

December 31, 2017

No matter who you are,
No matter where you are
On life's journey,
You are welcome here.

Please silence cell phones.

Bibles for use during worship are available at each entrance to the Sanctuary.

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"The Christian rule for action is simple: Venture to act in accordance with the truth and at that same moment through this action you will collide with the enviroing world."-Soren Kierkegaard

PRELUDE

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her
Scott Banjavcic, organ

Johann Pachelbel

WELCOME

Matt Fitzgerald

*WELCOMING EACH OTHER

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: This is the day the Lord has made.

All: We will rejoice and be glad in it!

One: This is the *year* the Lord has made.

All: And we are glad that it is ending.

One: Oh God, your compassions never fail!

All: They are new every morning.

One: Great is your faithfulness God.

All: Be with us in the New Year!

**Please stand if you are able*

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now give heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before him bow, asleep within the manger now.
Christ is born today, Christ is born today.

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now you know of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
God has opened heaven's door, and you are blessed forever more.
Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;
Now you need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In Christ's birth, God gives us new names.
You are now a sibling of Christ.
Sister, brother.

You are now a child of God.
Son, daughter.
I am now Christ's own sibling.
I am now God's own child.

We shall no longer be called
Wounded, Outcast, Lonely or Afraid.
We shall no longer be called
Wealthy, Successful, Graduate or Winner.

We are God's own children.
O Lord, forgive us when we live otherwise.
Amen.

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

RESPONSE

In the Bleak Midwinter

Black Hymnal No. 128, vs. 1 & 2

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

THE BIBLICAL WORD FOR THIS DAY

Kevin O'Brien

Luke 2:21-35

On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived. When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel." The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said

to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

***A STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**We believe in God who has created and is creating,
who has come to us in Jesus Christ to reconcile and make us new,
who works in us and others by the Holy Spirit.
We trust God. God calls us to be the Church,
to celebrate God’s presence,
to love and serve others,
to care for creation,
to seek justice and to resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope.
In life and death, in life beyond death, God is with us.
We are not alone. Thanks be to God!**

***RESPONSE** *In the Bleak Midwinter* Black Hymnal No. 128, vs. 3 & 4

Enough for Him, whom cherubim worship night and day,
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air,
But only His mother in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

SERMON “How to Make 2018 the Best Year of Your Life”

***HYMN** *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* Black Hymnal No. 127, vs. 1 & 2

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as men of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah t'was foretold it, the Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright she bore to men a Savior
When half-spent was the night.

OFFERTORY

What Songs Were Sung
Todd Coe, tenor

arr. John Jacob Niles

We cannot tell, we do not know
What stars shone down so long ago,
When Mary birthed her own sweet son
And peace and love became as one.
The son of God, as scripture said,
Was Virgin born in a tiny shed,
Where simple shepherds stood hard by,
While heavenly sound filled up the sky.

Now let us stand, uncovered all,
Before his crèche in lowly stall,
Where Kings and Angels dignify
God's gift, his Son, in humility.

We do not know, we cannot tell,
What songs were sung, what starlight fell,
Or why the holy mystery stands
For so many years in so many lands.

We cannot tell, we do not know...

*FESTIVAL DOXOLOGY

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia, Alleluia! Amen!

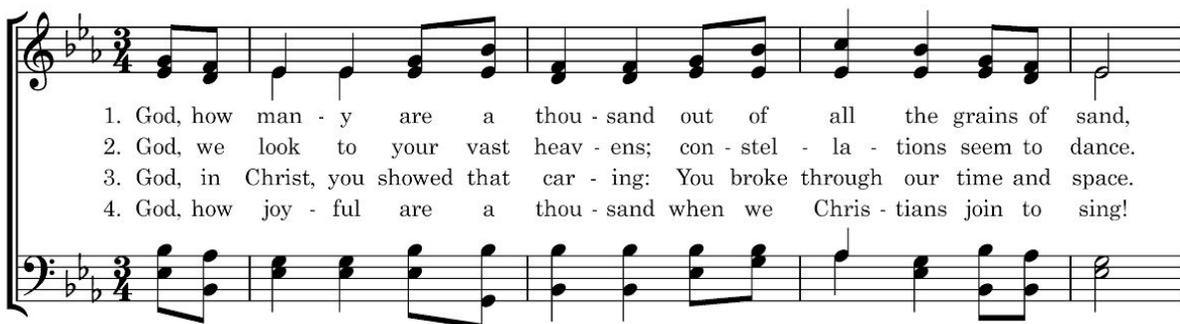
PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

THE LORD'S PRAYER

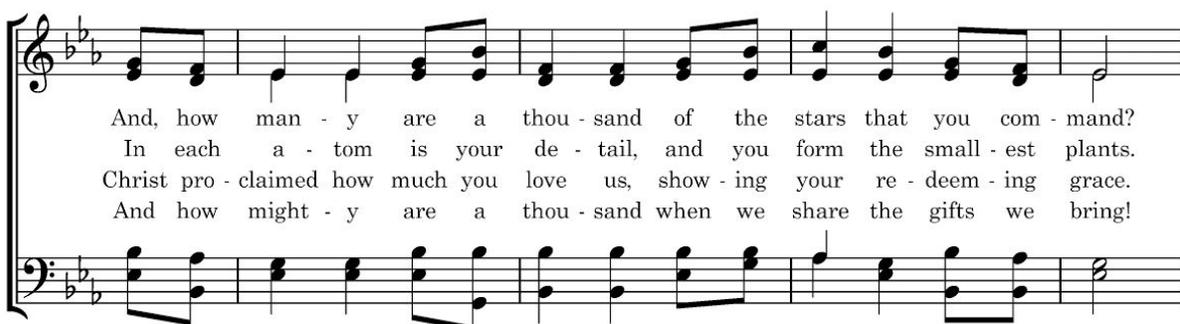
**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

*HYMN

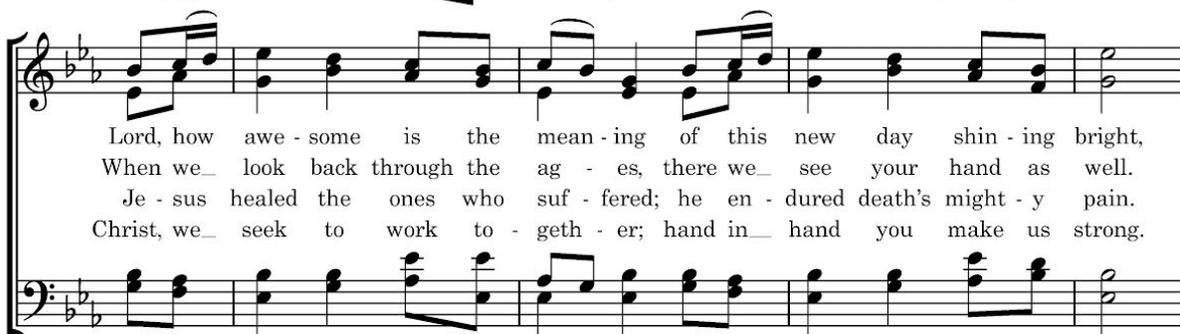
God, How Many Are a Thousand



1. God, how man - y are a thou - sand out of all the grains of sand,
2. God, we look to your vast heav - ens; con - stel - la - tions seem to dance.
3. God, in Christ, you showed that car - ing: You broke through our time and space.
4. God, how joy - ful are a thou - sand when we Chris - tians join to sing!



And, how man - y are a thou - sand of the stars that you com - mand?
In each a - tom is your de - tail, and you form the small - est plants.
Christ pro - claimed how much you love us, show - ing your re - deem - ing grace.
And how might - y are a thou - sand when we share the gifts we bring!



Lord, how awe - some is the mean - ing of this new day shin - ing bright,
When we look back through the ag - es, there we see your hand as well.
Je - sus healed the ones who suf - fered; he en - dured death's might - y pain.
Christ, we seek to work to - geth - er; hand in hand you make us strong.



For we know a thou - sand years are as a mo - ment in your sight.
Thank you, God, for lov - ing, car - ing for this world in which we dwell.
In your time, you raised our Sav - ior; with him, life be - gins a - gain.
Spir - it, help us in this new time: Give us joy in work and song.

The Journey of the Magi

A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:
The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.

Then at dawn we came down to a temperature valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins,
But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.

All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth of Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter and agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death. -TS Eliot

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS:

Head Usher: Brian Hafner

Ushers: Fred Pearson, Bruce Voice, Lauren Vega, Layne Lebahn

Head Greeter: Greg Mooney

Special Accommodations: Dodd Brown

BORN THIS WEEK IN DECEMBER

Donations to the Birthday Fund support A Just Harvest

We celebrate and give thanks for your life at St. Pauls. A perfect way to celebrate.

Dec. 31 Claire Nitzsche, Gemma Kate Womack, Jessica Parman, Justin Hartanov
Jan. 1 Addison Kohler, Jean Newcomer, Nathan Chamberlain
Jan. 3 Aaron Lawson, Theresa Busker
Jan. 5 Christine Frisch
Jan. 6 Elizabeth Harper

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE- Work to prepare building A2 for water service will begin on Tuesday, 1/9/18 and continue through Wednesday, 1/17/18. One lane traffic will be maintained at all times. Construction area will be barricaded off during work hours from 9 a.m-4 p.m. There will be no parking signs set up from Kemper Avenue to Lincoln Avenue on both sides of street during our construction.

SPONSOR VIOLENCE PREVENTION - Does your employer make grants to charitable organizations doing good work in Chicago? We are looking for sponsors for our January 14 Polar Peace March that supports the violence prevention initiatives of UCAN. For more information contact Jan Bail janbail@me.com or Pastor Jeff Carlson jcarlson@spucc.org .

“GIVE ODDLY” TO ST. PAULS IN 2018: St. Pauls’ 2018 Giving Campaign kicked off on October 29 and invites all who take part in the impactful worship and ministries at St. Pauls Church to “Give Oddly” to support St. Pauls’ 175th Anniversary year. Please consider adding an odd amount such as 7% to your typical “even” giving level in 2018 to help St. Pauls carry out our “wondrously odd” kind of Christianity for another 175 years and move toward a balanced annual operating budget. Every gift of treasure, talent, and time is counted, so help us achieve 100% congregational participation! Fill out and turn in a giving card from the pew rack, or go to SPUCC.org and click on “GIVE” at the top of the homepage. Thank you for your generous support of St. Pauls!

BIBLE STORY THEATRE NEEDS YOU! Whatever your gifts and skills, there is a role for you in the creative process of developing a production for BST 2018. Come join this year's exploration of the Bible with our St. Pauls children and young people as we work together to bring the scripture from the page to the stage. Get out your scissors or paint brush, your tap shoes or your hammer. Brush off your old thespian talents, search your sheet music, and put on your play clothes! Script Development and Design Teams begin work right after Christmas. BST Workshops with the Church School are January 14, 21, and 28. BST Sunday is February 4. Contact Sharon Phillips TODAY and let her know how you'd like to participate. Email: sphillips.7340@gmail.com. Mobile: 773-547-1943.

SUNDAYS 9-9:45 a.m. - THE WORD OF THE DAY - God is still speaking, and the primary way God speaks to us is through scripture. In this adult faith formation class, we take a dive into the Bible passages that our pastors will preach on, because reflecting on scripture with a group enriches our worship and understanding. No Bible experience necessary. Your questions are welcome. Childcare is provided in the Nursery. Meets in the Parlor. **Does not meet on December 31st.**

JANUARY 7 - PARENTS OF LITTLE ONES - 3 p.m. We will be making the CEP dinner for people in need in the St. Pauls kitchen. Let Corie know if you can come or bring food. Children can help prepare food but we will also have childcare provided. Contact corie.gallemore@gmail.com.

JANUARY 8 - CHRISTIANITY 101- 8:00 p.m. Parlor. Join Pastor Matt and fellow young adults for a lively discussion of the real-life questions we face in our daily lives. There is no need to prepare in advance. Please contact Hannah Basil at youngadults@spucc.org with questions and to RSVP. Note the time change.

JANUARY 14, 2018 POLAR PEACE MARCH TO BENEFIT UCAN. Join us as we honor the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at our 1.5 mile walk to benefit UCAN and its violence prevention initiative in Chicago. This family friendly event will start with a program in the Sanctuary at 4 p.m. and conclude with a cup of soup in the Gym. Invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers and family to be a part of your team. Register online at www.polarpeacemarch.org. YOU CAN be part of the solution to a more peaceful Chicago.

JANUARY 26 - YOUNG ADULTS GAME NIGHT - 7:00 p.m. Banjavcic's Home. Join the Young Adults Group for the fifth Winter Game Night! Bring your favorite game, a beverage to share, and \$10 to chip in for pizza. We will gather at Scott and Shannon's home and spend the evening enjoying games, laughter, and the company of friends. Wine Night will move to March and please RSVP to the Punchbowl invitation.

OPPORTUNITIES

ALTAR FLOWER SIGN UP - The 2018 signup is now available! If you would like to purchase flowers for the altar please go to our link at <http://tinyurl.com/h55pl82> and sign up. If you have any questions, please contact the church office.

AMAZON SMILE - Use <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/36-2179808> if you would like to support St. Pauls when buying Amazon products. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price from eligible purchases to St. Pauls.

BIBLE STUDY - Meets one Saturday a month. This in-depth study explores a book of the Bible from start to finish, looking at its original context as well as its meaning for us as Christians today. No December study. Next Study: January 27th Contact: Pastor Jeff jcarlson@spucc.org.

COLLEEN HENRY WRITING CENTER- We can always use a few new tutors at the writing center to help students learn to write clearly and convincingly. This program at Lincoln Park High School was initiated by St. Pauls and developed in connection with the English and Social Studies Departments. Tutors volunteer once a week, Monday through Thursday. Training and mentoring are available. For more information, or to volunteer, contact Nancy Brandt - nhbrandt@sbcglobal.net.

CONNECTORS reach out providing networking and support for members and friends of St. Pauls Membership is open to all who have the time and the inclination to help. Contact Marcia Volk - marcia@volkonline.com

CONSIDER THE LILIES - Deliver our Sunday Altar Flowers to members and friends who need to know St. Pauls is thinking of them. If you would like to be part of this initiative, please contact Maureen Grunst at mvgrunst@aol.com. Join us!

FAITH IN ACTION/FAITH AND PUBLIC ISSUES - Whether you're interested in supporting women or GLBTQ persons or immigrants and refugees, or interested in planning programs on critical issues, you can find St. Pauls people involved and join them now. Contact Toby Rogers at toby@rogers-home.com for more information.

FEED THE HUNGRY - Each week St. Pauls welcomes homeless and hungry people to Sunday dinner. To volunteer to prepare and serve dinner to guests of the Lincoln Park Community Shelter, contact Brent Carstensen at bcarstensen@ameritech.net.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT - Visit our Food for Thought blog <http://www.spucc.org/blogs/food-for-thought>.

GET YOUR NEW NAME TAG! - Email Virgie at vberry@spucc.org

LINCOLN PARK COMMUNITY SHELTER NEEDS OVERNIGHT VOLUNTEERS
- To sign up: volunteer@lpcsonline.org 773-549-6111.

LITTLE LIGHTS is a St. Pauls preschool program with classes for 2 and 3-year-olds in our church nursery with options for two or three mornings per week. Our standard application deadline has passed. However, we are still working with applicants on a rolling basis. If you are interested, email Virgie Berry- vberry@spucc.org.

NEW OR EXPECTING PARENTS - If you have a new baby or are expecting a baby, please let Corie know so that we can find ways to support you (meals, prayer, etc.) and so that we can inform you of opportunities in our Parents of Little Ones (POLO) group. Also let us her know if you have small children and are new to the church. corie.gallemore@gmail.com

SARAH'S SISTERS gather every Wednesday morning to make 40 bag lunches to be distributed to homeless people. Come to the church kitchen at 9:30 a.m.

STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. PAULS - If you're in need of support through a tough time and would like to be matched with someone who would support you with companionship and prayer, or you're feeling called to offer support, speak to Pastor Jeff Carlson jcarlson@spucc.org , Marti Pechnyo mpechnyo@gmail.com , or Diana Laskaris dianaminlead@gmail.com .

SAINT PAULS BASKETBALL WEDNESDAYS - 7 p.m. Our weekly pickup game is co-ed. Ages range from young and fast to old and not as fast. Skill levels range from enthusiastic to "I think he played in college, you guard him." All are welcome! Contact pastormatt@spucc.org

ST. PAULS PLAY GROUP for children from birth to 3 years old in the church Nursery. Drop in anytime from 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Wednesdays. Corie Gallemore at corie.gallemore@gmail.com

ST. PAULS SOCIAL - Get better acquainted with other adults at St. Pauls. If interested in hosting please contact Jen Luerksen, jenluerksen@yahoo.com and stay tuned for future events.

UCC DAILY DEVOTIONAL - To register: http://www.ucc.org/daily_devotional

WANT MORE VARIETY AT COFFEE HOUR? - Sign up to bring it at <http://bit.ly/1RtSUuh>

YOUNG ADULTS - A group for fun and fellowship for folks in their twenties and thirties. All are welcome! Volunteers needed! Any ideas for future events? Email youngadults@spucc.org .

YOUTH GROUP for kids in 3rd-8th grade will meet each Tuesday from 4-6 p.m. with pizza dinner, fun and Christian fellowship. Meet in the gym. Resumes in September, most Tuesdays, grades 3-8 from 4-6 p.m. Contact sgarcia@spucc.org

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please send any announcements you would like in the following week's Friday email to announcements@spucc.org no later than 10 a.m. on Tuesday. Please limit announcements to 70 words. Thank you.

SAINT PAULS PRAYS

- For Stacie B., sister of Mark P., for strength as she deals with her diagnosis of an incurable autoimmune disorder.
- Larry Simpson, with the death of his spouse, Ed Zasadil.
- For Aylmer Gifford's close friend, Mario Dominis, who is facing difficult health challenges.
- For Robin Scott's friend, Michelle, for her physical health and mental well-being.
- Al Cerkan and family, at the loss of his sister-in-law, Maureen.
- For Bruce and Betty who need prayers for their uncle Victor in the hospital.
- For Rod Robert, brother of Susanne Baker, and brother-in-law of David Baker, as he recovers from difficult health challenges.
- Jan Bail's friend, Genel Daley, starting a second round of chemotherapy.
- Dale Martin and his family.
- For young people who struggle to do the right thing but are surrounded by those who seem to benefit from wrongdoing.
- Bobbi Gannello, diagnosed with lymphoma.
- Amy Newman's sister Linda, being treated for cancer.
- Sandra Benedict, recovering from surgery.
- Carole Knuti undergoing treatment for cancer.
- Carole Crowley recovering from a stroke.
- All those struggling to conceive.
- Sylvia Pine's grandfather, Terry Barton, recovering from strokes.
- Candi Huber's niece, Kathryn, continuing treatments for cancer.
- Michelle's friends Michael, Chris and Jerry, all sick with chronic illnesses.
- Lorri Gunn Wirsum, for her husband, Karl Wirsum, and her brother, Jim, who is recovering from transplant surgery.
- Mary Train and her nephew Carl and family.
- Jonah, Sean, and Kevin and all homeless individuals with mental illness living in this city.
- For those struggling with mental health issues.
- For all those touched by violence in Chicago.
- Steve Warsh, undergoing chemotherapy.
- Tom Palkon being treated for cancer.
- Pat Kirby, recovering from heart attack and complications.
- Those killed and injured in terrorist attacks around the world and all Refugees.

NEARLY 1 IN 5 ADULTS STRUGGLE WITH A MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE. Contact one of the pastors today for information about mental health care advocacy and resources that can help you and your loved ones. Contact information for the pastors is at the back of this Bulletin.

ABOUT ST. PAULS
Making a joyful sound in the city

Saint Pauls UCC has a vibrant history in the city of Chicago. Founded in 1843, we are one of the city's oldest churches. In 1989 we became one of America's first congregations to declare ourselves "Open to and Affirming of" LGBT women and men.

From founding Chicago's largest provider of social services to at-risk children to starting a home for the elderly, from housing protestors at the 1968 Democratic Convention to hosting Lincoln Park's first MLK day march against violence on Chicago's streets we are proud to make a joyful sound in the city.

Most importantly, over the past 174 years we are glad to have introduced thousands of children and adults to the amazing, inclusive, life changing, uplifting love of God. We do so in worship that is traditional, but far from conventional.

St. Pauls United Church of Christ
2335 North Orchard Street Chicago, Illinois 60614
(773) 348-3829 FAX (773) 348-3858
www.spucc.org

Matt Fitzgerald, *Senior Pastor*, mfitzgerald@spucc.org

Jeff Carlson, *Associate Pastor*, jcarlson@spucc.org

Sarah Garcia, *Associate Pastor for Children and Youth*, sgarcia@spucc.org

Karen E. Johnson, *President of the Congregation*, kejplano@aol.com

Tom Henry, *Pastor Emeritus*, emeritushenry@gmail.com

Kurt R. Hansen, *Music Director*, kurtsingsbach@gmail.com

Kevin Dzierzawski, *Organist*, kdzierza@att.net

Brendan Henry, *Pianist*, brendanpherry@hotmail.com

Nancy Voigts, *Children's Choir Director*, nvoigtsgod@att.net

Kecia Waldschmidt, *Youth Choir Director*, keciagerman@hotmail.com

Kristopher Hansen, *Joyful Sounds Choir Co- Director*, TheBeatB0xer1995@gmail.com

Mark Mosley, *Intergenerational Orchestra Director*, mwmosley@gmail.com

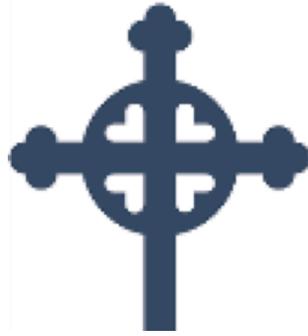
Tom Vaitsas, *Pianist*, tomvaitsas@gmail.com

Kevin O'Brien, *Lay Liturgical Administrator*, kob48@att.net

Free Parking is available on Sundays from 9am-1pm at Children's Memorial Hospital
2300 Block of North Lincoln Ave. – Vouchers Not Needed

NOTES

NOTES



WELCOME TO SAINT PAULS UCC!

Welcome to those whose hearts are on fire with faith,
and to those who bring their doubt inside our doors.

Welcome to our first time guests and
our longtime members.

Welcome to single people, tiny children,
grandparents and families of all
configurations.

Welcome to those who rejoice and to those who
grieve.

Welcome to each and to everyone.
We are an Open and Affirming church.
We welcome all.

We are blessed by your presence and
we are glad you are here.