

St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

Second Sunday of Advent + Sunday, December 4, 2022

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.

Let us confront our sins,
and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

God of new beginnings,

we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

Purify us with your refining fire

and set us again on your way of love,

that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,

and welcome your coming among us.

Amen.

People of God,

a new thing is growing in our midst,

a tender branch, a living sign.

By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.

You have put on ✝ Christ,

and your sins have been washed away.

Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

We light the second candle on our Advent Wreath. As the candle is being lit, we sing verse one of Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah.

SONG *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* (ELW 240, vv1-2)



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

PRAYER

Let us pray,

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again.

You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire.

Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames,

and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare.

We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

Amen.

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.

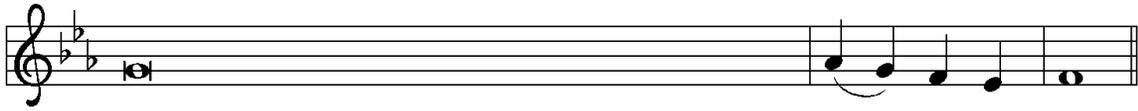
KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



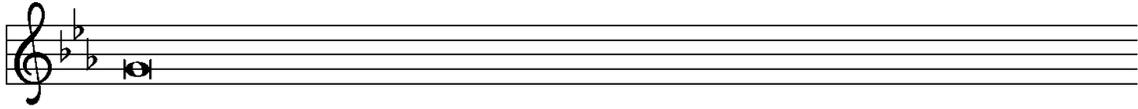
Lord, have mer - cy.



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



Lord, have mer - cy.



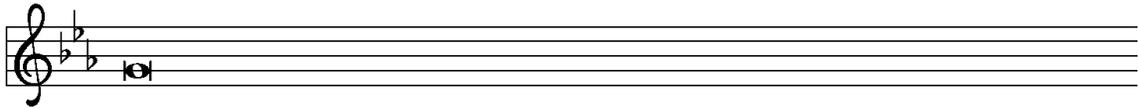
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



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 defend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

A reading from Isaiah.

- ¹A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.
- ²The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.
- ³His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide by what his ears hear;
- ⁴but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.
- ⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.
- ⁶The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
- ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
- ⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
- ⁹They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;

for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

¹Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁸**Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

¹⁹And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13

God's promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God's blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God's family.

A reading from Romans.

⁴Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. ⁵May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the

truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, ⁹and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles,
and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰and again he says,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people”;

¹¹and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles,
and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹²and again Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse shall come,
the one who rises to rule the Gentiles;
in him the Gentiles shall hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,
²“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.’”

⁴Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, ⁶and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸Bear fruit worthy of repentance. ⁹Do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *Hark, the Glad Sound!* (ELW 239)

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
 the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
 God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
 begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
 through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we get ready for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns
for new hope.

A brief silence.

God, you renew the church in every age. We give thanks for hymn writers and selectors,
and theologians. Empower instructors, writers, and musicians to delight and instruct
your people. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You give us a vision of creation in harmony, when hurting and destruction will be no
more. Teach us to be stewards of the earth and companions to its creatures. Restore to
balance and wholeness what human greed has harmed. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You defend the cause of all who are poor and oppressed. Raise up leaders who will
govern with equity and serve the common good. Guide judges, lawmakers, and public
officials to protect the rights of those who cannot advocate for themselves. God, in your
mercy,

hear our prayer.

You deliver those in need from suffering and fear. Come to the aid of any who are
exploited or abused, especially children, elders, and victims of human trafficking.
Provide safety and help to our neighbors without shelter, refugees, and those fleeing
violence. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You urge your people to welcome one another as you have welcomed us. Nurture ministries of hospitality and care: St. Paul's food pantry, GriefShare, the YMCA, GEMS, and all 12-step programs. We pray for people who are homebound, hospitalized, or separated from loved ones especially those we remember out loud, in our hearts, or online... God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

You embrace all who have died trusting in your promises, and we give thanks for their faithful witness. Sustain us in hope until we are united with them in the joy of your eternal presence. God, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

We give our offerings in praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done for us in Jesus Christ and for the sake of Jesus' ongoing mission and ministry in this world. We have been entrusted to carry out this mission Jesus' name, bringing the good news of Jesus to the people of this community and around the world. Please, take a minute of your time to make an electronic gift through the St. Paul's Website www.stpauls-edison.org/online-giving.html. Please consider making this gift a recurring gift, and look for ways to grow in your giving for the sake of Christ's mission through this congregation. You may also mail your offering to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 445 Old Post Rd., Edison NJ 08817.

OFFERING SONG *We Are an Offering* (ELW 692)

**We lift our voices, we lift our hands,
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering
Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our lives,
they are yours: we are an offering.
All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be
we give to you, we give to you.
We lift our voices, we lift our hands,
we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering**

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

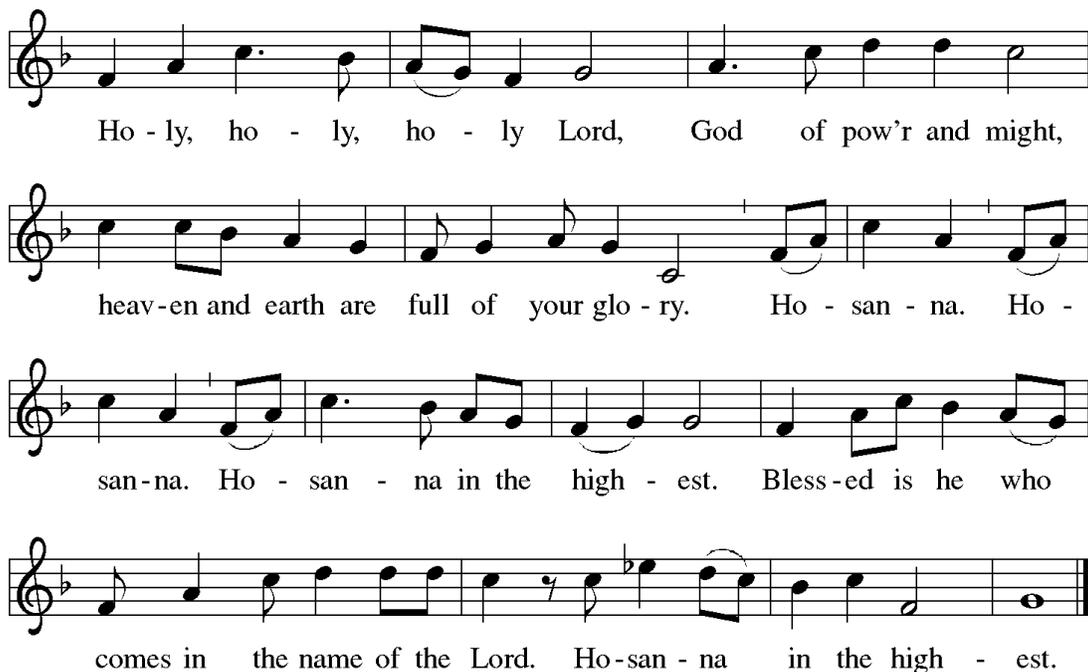
PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, mighty Lord, gracious Father:
Endless is your mercy and eternal your reign.
You have filled all creation with light and life;
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

We praise you for the grace shown to your people in every age:
the promise to Israel,
the rescue from Egypt,
the gift of the promised land,
the words of the prophets;
and, at this end of all the ages, the gift of your Son,
who proclaimed the good news in word and deed
and was obedient to your will, even to giving his life.

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup
we remember the life our Lord offered for us.
And, believing the witness of his resurrection,
we await his coming in power
to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
that we who share in Christ's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants
of every time and every place,
and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest
until he comes as victorious Lord of all.
Through him, with him, in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father,
now and forever.

Amen.

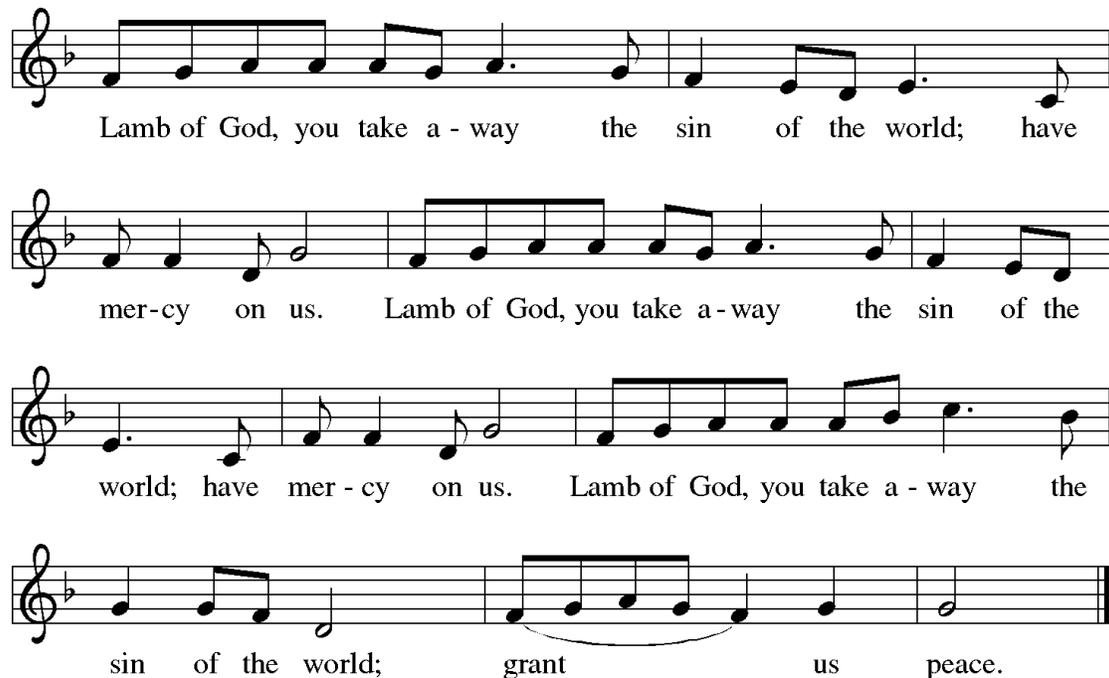
LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

COMMUNION SONG



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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

COMMUNION HYMN *Wait for the Lord* (ELW 262)

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Faithful God,

in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.

As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.

Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADVENT COOKIE WALK. TODAY! Enjoy and share your favorite holiday cookies and baked goods with your friends and neighbors.

WALKING AT ROOSEVELT PARK. Tuesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Call your friends and put on your walking shoes and meet at the skating rink at Roosevelt Park and enjoy fellowship and walk around the park.

GRIEFSHARE. GriefShare meets Tuesdays 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. GriefShare is a 13-week program that gathers a group together to journey through grief.

ADVENT EVENT SCHEDULE

Throughout the season of Advent, we will gather for fellowship and prayer fun as we prepare our hearts and minds for Christ's arrival. Mark your calendars and invite your friends to be part of our community this Advent-Christmas season.

- **Sunday, December 4, 11:30 a.m. Advent Cookie Walk.** Share your favorite holiday cookies and baked goods with your friends and neighbors.
- **Wednesday, December 7, 7:00 p.m. Youth and Caregivers Advent Coloring Night.** This is a chance for our caregivers and those they care for to enjoy an activity together, and for caregivers to get together and support each other.
- **Tuesday, December 13, at 11:30 a.m. Senior Lunch.** Bring your lunch and reconnect with new and old friends. Topic: Your favorite Christmas stories.
- **Wednesday, December 14, 7:00 p.m. Carol Sing.** Come and sing your favorite carols, games and snacks. If you would like to be part of the Carol Sing Choir, see Stefeny. If you would like to be part of a band of carolers to sing to our shut-in members, see Pastor Jim.
- **Saturday, December 17, 9:00 a.m. Christmas Decorating.** Deck the Sanctuary with greens, set up the Christmas tree and enjoy all the fun that comes with preparing our ministry center for Christmas!
- **Saturday, December 17, 5:30 p.m. Sunday school Christmas Program.** Our Sunday school children remind of the meaning and joy of Christmas as part of our Saturday Worship.
- **Wednesday, December 21, 7:00 p.m. Longest Night.** Our annual Blue Christmas service creates a space for people who are grieving and suffering this holiday season to worship, pray and receive God's gifts of faith, hope and love, even on the darkest day of the year.

BIBLE STUDY.

Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. in the lounge.

Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom.

DAILY PRAYER. Daily prayer is one of the means the Holy Spirit uses to keep us in faith. Here are two ways to make daily prayer part of your life: a daily service of morning prayer and a daily service of night prayer.

Morning Prayer: Start each day (Monday through Saturday) with a brief service of Morning Prayer. This service is available as an audio file on the [St. Paul's Website](#)

and the St. Paul's Facebook each morning. You can listen and pray along from your home or take it with you as you exercise or commute.

Night Prayer: End your day in prayer and fellowship. This ongoing prayer group meets **on Zoom each night at 9:00 p.m.** to share what has been happening in their day, to let go of each day's trouble and to participate in a brief service of night prayer. Zoom log info: Meeting ID = 401 244 599 + Password: 042662

BLESSING

God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus,
and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
✚ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!* (MERTON) (ELW 246)



1 Hark! a thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! "Christ is near," we
2 Wak - ened by the sol - emn warn - ing, from earth's bond - age
3 See the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, come with par - don
4 So, when next he comes in glo - ry and the world is
5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, and bless - ing to the Fa - ther



hear it say. "Cast a - way the works of dark - ness,
let us rise; Christ, our sun, all sloth dis - pel - ling,
down from heav'n. Let us haste, with tears of sor - row,
wrapped in fear, he will shield us with his mer - cy
and the Son with the ev - er - last - ing Spir - it



all you chil - dren of the day!"
shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
one and all, to be for - giv'n;
and with words of love draw near.
while un - end - ing a - ges run!

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near.

Thanks be to God.