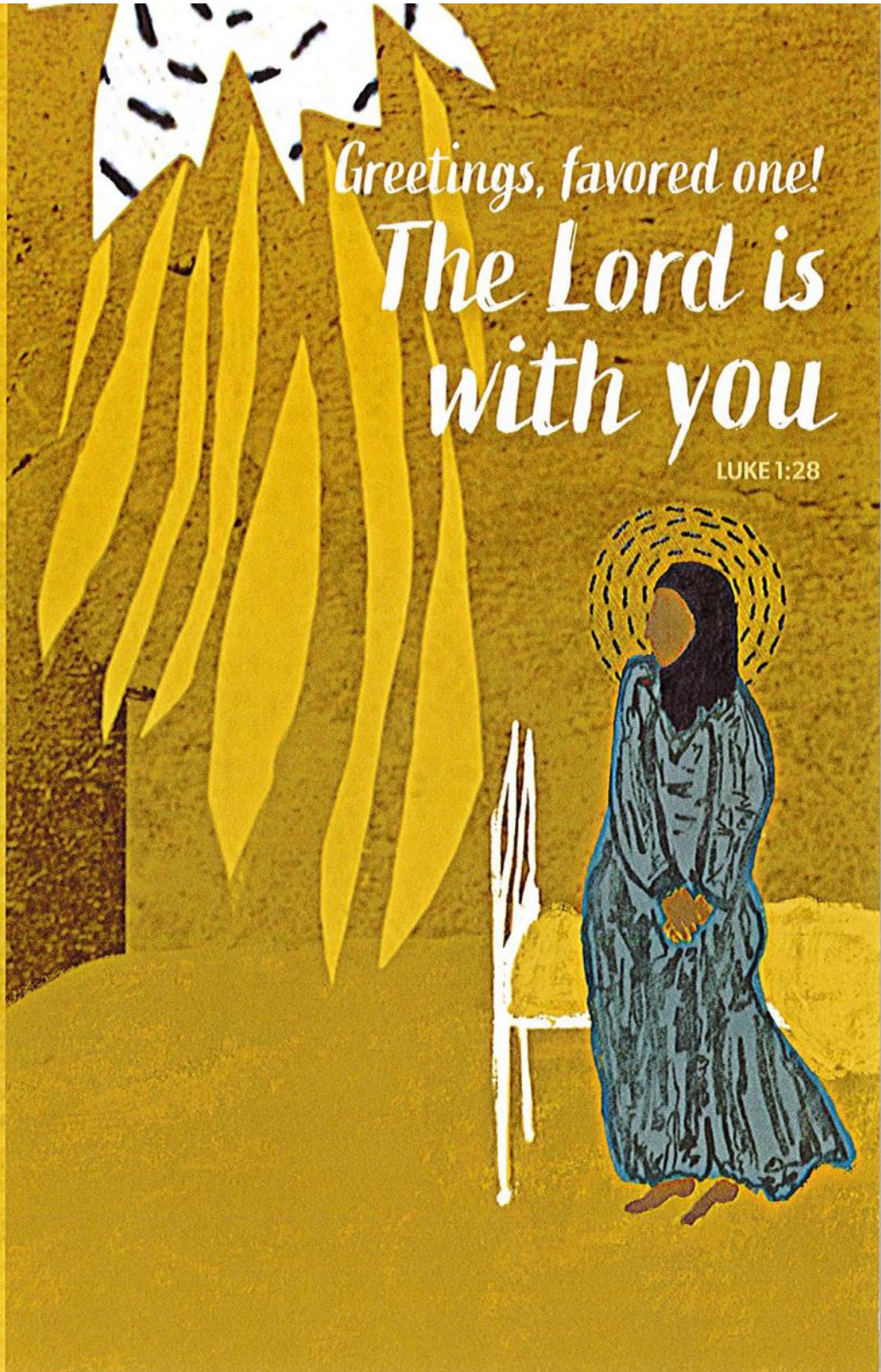


Greetings, favored one!
The Lord is
with you

LUKE 1:28



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

25 W. Springettsbury Ave., York, PA 17403

Church Office 717-843-8155

Email: st.paulsyork@comcast.net

www.stpaulsyork.org

www.stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Facebook: St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George

YouTube: St. Paul's Lutheran Church - South George St. York

WELCOME Thank you for being with us.

We are a Christian church within the Lutheran tradition (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) and we welcome people of all Christian traditions as well as people of other faiths and people of little or no faith. Christian worship has been offered to God in this congregation for 187 years. By worshipping with us today, you become part of that living tradition.

Offerings Offerings are received during the liturgy. They are presented along with gifts of bread and wine at the altar. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org

Postlude It is our tradition to remain seated for the postlude. If you need to leave we ask that you do so reverently. This tradition developed as a result of our livestream. We want anyone viewing to be able to listen to the postlude without unnecessary distraction. Thank you.

Restrooms are available in the Good Shepherd Room (Springettsbury lobby) and the narthex (George St). Baby changing stations are provided in these restrooms as well as in the nursery.

An AED/Defibrillator unit is located in the Good Shepherd room. It is placed on the wall left side of the Springettsbury door exit.

The Nursery is accessed through the front right double doors. The liturgy is live-streamed into the Nursery. Parents are asked to stay with their children. Quiet activities are also available in the Narthex for infant through preschool children to use with an adult.

Please be aware that there is a rise in individuals loitering at church buildings and asking for money. This is panhandling and it is illegal. Please do not give money. Simply direct them to contact the Pastor at a time other than during worship. Thank you.

Parents, please do accompany your child to the restroom during the liturgy and wait with them. This is a way for us to practice good safety protocol within our building.

STAFF		
Pastor	Rev. Stanley Reep	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Youth Director	Kelly Moore-Spencer	kmoorespencer.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Organist, Choir Director	Victor Fields	vfields.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Children Choirs Director	Julianna Jones	jjones.stpaulsyork@comcast.net
Bell Choirs Director	Leah McComas	lmccomas.stpaulsyork@gmail.com
Secretary	Patee Pizzirusso	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Sexton	Ted Weikert	st.paulsyork@comcast.net
Preschool Director	Deb Becker	director@stpaulspreschoolyork.com

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023
Holy Communion 9:15 AM
Evangelical Lutheran Worship Setting V

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Robert Lau

ENTRANCE HYMN

O Come, O come, Emmanuel (ELW 242)



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

APOSTOLIC 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 a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, 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.



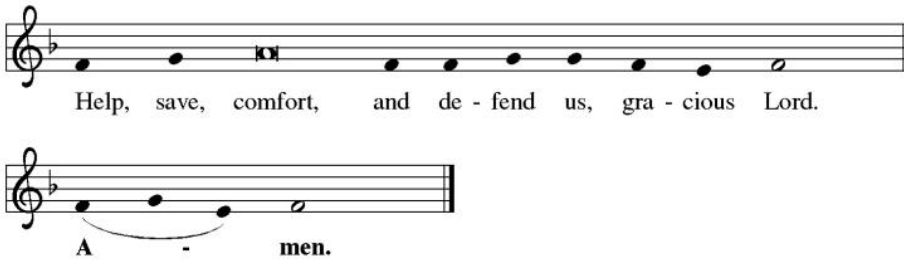
For this ho-ly house, and for all who of-fer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. . . Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the hindrance of our sins and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and forever **Amen**.

Sit

FIRST READING

2 Samuel 7:1-,16 (back cover)

PSALM Psalm 89: 1-4, 19-26 *Spoken responsively by whole verse.*

- ¹ Your love, O LORD, forever | will I sing;*
- from age to age my mouth will pro- | claim your faithfulness.
- ² **For I am persuaded that your love is estab- | lished forever;***
- you have set your faithfulness firmly | in the heavens.**
- ³ "I have made a covenant with my | chosen one;*
- I have sworn an oath to Da- | vid my servant:
- ⁴ **'I will establish your | line forever,***
- and preserve your throne for all | generations.'"**
- ¹⁹ You spoke once in a vision and said to your | faithful people:*
- "I have set the crown upon a warrior
- and have exalted one chosen out | of the people.
- ²⁰ **I have found Da- | vid my servant;***
- with my holy oil have I a- | nointed him.**
- ²¹ My hand will | hold him fast*
- and my arm will | make him strong.
- ²² **No enemy | shall deceive him,***
- nor any wicked man | bring him down.**
- ²³ I will crush his | foes before him*
- and strike down | those who hate him.
- ²⁴ **My faithfulness and love shall | be with him,***
- and he shall be victorious | through my name.**
- ²⁵ I shall make his domin- | ion extend*
- from the great sea | to the river.
- ²⁶ **He will say to me, 'You | are my Father,***
- my God, and the rock of | my salvation.'**

SECOND READINGRomans 16:25-27 *(back cover)***Stand****HOLY GOSPEL**Luke 1:26-38 *(back cover)*

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke

Glory to you, O Lord.*At the conclusion of the Gospel.*

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.**Sit****SERMON**

Pastor Stan Reep

HYMN OF THE DAY*The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (ELW 265)*

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."

Stand

NICENE 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; by the power of
the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man.**

**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.**

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He 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

With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

A brief silence.

You promise mercy to Abraham and his descendants forever. Bring us into thoughtful, caring, and collaborative relationship with those of other faiths. Strengthen our shared values, so that we work together in caring for the world. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

As fields and crops lie dormant, bless them with holy rest. Prepare them to thrive, so that they provide abundant food in due season. Protect animals who hibernate and provide for all who scavenge for food in the lean season. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

You raise up the lowly and cast down the mighty. Teach humility to all in positions of authority. Break down systems of oppression, especially systems that perpetuate inequity and exclusion, Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Look with favor upon all who cry out to you. Embrace with tenderness all who are afraid or ill (*especially*). Rescue all who experience abuse or who live under threat of violence, especially refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers in search of a safe and stable home. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Make our homecomings joyful as we gather with friends, and loved ones in our Christmas celebration. Grant safety to all who travel. Sustain the work of Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, Bridge of Hope and other ministries that assist in setting up new homes. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Blessed are you for Mary and all your servants in every generation who lived according to your promise of mercy (*especially*). Strengthen us by their example until the revelation of your glory is fully made known. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Receive these and all our prayers, O God, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

The ministers and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

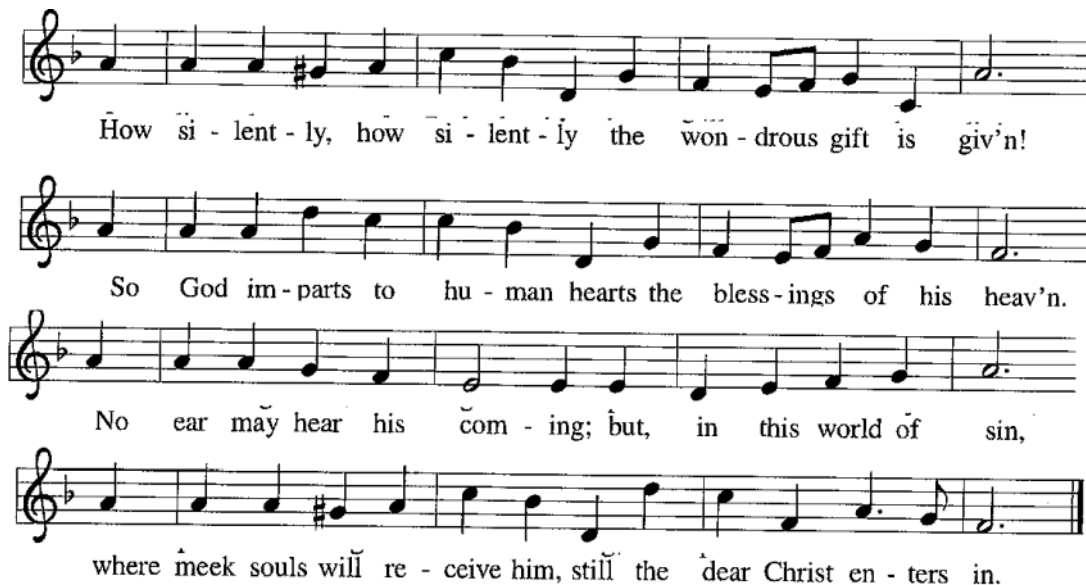
Sit

OFFERING Chancel Choir *Ding, Dong! Merrily on High* Alan Smith

Stand

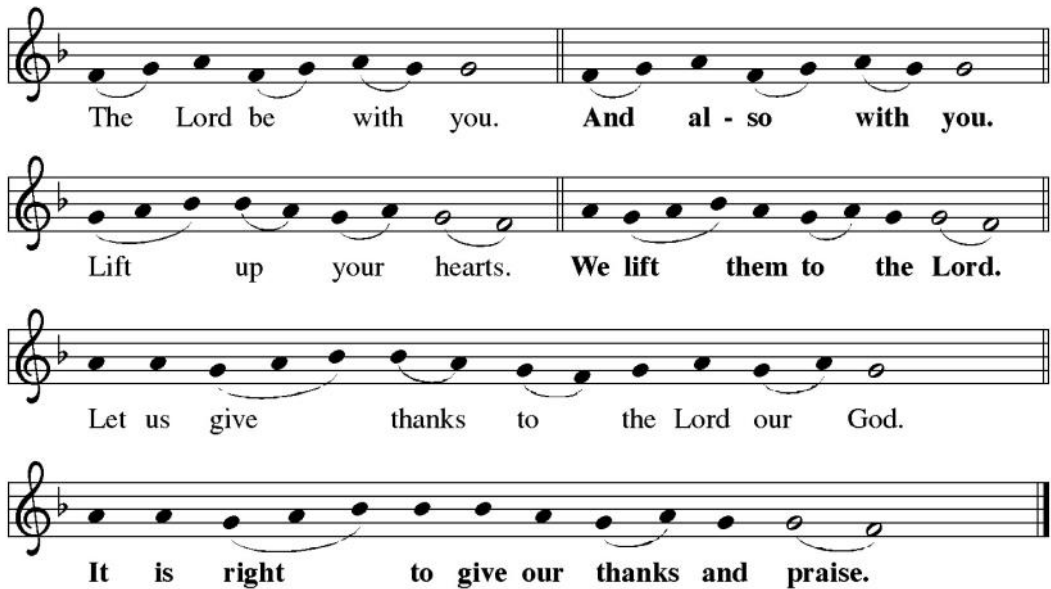
OFFERTORY HYMN *O Little Town of Bethlehem (ELW 279) stanza 3*

The gifts of bread and wine and monetary gifts are presented at the altar.



How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his com - ing; but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.

DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

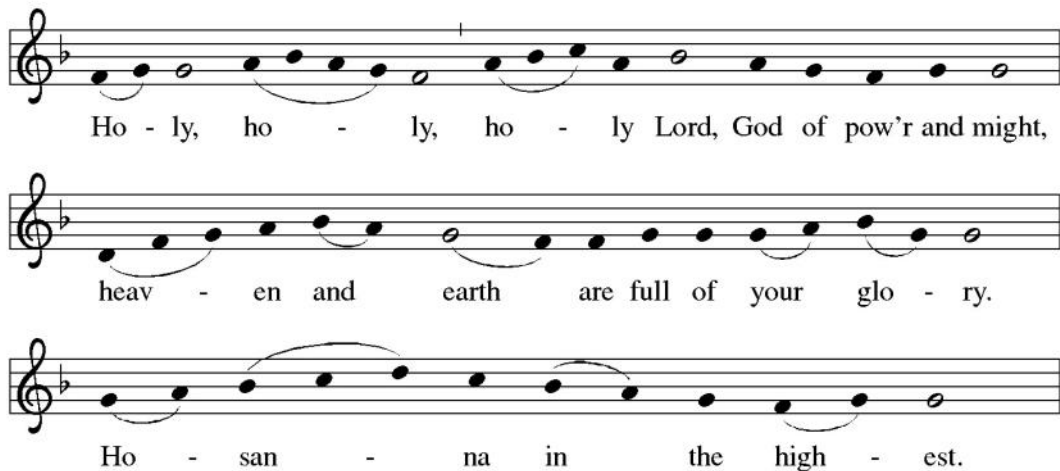
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE *The preface appropriate to the day is said.*

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. 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 again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS *Sung by all.*

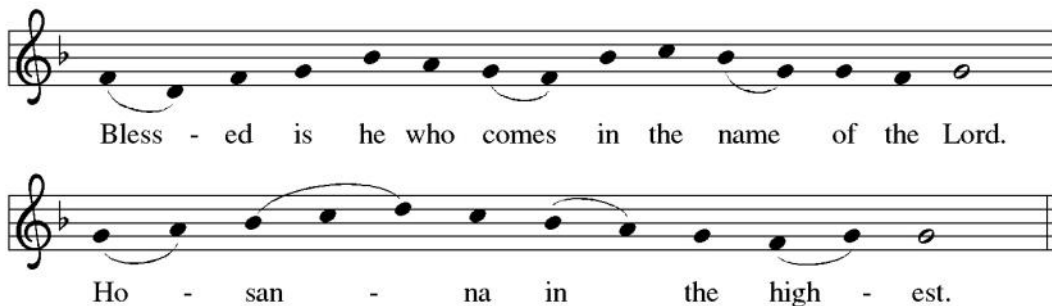


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Continued on next page...



THANKSGIVING

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,
that all those who believe in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you
for the salvation you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts, that we may receive our Lord with a living
faith as he comes to us in his holy supper.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

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.

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 honor and glory
is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. Amen**

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

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.**

FRACTION RITE *A brief silence is kept*

AGNUS DEI *Sung by all.*

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. A - men.

Sit The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Holy Communion at St. Paul's Church is "open" to all believers who trust that the Risen Christ is present for his people in the Holy Eucharist.

Procedure for receiving Communion:

1. Come to communion using the center aisle.
2. Communion glasses are placed on credence tables at the front pews (left and right side).
3. Take a communion glass from the tray of glasses.
4. Take your place along the chancel step. The ministers will bring the bread and wine to you.
5. Extend your hands to receive the communion host.
6. Consume the communion host.
7. Hold the communion glass with both hands at chest height so that the communion assistant can easily pour the wine into the glass.
8. Consume the wine before you leave the chancel edge.
9. Place the used cup in an empty tray located on a credence table at the side aisle.
10. Return to your pew using the side aisle.

COMMUNION HYMN

In the Bleak Midwinter (ELW 294)



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;

Continued on next page...

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.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray. Almighty God, in the Eucharist you cleanse us from our sins and prepare us for the coming of your Son. Make us ready always to welcome Him into our hearts as we receive you Holy Sacrament; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

Almighty God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

HYMN *It Came upon the Midnight Clear (ELW 282) next page*

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

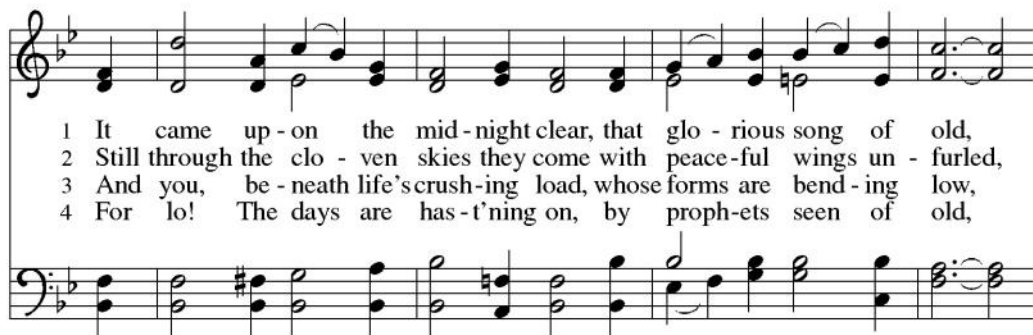
POSTLUDE

God Rest You Merry

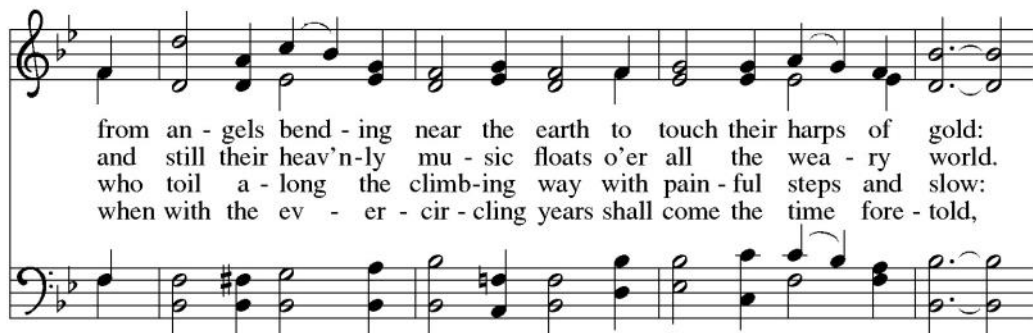
Wilbur Held

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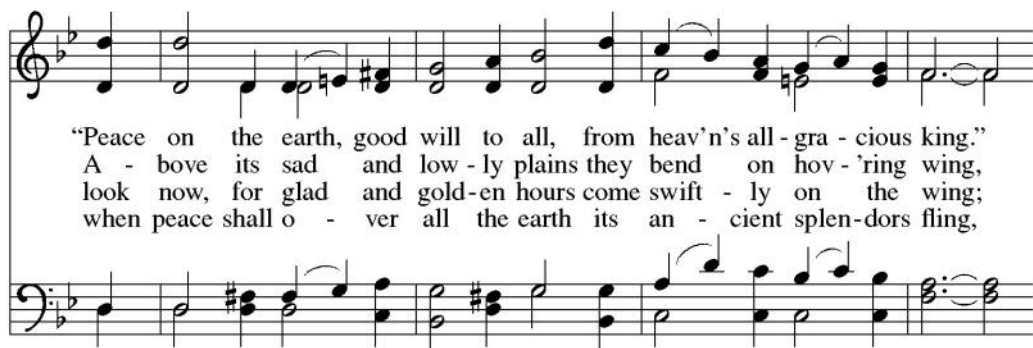
It Came upon the Midnight Clear



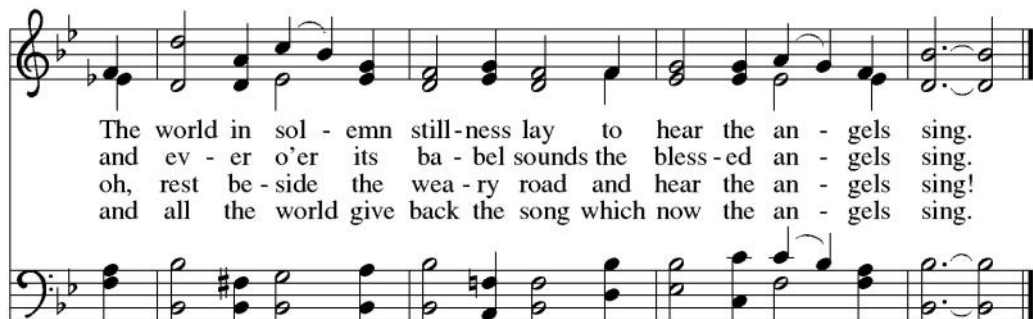
1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king."
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

This Week at St. Paul's

Sunday, December 24 Advent 4

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist

Sunday, December 24 Christmas Eve

4:00 PM Christmas Eve Service,
Children's Choir

7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service
Handbell Choir & Chancel Choir

Monday, December 25 Christmas Day

10:30 AM Christmas Day Service

Tuesday, December 26—Office Closed

9:30 AM Food Pantry—Closed

6:00 PM NO CREATE

Wednesday, December 27—Office Closed

10:30 AM No Bible Study

Sunday, December 31—Combined Liturgy

9:15 AM Holy Eucharist—Live Stream

6:30 PM AA meeting Community Rm

2024 Flower Chart— The 2024 flower chart is posted on the Springettsbury vestibule bulletin board. The cost of the flowers is **\$35 per vase**. You are welcome to sign up to provide one or both vases. After you have signed up, simply make a check payable to St. Paul's Lutheran Church and mark it altar flowers. The flowers may be taken home with you at the conclusion of the last liturgy or you may have them given to someone who is sick, shut it, or hospitalized. If you wish, you can contact the office to reserve a date, and to provide us with all of the correct information for inclusion in the Sunday bulletin.



St Paul's is collecting clothing for Union Lutheran Church's Clothing Ministry. Union collects 'gently used' clothing (and shoes) for its clothing closet and offers it **free of charge** to needy families in the York City community. A bin has been placed in the Good Shepherd room to collect any clothing you would like to donate. These donations will surely be a blessing to our neighbors. Union's volunteers are very appreciative of our cooperation and our help.



*The altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God
in memory of William H. Kain, great-grandfather; William H. Kain,
father; and William H. Kain III, brother by Carol Woodbury*

Serving the Lord with Gladness

DATE	TIME	Assisting Minister	Crucifer	Lector	Communion Assistants	Greeters	Ushers	Altar Set-up & Clean-up
12/24	9:15 AM	George Fitch	Kirsten Barnes	Ann Ulrich		Cindy & Kem Vaught	Sammy Barnes	Kathleen Lempke, Pat Scarborough

Christmas Worship Schedule

Please note the alternate service times throughout the Christmas Season

Sunday December 24, Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:15 AM

The Holy Eucharist

O, Come, O Come Emmanuel

Sunday December 24, Christmas Eve - The Nativity of Our Lord

4:00 PM

The Holy Eucharist

Joy to the World

The Ringing in of Christmas

Organ, Children's Choir, Cello, Violin, Flute

Lighting of Hand Candles

7:00 PM

The Holy Eucharist

Once in Royal David's City

Handbells, Organ, Chancel Choir, Piano Duet, Violin, Flute

Lighting of Hand Candles

Monday December 25, Christmas Day

10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Organ, Dulcimer, Trio

Sunday December 31, The First Sunday after Christmas

9:15 AM

The Holy Eucharist

In His Temple Now Behold Him

Sunday January 7, The Baptism of Our Lord

8:00 & 10:30 AM

The Holy Eucharist

With Thanksgiving for Holy Baptism

INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION

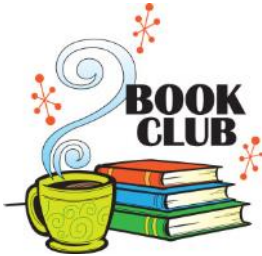


You may get information regarding closures at our website www.stpaulsyork.org or on our Facebook page St. Paul's Lutheran Church York PA on Springettsbury & George.



Reminder for End-of-Year Check Donations / U.S. tax deadline:

Check envelopes must be postmarked by USPS on or before December 31, 2023 to be eligible for a U.S. 2023 tax deduction. The date on the check does not designate the year of giving.



St. Paul's Book Club: Join us at Panera Bread on South Queen Street 4:00-5:00 PM as we discuss....

December 14 True to Form by Elizabeth Berg

The Fourth Sunday of Advent B, 2023

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

We have arrived at the season of gift giving. Leading up to this time people ask what you want, what you need, what you would like to have. They are all fine questions. Sometimes I think that the questions are asked as a way to permit the one asking to be free from any hard work or deep thought. Or there arises a situation when someone thinks they know exactly what you need. And they gift you with something that you did not; want; desire; or necessarily need.

It was that way the year that I received the deluxe drip 12 cup automatic coffee maker with built in grinder, clock and timer for automatic morning brew. It was a massive kitchen appliance. It took up loads of counter space. I did not ask for, did not need, did not even want it, didn't honestly have room for it, and was then perplexed about what to do with my simple French press. Furthermore why would I need to make 12 cups of coffee at one time? Oh, those were the days before marriage, I was a single man!

It became an odd sort of dance, when the giver of the coffee maker would come to visit, I would pull it out of storage, clean it off, remove the items I used every day from the counter and replaced them with the deluxe drip 12 cup automatic coffee maker with built in grinder, clock and timer for automatic morning brew. The guest always thought it was a great addition to my kitchen, hospitality and culinary finesse. I found it to be an unnatural addition to the way that I had lived life, my morning ritual, and the simplicity of hot water poured over fresh coffee. When the giver of the gift changed geographic locations and moved to the adjacent town and could pop in unannounced for coffee or a chat anytime, the French press was moved to the bottom cabinet along with all of the frequently used items making room for the deluxe drip 12 cup automatic coffee maker.

God had been tenting with his people for generations. They were together and in many ways were inseparable. Those were the days of the Ark of the Covenant; portable, simple, nimble, mobile. I think about those days in the life of God's people as being like the days with my French Press! The Lord had promised David that he would make him a great house, permit peace, and thus provide rest. Things were good. Then there comes a turning point. Someone decides on how to make the future better. And this works out ok if there isn't any relationship. But if you are living in a relationship, it is at least polite to inquire regarding the other ones thoughts, perspectives, ideas, or insights.

Nathan comes on the scene in this seventh chapter of Second Samuel. David decides that because he is living in a residence made of cedar, that the Lord God should live in a house of cedar too. It is the I have a deluxe drip 12 cup automatic coffee maker and you should have one too syndrome. David decides to build a Temple. This will pro-

vide God with a permanent dwelling place. Never before had anyone in David's long genealogical line thought to contain God in such a way as a temple, a building of cedar and stone, in a fixed location. It was a massive shift in the way that God's people had lived life, their regular rituals, and the simplicity that life with the Ark provided. God of course argues that a permanent residence is unacceptable because it violates God's freedom. A permanent residence will hamper God's coming and going. The succeeding chapters of Second Samuel are all rather tumultuous. Little did anyone know that the house and kingdom and throne that were established forever, they could not be contained in a fixed location.

God's coming and going isn't hampered, nor is God's desire to make a way forward and open a way for people, all people. Centuries after David and the first go at Temple construction, the gospel writer Luke tells the story of how God is not held captive in a Temple. "*In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David.*" Joseph was of that very house, a house, that centuries before, had been promised peace and thus rest, a kingdom and a throne that would last forever making a way forward for God's people. And Joseph's betrothed, Mary, receives the word of the Lord.

At least one outrageous aspect of this visit is how God's Word travels and makes its way precisely where God wants for it to go. The Word to Mary will soon be followed by the Word made Flesh, and the Word for shepherds, and the Word for Magi, and the Word for fishermen, and on this very morning, the Word for you.

We have arrived at the season of gift giving. God knows that we don't really know what we want, or what we need, or even what we would like to have. So God doesn't ask us, rather God simply acts. The hard work and deep thought belong to God; sending Gabriel to Mary, taking on human flesh in Jesus, suffering, dying and rising saving people from sin even when we haven't a clue that we need saving, rescuing, liberating, releasing, freeing. This gift is one that we may not recognize or even perceive that we need. It must have been something like that for Mary when the surprising visit from the angel announced good news, that she had found favor with God. In Christ Jesus you are favored by the Lord Most High.

In a season of gift giving, the Word of favor from God is superior to those wrapped up in paper, ribbon, and bows. God is with you. Amen.

FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Now when [David] the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the 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.” ³Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you.”

⁴But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I 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. ⁷Wherever 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?” ⁸Now 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; ⁹and 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. ¹⁰And 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, ¹¹from 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. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Luke 1:46b-55

or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

SECOND READING: Romans 16:25-27

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 ²⁶but 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—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

GOSPEL: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He 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. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The 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. ³⁶And 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. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸Then 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.

Next Sunday's Readings: Isaiah 61:10—62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40.

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