scheibe, Bonnie Frank, Duane Schultz, Olive Lecker, Rodney Henschel, Nancy Standiford, John Scheinpflug, Adam Giebel, Elizabeth Thompson, Lowell Holverson, Ellen Radley, David Clausen, Donald Ahrens, Michael Juzenas, and Kenneth Hinz.*

## HYMN

Across the Sky the Shades of Night - **CW 367 v. 4**

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P: I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever.

**C: Every day I will praise you and extol your name.**

P: It is fitting, O Lord, in the final hours of this year, to express our gratitude for the countless gifts of grace we have received from you.

**C: You have been faithful to your promises and loving toward all you have made.**

P: You clothe your creation with beauty; you feed even the birds and tell us that we are much more valuable than they.

**C: You know what we need, and you give us all good things.**

P: Clothing and food, safety and health, possessions and money, even life itself—all these come to us from your generous hand.

**C: We thank you for these blessings, and we ask that you continue to grant them to us.**

P: We thank you especially for your Word and Holy Supper, which strengthen our faith, shield us from temptation, and equip us for service.

**C: Increase our commitments to these precious gifts, so that we may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

*Special prayers and intercessions may follow.*

P: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

*Silent prayer.*

P: Almighty and eternal God, you have been gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. As you led your people Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so lead us by the light of your Word that we may live our lives to your glory and be prepared to die in your peace.

**C: We ask these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

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## LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

## THE SACRAMENT

*Today we offer individual distribution of the Lord's Supper. For those unable to drink alcohol, there is white grape juice. **Gluten free** wafers are also available. Please speak to a pastor if you need either one.*



## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: 🎵 Amen.**

***O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
Have mercy on us.***

***O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
Have mercy on us.***

***O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world,  
Grant us your peace. Amen.***

**DISTRIBUTION HYMN**      Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness – **CW 663**

P: The Lord does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

**C: For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him.**

P: As far as the east is from the west,

**C: So far has he removed our transgressions from us.**

## THE BLESSING

P: The Lord bless you and keep you;

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

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

**HYMN**

May the Peace of God - **CW 929**

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## Worship Notes

Presiding Minister: Kenneth Frey  
Service Team: Team Paulson

Organist: Claire Rehberger