

O COME,
ALL YE

Faithful

JOYFUL
AND
TRIUMPH

*St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Howards Grove, WI
December 25, 2020*



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**St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a
Congregation in the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod.**



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

We want to extend a warm welcome to everyone attending this worship service! Especially to you who are guests and visitors, WELCOME!

We at St. Paul's Lutheran share a common belief in **Jesus** as **our Savior** from sin and as the Lord of our lives. Our faith is based on God's Word, revealed in the Bible. We want to share God's Word with as many people as possible because we know that Jesus lived, died and rose from death to save us and all people. We're happy to have the opportunity to share the saving truths of the Bible with you!

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Worship during these times: We offer distanced seating on one side of the sanctuary. We also encourage compliance for all who are able to wear a face covering to honor God's representatives in our state government. Door handles and pew backs are cleaned between Sunday services. Hand sanitizer is available in the narthex. All responses and songs are printed in your bulletin, which should be taken with you or discarded after worship. Offerings may be placed in the designated boxes in the narthex.

Communion is offered in worship each month on the 2nd and 4th weekends. Members who are not yet comfortable returning to worship during the pandemic may schedule a communion appointment with a pastor.

DVDs: DVDs of our worship services can be made per request. Please contact the office to make arrangements. In order to ensure cleanliness, you do not need to return a DVD. Please consider a small monetary donation (\$2) to cover the cost of the DVD if you request one.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (The WELS) and was founded in 1862. We have our Lutheran elementary school (pre K-grade 8) on site and are part of a federation of churches to support our own high school, Manitowoc Lutheran High School.



Merry Christmas!

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful | 55

- 1 Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.
Refrain: Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.
- 2 God from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes,
Only begotten Son of God the Father. *Refrain*
- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.
Glory to God, all Glory in the highest. *Refrain*
- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n,
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing. *Refrain*

Please stand.

INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son \mp and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about:

Women: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit.

Men: Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Minister: But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Congregation: All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Minister: When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife.

Congregation: But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

M: We have come to worship the Christ child. Let us confess our sins to him:

C: Holy Jesus, you took on our humanity because we were not the humans we should be. We were conceived and born in sin. We have been selfish, proud, and unloving. We deserve to see God's anger and punishment instead of his glory. We come to your manger this morning and plead, "Lord, have mercy!"

M: Christmas is the Father's answer to our cry for mercy. Jesus was born among us so that we might have new birth in him. He lived on earth so that we may live in heaven. He took on our humanity so that we might be clothed in immortality. As a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of our newborn Savior, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Be seated.

DUET

Emmanuel

He was not the one we thought would come. We were looking for a King, but he didn't come in glory. The Author of the oceans and the sun, still he chose to be written in our story so he could fill our flesh and blood. And we could know his love.

Refrain: Emmanuel, a manger for a bed, no crown upon his head. He came like us instead. Emmanuel, he meets you where you are. He holds your heavy heart. Our God is with us all. Emmanuel, Emmanuel!

It was no mistake that he arrived, lost without a home, helpless as a baby. So if we're feeling lost in our own lives, we are not alone. He has felt the same thing, because he lives in flesh and blood. We can know his love. *Refrain*

THE WORD

FIRST LESSON

Hebrews 1:1-9

The Son is the radiance of God's glory; he sustains all things by his powerful word.

¹ In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴ So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

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

“You are my Son;

today I have become your Father”? Or again,

“I will be his Father,

and he will be my Son”?

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

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

⁷ In speaking of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels spirits,

and his servants flames of fire.”

⁸But about the Son he says,
“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

HYMN

Of the Father's Love Begotten | 35 v. 1, 3, 4

- 1 **Of the Father's love begotten Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending he,
Of the things that are, that have been, And that future years shall see
Evermore and evermore.**
- 3 **This is he whom heav'n-taught singers Sang of old with one accord;
Whom the Scriptures of the prophets Promised in their faithful word.
Now he shines, the long-expected; Let creation praise its Lord
Evermore and evermore.**
- 4 **Let the heights of heav'n adore him, Angel hosts his praises sing,
Pow'rs, dominions bow before him And extol our God and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent, Ev'ry voice in concert ring
Evermore and evermore.**

Please stand.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 1:1-5, 10-14

What a glorious sight! The one and only Son has made his dwelling among us.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God — ¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Be seated.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Go, Tell It on the Mountain | 57

Refrain: Go, tell it on the mountain, Over the hills, and ev'rywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born.

- 1** While shepherds kept their watching O'er silent flocks by night,
Behold, throughout the heavens There shone a holy light. *Refrain*
- 2** The shepherds feared and trembled When lo, above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus That hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*
- 3** Down in a lowly manger The humble Christ was born;
And God sent us salvation That blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

SERMON

Isaiah 52:7-10

*Burst into songs of joy at this glorious good news of peace, salvation,
comfort and redemption from the Father.*

⁷How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
"Your God reigns!"

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,

and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

SERMON

Isaiah 52:7-10

What a Beautiful Christmas!

Listen to good news - Laud from great ruin - Look at God's salvation

DUET

Father, How Sweet

Father, how sweet must be the pleasure you find in your eternal Son. For long before you made the heavens both you and he rejoiced as one. And long before you formed the angels, before you made the day and night, Jesus exulted in your presence, and he was all of your delight.

Father, what love you've shown to rebels that you would send your Son so dear into this world of grief and trouble to bring unworthy sinners near. We'll never fathom how it pained you when you supplied the offering to rescue those who had disdained you, to watch your dear Son suffering.

Jesus, it fills our hearts with wonder that you would leave your heavenly place to take on flesh to thirst and hunger to save the ones who spurned your grace. You came to forfeit every mercy, to die that mercy we would find, and then you hung alone in darkness, so in our hearts your grace would shine.

Jesus, in glory you've ascended, never again to leave your throne. Because of you we are befriended, received and welcomed as God's own. Father, how sweet now is your pleasure in us, your daughters and your sons. We will delight in you forever. In Jesus you have made us one.

Please stand.

ATHANSIAN CREED PT. 2

This statement of belief, together with the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, is held in common by all Christian churches. It was written to take a stand on God's Word against false teachings about the triune God and the person of Jesus Christ. Although it was not written by Athanasius, it is named after this defender of God's truth who lived in the 300s AD. On Christmas, when we celebrate God becoming human in Christ, we will confess the second half of the creed. When it speaks of answering for our personal deeds at Christ's return, it is not promoting salvation by works. It is using language straight from the Bible. (John 5:28-29) God judges and saves us through faith in Christ. (Eph.2:8-9; Rom.3:23-24) Through this faith in Christ, God views us as righteous and our deeds as holy. (John 15:1-5; Mt 25:31-46)

C: It is furthermore necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh.

Now this is the true Christian faith: We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man. He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh, equal to the Father as to his deity, less than the Father as to his humanity; and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons but one, one, not by changing the deity into flesh, but by taking the humanity into God; one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being, so God and man are one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead. He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty, and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.

At his coming all people will rise with their own bodies to answer for their personal deeds. Those who have done good will enter eternal life, but those who have done evil will go into eternal fire.

This is the true Christian faith. Whoever does not faithfully and firmly believe this cannot be saved.)

OFFERING

Online giving options available

In thanks to our gracious Lord and his gift of forgiveness in Jesus, we bring to him a generous portion of all we have received from him. Offerings for the Lord's work may be placed in one of the designated boxes in the narthex today. They may also be mailed in, dropped off in the office, or given online.



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH AND LORD'S PRAYER

M: On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

M: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

C: Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our Savior.

M: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard concerning the child.

C: Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

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

Silent prayer.

M: As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

C: Glory to God in the highest!

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 BENEDICTION

M: 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.

Be seated.

CLOSING HYMN

Joy to the World | 62

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

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SERVING JESUS WITH HEARTS OF LOVE:

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