

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
“Let’s Make a Difference Together”



Fish Hill Road  
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Tannersville, Pennsylvania  
Telephone: (570) 629-1992  
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Website: [www.stpaultannersvillepa.org](http://www.stpaultannersvillepa.org)

Parish Administrator’s Email: [parishadmin@stpaultannersvillepa.org](mailto:parishadmin@stpaultannersvillepa.org)

Worship Services: Sunday at 9:00 A.M.  
Holy Communion: 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month & Festivals

Christian Education: Sunday’s at 10:15 A.M.

Air Conditioned & Handicapped Accessible

# *Welcome to St. Paul Lutheran Church*

**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:** Grounded in faith and growing in grace, we share the Good News of Jesus Christ by word and deed in our local community and throughout the world.



**Are you visiting St. Paul? Are you interested in membership or just looking to see if St. Paul is a good fit for you and/or your family??**

Please call (570-629-1992) or stop by our office during regular business hours (Mon – Thurs 9:00am – 1:00pm) and speak to our Parish Administrator, Leanna Wickline, who will be happy to guide you through the membership process and help you find information on all of the great programs at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

***SILENT MEDITATION.*** . . Please note – the silent meditation is a part of the morning worship service. This is a time for individual reflection; a time for communicating with God, as well as a time of preparation for the service of worship. We encourage you to use it in a meaningful way.

*Please respect the prayerful atmosphere of this holy place. We ask that you turn off all cell phones and electronic devices. Thank you.*

## Our Church Staff

**Pastor:** Vacant – in Call Process

**Parish Administrator:** Mrs. Leanna D. Wickline

**Choir Director/Organist:** Mr. Robert Jones

## 2020 Council Members

Grant Allen  
Bill Below  
Terry Fouts  
Chris Kinsley Sr.  
Nicole Kresge  
Carl Reindl  
Deb Storman  
Ingrid Unternahrer  
Beth Werkheiser

*We welcome the Rev. William Thompson this morning. Pastor Bill Thompson is a retired United Methodist pastor residing with his wife, Leta, in Bear Creek Lakes outside of Jim Thorpe. He serves as Adjunct Pastor at St. John's in the Heights Evangelical Lutheran Church and as Chaplain and Safety Officer for the Penn Forest Volunteer Fire co. #1.*

*Thank you for leading us in worship this morning!*

# Worship Service

## Fourth Sunday of Advent

### Sunday, December 20, 2020

*+Late Seating*

*\*Please stand, if able.*

*Words in bold print denote congregational response.*

#### Prelude

#### Chimes (Call to Worship)

#### Announcements

#### \*Confession

Blessed be God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, whose forgiveness is sure and whose steadfast love endures forever.

**Amen.**

Together let us honestly and humbly confess that we have not lived as God desires.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Loving and forgiving God,

**we confess that we are held captive by sin. In spite of our best efforts, we have gone astray. We have not welcomed the stranger; we have not loved our neighbor; we have not been Christ to one another. Restore us, O God.**

**Wake us up and turn us from our sin. Renew us each day in the light of Christ. Amen.**

#### \*Absolution

People of God, hear this glad news: by God's endless grace your sins are forgiven, and you are free— free from all that holds you back and free to live in the peaceable realm of God.

May you be strengthened in God's love, † comforted by Christ's peace, and accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

\*+ Opening Hymn

# In the Bleak Midwinter

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,  
2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor . . . . earth sus - tain;  
3 What . . . can I give him, poor . . . . as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;  
heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;  
If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed  
if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.  
the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.  
yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

## \*Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

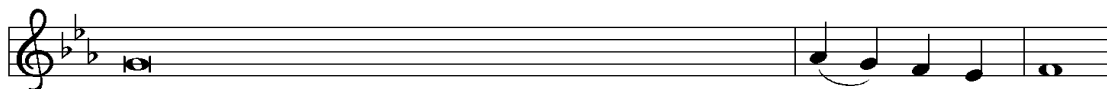
## \*Kyrie



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



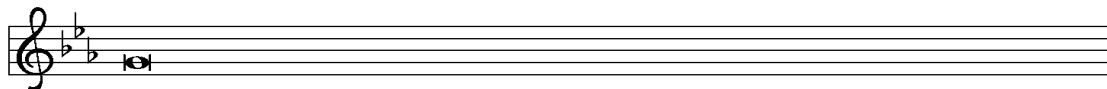
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



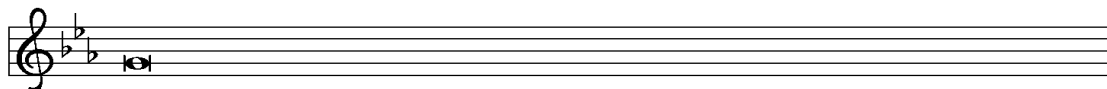
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

## **\*Prayer of the Day**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16**

*Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.*

<sup>1</sup>Now when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, <sup>2</sup>the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." <sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you."

<sup>4</sup>But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: <sup>5</sup>Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. <sup>7</sup>Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" <sup>8</sup>Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; <sup>9</sup>and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. <sup>10</sup>And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, <sup>11</sup>from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. <sup>16</sup>Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Lighting the Advent Wreath**

Blessed are you, God of hosts, for you promised to send a son, Emmanuel, who brought your presence among us; and you promise through your Son Jesus to save us from our sin. The fourth candle represents peace and is called the "Angel's Candle." The angels announced that Jesus came to bring peace--He came to bring people close to God and to each other again. This color is also purple to represent the culmination of love through the Messiah. As we light these candles, turn again to us in mercy; strengthen our faith in the word spoken by your prophets; restore us and give us life that we may be saved. O house of David, come,

**let us rejoice, for the Son of God, Emmanuel, comes to be with us. Amen.**

*Light the fourth candle.*

**O Come, O Come Emmanuel – vs 8**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27**

*Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.*

<sup>25</sup>Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages <sup>26</sup>but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—<sup>27</sup>to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**\*Gospel Acclamation**

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

**\*Gospel: Luke 1:26-38; 46b-55**

The holy gospel according to Luke, the 1st chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.*

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him

Jesus. <sup>32</sup>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. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” <sup>35</sup>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. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God.” <sup>38</sup>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.

<sup>46b</sup>My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, <sup>47</sup>my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed: <sup>49</sup>you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name. <sup>50</sup>You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit, <sup>52</sup>casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly. <sup>53</sup>You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy, <sup>55</sup>the promise made to our forbears, to Abraham and his children forever.

The word of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## Sermon – “God Only Knows How” - Rev. William Thompson

### \*Hymn of the Day      My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness



1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav - ior's praise!  
 2 To all who live in ho - ly fear your mer - cy ev - er flows.  
 3 To Is - ra - el, your ser - vant blest, your help is ev - er sure;



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.  
 With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.  
 the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—  
 The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;  
 Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.  
 the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.  
 and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.



### **\* The Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.\* On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

### **\*Pastoral Prayer**

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

*A brief silence.*

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Creator God, you scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Righteous God, you humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Compassionate God, you fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Healing God, you pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, you are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of Katharina von Bora Luther and other ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. We give thanks for the bold leadership of female leaders in our own time. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### \*The 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

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, † now and forever. Amen.

### \*Closing Hymn

### Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

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  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

**\*Choral Benediction**      *"Go Now and Pass It On"*

May the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ walk be - side us \_\_\_\_\_ as we

6  
leave \_\_\_\_\_ this qui - et place, \_\_\_\_\_ for the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ will al - ways

12  
guide us \_\_\_\_\_ if we walk in the light of His grace. \_\_\_\_\_

17  
\_\_\_\_\_ May we feel God's love a - round us \_\_\_\_\_ as it

22  
keeps us faith - ful and strong, \_\_\_\_\_ for the peace \_\_\_\_\_

27  
\_\_\_\_\_ of God sur rounds us, \_\_\_\_\_ and now we must pass it

32  
on. \_\_\_\_\_ Go now and pass it on. \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Dismissal**

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

**"The worship ends. . .the service begins."**

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## Prayer Requests

**Prayers have been requested for the following brothers and sisters in Christ who have concerns needing God's help...**

Ryan Ace, Sr.; Msgt. William F. Allen; Grant Allen; Private William "Blake" Allen; Tom Altemose; Mark Anthony; Evelyn Arroyo; Daniel Bartron; Dawn Bartron; Wynne Below; Nancy Besecker; Dillon Berenti; Cptn. Matthew Blessing; David Brong; Vicki Burnett; Jack Callahan; Judi Carman; Elaine Cornelus; LilliAnna Daniels; Don Deibler; Renee Depuy; Doris Drury; John Drury; Terry & Ivy Fouts; Chris Gehm; Louis Genset; Lynn Gerber; Jean Gerstlauer; Barbara Grosch; T. J. Imhof; Carol Jones; Ian Juica; Mason & Addison Kapun; Richard Kernan; Robbie Kinsley; Eleanor Kreuger; Esther Laurito; David Leith; James Meckes; Ruth Mitchell; Mattie Morales & family; Bev Otten; Dr. Kenny Pearson; Annabelle Peechatka; Shirley Pensyl; Faye Reiner; Rev. Tom & Sandy Richards; Joan Rinker; Anna Rivera; Jean Ross; Marian Rugen and family at Fred's passing; Gloria Russell; Jack Russell; Pastor Santiago; Alice Schambra; Claudette Segear; Lynn Seip; Shirley Singer; Samuel Smith, Jr.; Gerald Staples; David Stirling (liver transplant); Greg Theadford; Kelly Wickline; Charles Zuccarelli; Fran Zuccarelli; for all who are traveling; for all of those struggling with addictions; the families of those killed and wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan; the members of the Armed Forces of the United States; for the victims of the mass shootings, for all those around the world and here at home suffering from the coronavirus pandemic.

**Have your prayers been answered? Or do you still need God's help? Please let us know. Thank you to everyone who prays with us for those in need.**



***Thank you to all who have helped to support St. Paul's Strunk Food Pantry!*** Your commitment to help is a true blessing to those who are struggling to feed their families. The pantry is always in need of basic food supplies, and we need your continued support to keep this program going strong. **Items of particular need are: canned vegetables like peas, carrots, corn, green beans, kidney beans, pinto beans, canned fruit, canned potatoes, and canned meats like tuna, chicken, beef and other protein sources.** ***Our Food Pantry remains open, although it is functioning as a curb-side service. This limits the contact to others and protects our food pantry staff and our building while still serving the needs of those in need. This week, we served 2 families, adults and children, totaling people this year!***

### **God's Global Barnyard**

The Global Barnyard includes a family farm for \$750, a cow for \$500, and a herd of goats for \$300, as well as many other "Good Gifts" to support economic independence and good nutrition. Our plan is to launch our Global Barnyard campaign next Sunday, the first

Sunday of Advent and continue it through the end of the year. Please consider giving to this effective and proven program that has demonstrated positive results of self-sufficiency throughout the world! We are getting close to our goal of 2 farms!

**The Mitten Tree** is up and we are collecting children's hats, mittens, and scarves through the beginning of January for distribution to Monroe County Children & Youth Services.

### **Grocery Tapes**

If you shop at Kinsley's Shoprite or Weis markets we get a percentage of your purchase. Just bring your receipts in and put them in the box on the table in the Narthex. In order for us to receive credit, the receipts must include the date and store number. On a Weis receipt it is below the Weis Club Savings and above the Weis Reward Points. It looks like this: "1/06/2020 12:12 166 306 10 229" Your numbers will be different. If in doubt, don't tear off the bottom of the receipts.



Don't forget to put St. Paul Lutheran Church Tannersville as your charity before checking out on Amazon. They will send us 1% of your purchase.