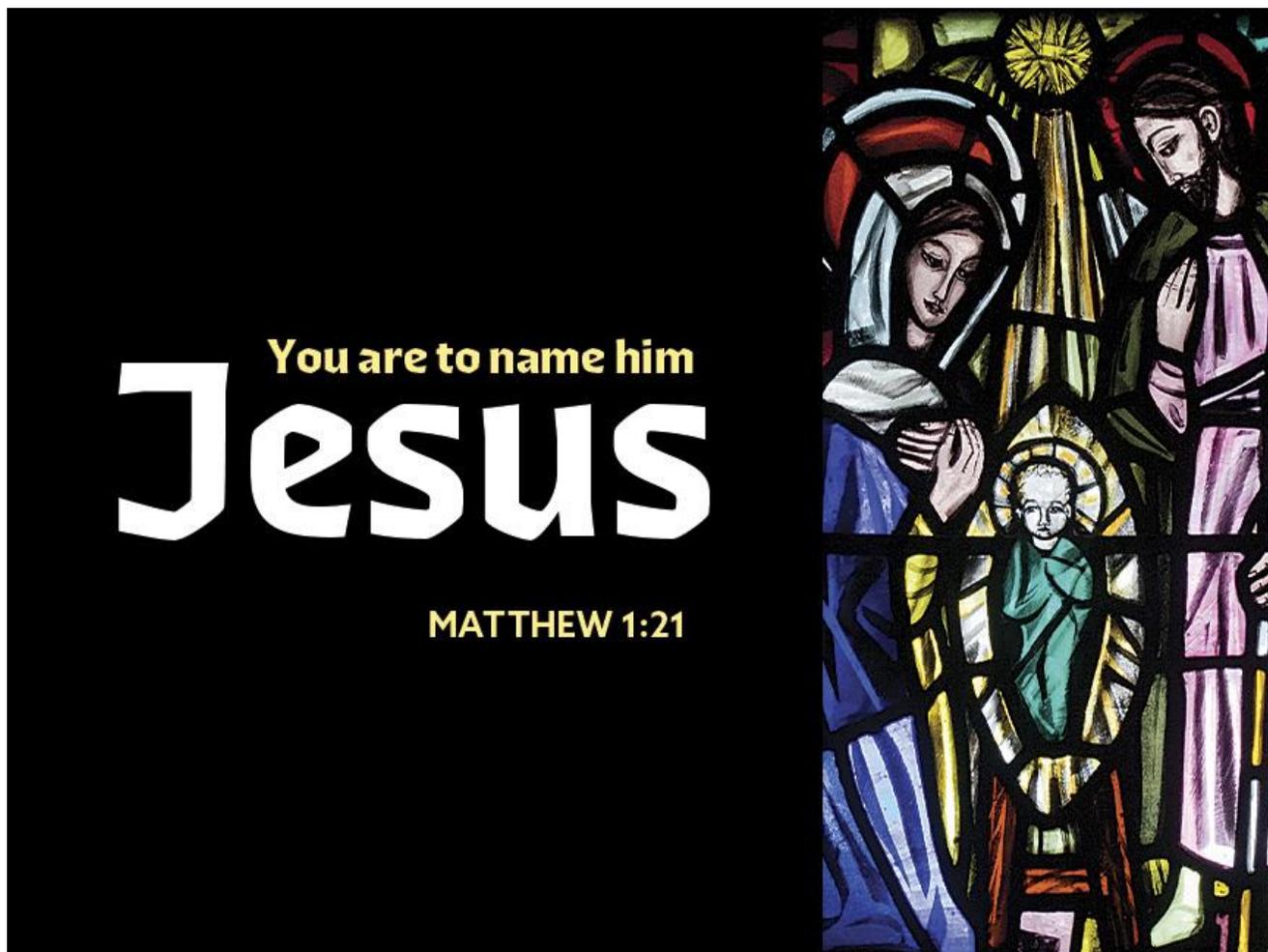


**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**SUNDAY December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**



***WELCOME***

**To our Church Family**

*We're Glad You're Here.*



## St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

We are so glad that you chose to worship with us today. If you are visiting with us for the first time, please visit our Welcome Center in the North Narthex. As our way of saying thank you, you will receive a St. Paul's Welcome Bag with a coffee cup and information about our church. You may also want to download our new St Paul's App and visit our website. Information on both is in the Welcome Bag.

For our young worshipers we have children's packets to play and color with during the service. These are on the white stand near the east entrance to our sanctuary.

### ***You are Welcome at the table!***

If you have been baptized and believe Christ is present in the Eucharist (Holy Communion), you are welcome to join us at the table. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers and return to your seats using the side aisles. If you do not wish to partake in the Sacrament but would like to receive a blessing, please just cross your hands over your chest when you come forward.

Grape juice and Gluten-free wafers are available on request. Grape Juice is in the colored glasses in the center of the communion tray. If you are not able to come forward and would like to receive communion, please inform an usher and the pastor will bring communion to you.

### **Flowers**

**Altar Flowers** were given today by Jim and Barb Starrett in memory of parents' anniversary.

**Throne Flowers** were given today by Carol Stoner in memory of Billy Clark (her brother), who loved Christmas.

### **Today's Worship Focus**

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

### **Readings and Psalm**

#### **Isaiah 7:10-16**

*The sign of Immanuel*

#### **Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19**

Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (*Ps. 80:7*)

#### **Romans 1:1-7**

*Paul's greeting to the church at Rome*

#### **Matthew 1:18-25**

*A God near at hand*

Today's Hymns from the Tower  
The Westminster Strike  
Announcements

Church Carillon

Prelude: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel arr. Sharon Wilson  
Carol Butler, cello; Heidi Hall, violin

## Fourth Week of Advent Prayer - Love

### Scriptures

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." - **John 3:16**

"But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons." - **Galatians 4:4-5**

### Wreath Prayers:

O Lord, you promised in your Holy Scriptures to send your Son Jesus Christ as the Son of David, and your own Son. Reveal this saving promise also to us and move our hearts to faith and obedience; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Heavenly Father, the whole meaning of Christmas can be explained in one little four-letter word...**LOVE**. You sent your gift of pure love to us that first Christmas. Love descended from heaven to be born of a virgin. Love lay in the scratchy hay of a manger in a meager barn in Bethlehem. All of your love, God, was robed in the delicate skin of a baby and wrapped in swaddling clothes. This final week of Advent helps us to reflect on the magnitude of love that was made manifest in Jesus.

Father, this final week of Advent, fill our hearts and minds with the significance of that truth. Thank you, Lord, for loving us enough to send Jesus. In Jesus' precious name we pray. Amen.

**GATHERING SONG**      The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came      ELW 265

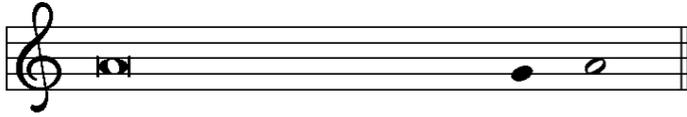
### GREETING

*During this time, the presiding minister and the assembly greet each other.*

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 a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



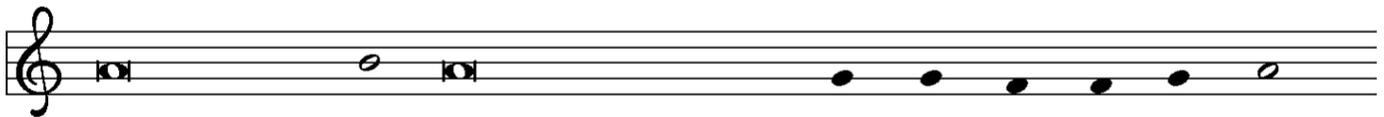
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

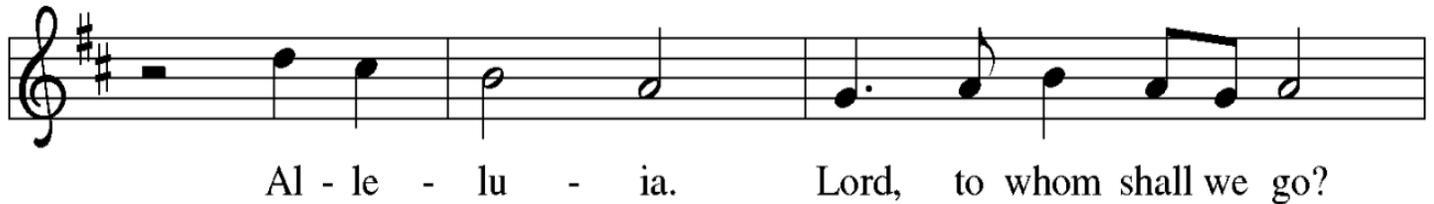
<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



### Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

**The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter**

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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

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

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

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

*Rev. Mark Kreemer*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**     That Boy-child of Mary

ELW 293  
V1-4

**CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.\*  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

*After each petition the following response is given:*

God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**Amen.**

## PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**Offertory:** O Come, O Come Emmanuel arr. Jamey Ray  
*Chancel Choir*

*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 thee, O Israel. O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here, Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight*



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



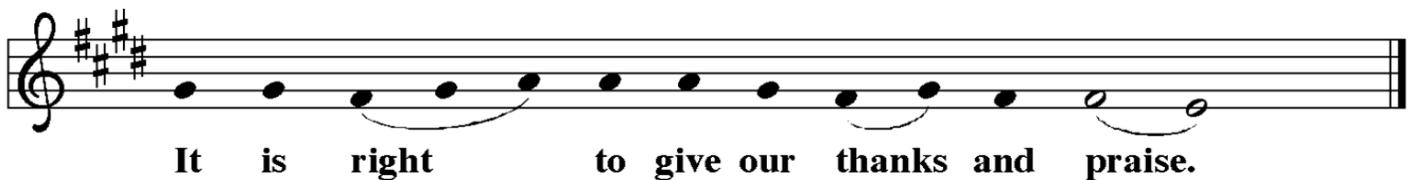
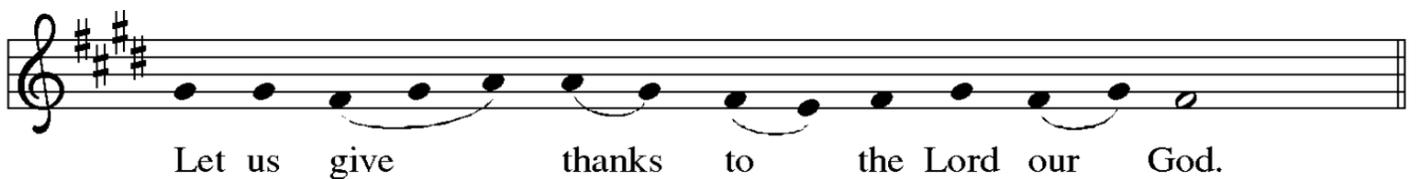
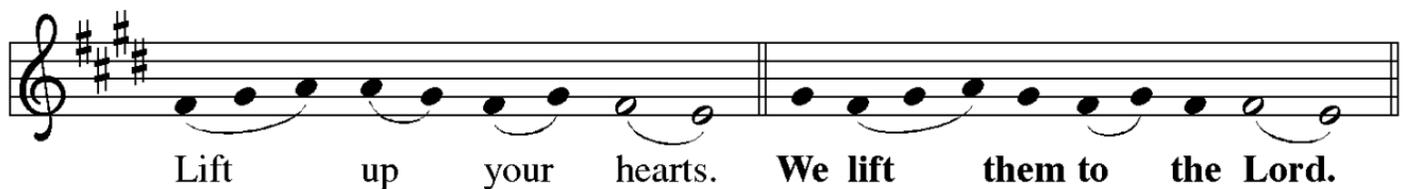
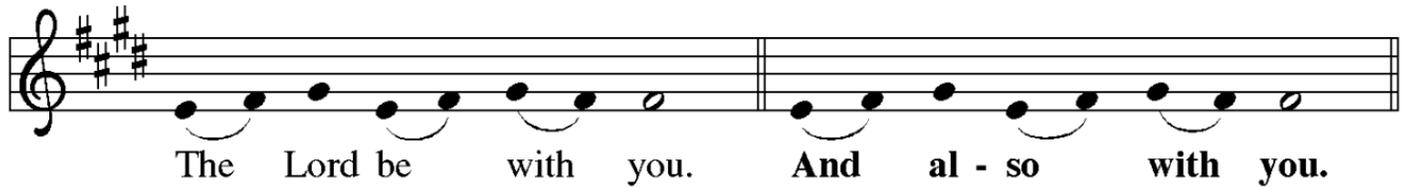
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

## OFFERING PRAYER

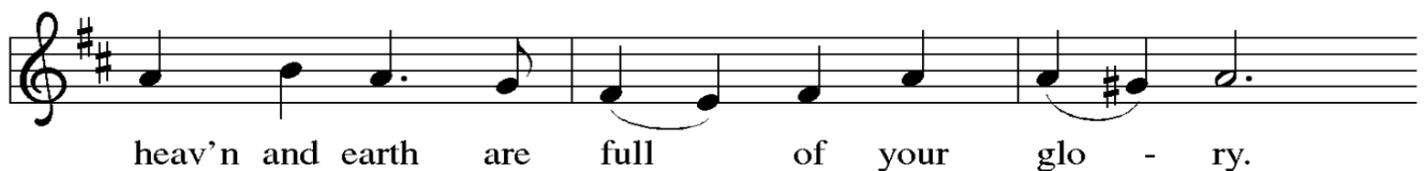
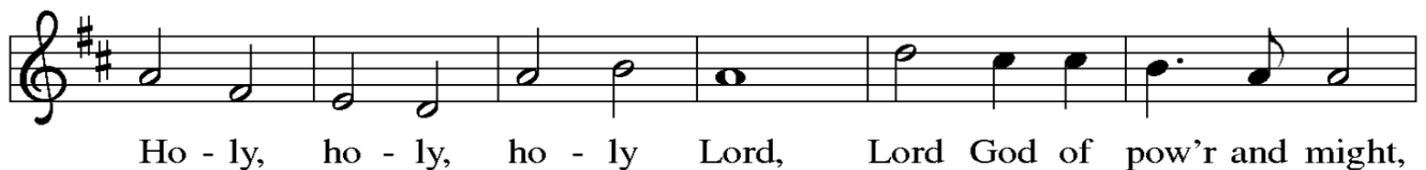
Let us pray.

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places.... And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

### **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.**

### **Invitation to Communion**

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on  
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have

mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

**COMMUNION HYMN:** In the Bleak Midwinter arr. Wilson  
Dr. Butler and Ms. Hall

### TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**SENDING SONG** Joy to the World! ELW 267

### BLESSING

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.

**Amen.**

### DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude:** Carillon on ANTIOCH Mary Beth Bennett (b. 1954)

**In our prayers today we will remember**

*Cole, Marty, Paul Staver, Jessie & Linda Shaffer, Nancy Lint, Steve Kress, Lenny Herd, Loren Veigel, Pastor Groenke, Eric Gerber, Judy Hall, Bonnie & Dave Dourm, Tom Fry, Carol Sargent, Kenneth & Jean Dexter, Anna Langenfeld, Arthur Barrett, Karen & Paul Daily.*

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**Music Notes:**

**Coming in 2026! The St. Paul's Steelband!**

Through a generous donation of five instruments, Eleanor Manes will be starting a steelband for the congregation and greater Massillon community. No musical background necessary, and any and all ages/skills are welcome. For more information, please contact Ellie: 330-400-8543

**Christmas Eve Worship**

Family Worship (with Candlelight Service) 7:00 pm  
Special music provided by Thomas Haake, Sydney Johnson, and Anderson Rambler.

Brass Christmas Music (with the Camarada Brass Quintet) 10:00 pm  
Traditional Candlelight Service 10:30 pm  
Special music in addition to the brass provided by Dwight Butler, Sammy Kay Smith, and the choir.

# Adult Sunday School

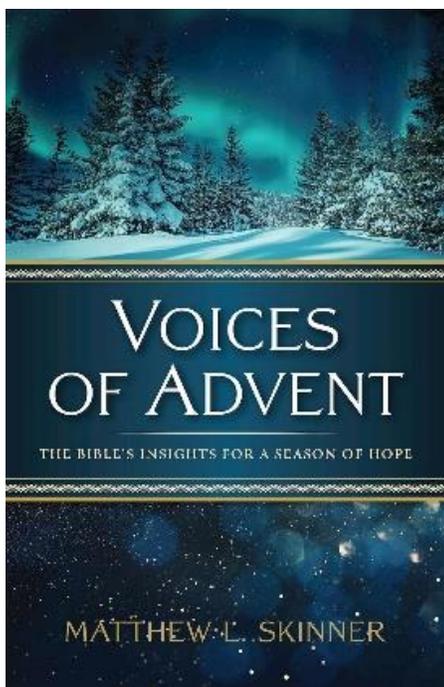
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Parish Hall

The True Spirit of Christmas

“...The Holy Spirit will come upon you...” (Luke 1:35)

The Holy Spirit played an integral role in the birth of Jesus Christ. Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah, and Simeon, among others, all knew the Spirit’s power and leading as each played a part in the coming of the Christ child. As a result, the Spirit fruit of love, joy, and peace was evident in their lives, as it can be for us.

We gather at 11:30 on Sunday morning in the Parish Hall, top floor. An elevator is available for easy access. Note - the class will not meet on Sunday, December 28.



## Thursday Morning Bible Study

Beginning December 11th

Voices of Advent

By Matthew Skinner

In *Voices of Advent*, Matthew L. Skinner leads readers through biblical texts and explores how they shape our lives and Christmas celebrations. We listen as Jesus promises to return to us in the future, to John the Baptist as he prepares the way for the Messiah, to the faithful people and poets who anticipate the magnificence of Jesus’s birth, and to the angels and visionaries who praise God when Christmas dawns. Listen carefully to the Bible’s various perspectives that shape our

preparations for Christmas; you’ll hear hope in all of them. *Voices of Advent* helps readers experience Advent not only as the start of the Christian Church Year, but also as the powerful overture that sets the tone for the incredible story of Jesus.

## **Game Night – Sunday, January 18**

Join us in the lounge at 5:00 pm to play games. We will play bingo with prizes or you can bring a favorite board game or card game. Also bring an appetizer to share. This will be a fun chance to mix with our church family! Come and have fun!! Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee.

## **Capital Campaign Report**

With joy and gratitude, we celebrate the completion of our new entrance and bathrooms—made possible by your faithful generosity. What a gift it is to see these improvements already serving our community!

Yet our work of caring for God’s house is not finished. Three pressing needs lie ahead: a \$125,000 replacement of the Parish Hall heating and cooling system, repairs to the Parish Hall window wells, and fixing a boiler leak in the Education Building. Through your continued giving, we can preserve this sacred space as a place of safety, welcome, and comfort for all who come through our doors. Together, we are ensuring that our church remains a living witness to God’s grace for generations to come.

## **Download the St. Paul’s Phone APP**

**Go to your Google or Apple app store on your smart phone and download the “My Church” by Pushpay. It is a free download.**

**Open the app and search for St Paul’s by typing STPLC APP.**

**Then click on the St Paul’s logo—that’s it.**



# Assisted Hearing Devices Available

Four assisted listening devices are available at the sound system table in the back of the sanctuary at the beginning of worship. Please see Jim Johnson or John Stanko if you need assistance with these devices.



You can also use your smartphone to access the system. Go to your app store and download the **WaveCAST** app. Then connect to the sanctuary Wi-Fi: **Network:** sound media **Password:** Sound127

## Community Social Media Pages

**Facebook & Instagram, Search “*Massillon Lutheran Churches*”**

**Facebook**

*“St Paul’s Lutheran Church in Massillon”*  
or *“Cathedral Concerts at St Paul’s”*

## **Thank you to those serving today:**

<b>Presiding Minister</b>	<b>Rev. Mark Kreemer</b>
<b>Director of Music</b>	<b>Dr. Abigail Haake</b>
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	<b>Sue Reid</b>
<b>Lector</b>	<b>Sydney Johnson</b>
<b>Greeters</b>	<b>Russ &amp; Mary Ann Poling</b>
<b>Communion Assistants</b>	<b>Dwight Butler &amp; Jim Johnson</b>
<b>Sacristan</b>	<b>Kathryn Myers</b>
<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Jeff Akey, Gary Collard, Richard Evert, Dan Farrar</b>
<b>Soundboard</b>	<b>Jim Johnson</b>
<b>Video/Live-Stream</b>	<b>John Stanko</b>

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**GATHERING SONG** The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came ELW 265

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**HYMN OF THE DAY** That Boy-child of Mary ELW 293

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**SENDING SONG** Joy to the World! ELW 267  
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## The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,  
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,  
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;  
 4 Of her, Em-man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:  
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;  
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.  
 in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,  
 thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,  
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."  
 and Chris-tian folk through-out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."  
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."      Glo - ri - a!  
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,  
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924  
 Music: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

# That Boy-Child of Mary



That boy - child of Mar - y was born in a sta - ble,



a man - ger his cra - dle in Beth - le - hem.



- 1 What shall we call him, child of the man - ger?
- 2 His name is Je - sus, God ev - er with us,
- 3 How can he save us, how can he help us,
- 4 Gift of the Fa - ther, to hu - man moth - er,



What name is giv - en in Beth - le - hem?  
God giv - en for us in Beth - le - hem.  
born here a - mong us in Beth - le - hem?  
makes him our broth - er in Beth - le - hem.

5 One with the Father,  
he is our Savior,  
heaven-sent helper  
in Bethlehem.

6 Gladly we praise him,  
love and adore him,  
give ourselves to him  
in Bethlehem.

Text: Tom Colvin, 1925–2000

Music: BLANTYRE, Malawi traditional; adapt. Tom Colvin

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# 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



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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872