

Second Sunday of Advent
Communion, Commitment and
New Member Sunday
December 10, 2023

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.
Assisted listening devices and Bluetooth hearing aid guides are in the Narthex.
The Nursery and Toddler Room are open for children ages 0-5, from 10 to 11 a.m.*

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THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

In Advent, we read the prophecies of Isaiah and learn of God's call to Mary and Joseph to be Jesus' parents. But as Protestants, we believe that God calls each and every one of us to serve the Lord! God has a special role for you this Advent season, so take time to pray to God and seek other's wisdom to discern how God is calling you to make a difference in this Advent season.

PRELUDE

Rejoice!
St. Arbucks Quartet

Richard Smallwood

INTROIT

Of the Father's Love Begotten
Chancel Choir

Plainchant

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE - The Candle of Love

Andrea and Ron Koepke

WELCOME

Liz Nickerson

* WELCOMING EACH OTHER

* CALL TO WORSHIP

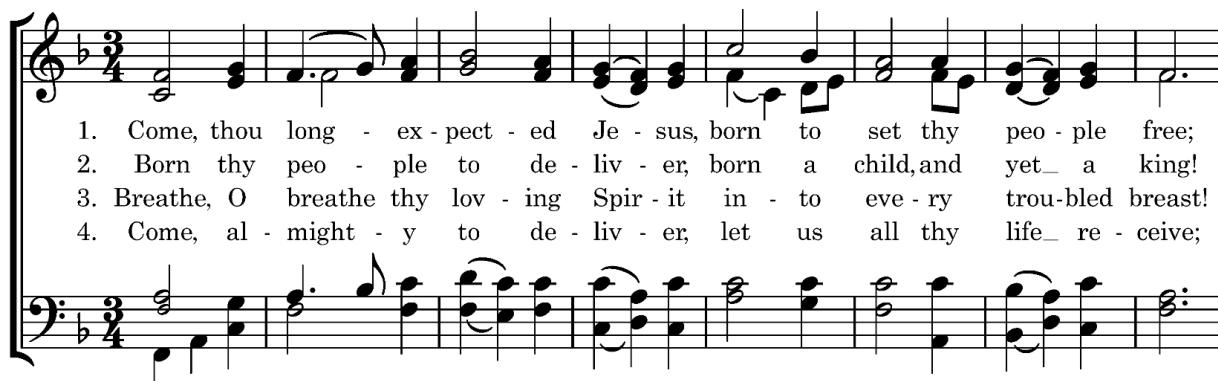
One: The season of Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of Christ, and
listen for God's call to each one of us!

All: O come Emmanuel!

* *Please stand if you are able to do so.*

* HYMN


Come Thou Long Expected Jesus



1. Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
 2. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king!
 3. Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to eve - ry trou - bled breast!
 4. Come, al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all thy life re - ceive;



From our fears and sins re - lease us; Let us find our rest in thee.
 Born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
 Let us all in thee in - her - it; let us find thy prom - ised rest.
 Sud - den - ly re - turn and nev - er, nev - er - more thy tem - ples leave.



Is - rael's strength and con - sol - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
 By thy own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;
 Take a - way our love of sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be;
 Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing, serve thee as thy hosts a - bove,



Dear de - sire of ev - ry na - tion, joy of ev - ry long - ing heart.
 By thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glor - ious throne.
 End of faith, as its be - gin - ing, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 Pray and praise thee with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy pre - cious love.

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus, forgive us for putting ourselves first and failing to feed others with our words and actions. Help us to draw near to you and remake us in your image to nourish and strengthen each other. Help us to answer your call to help those in need. In silence hear now our personal confessions...

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

WORDS OF INSTITUTION & PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

SERVING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

Please come forward for communion.

Take the bread and eat it. Then take the cup and drink.

Deposit the cups in the baskets on the way back to your seat.

The outer ring of cups contains grape juice. The inner rings contain wine.

A gluten-free bread option is wrapped and available on a separate tray.

Return to your seat by the side aisles.

All are welcome to take part in communion.

COMMUNION MUSIC

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

St. Arbucks Quartet

* PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Jesus, thank you for giving your very self for the sins of the world. We can never repay you, but we can follow you. Help us to hear your call and find our role in this community feeding and nourishing others in our thoughts, in our words, and in our deeds. Amen.

*Sunday School students are invited to go to their classrooms.
If you would like to accompany your child(ren),
you are welcome to drop them off and return to worship.*

*HYMN

Come My Way

v.1



1. Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life: such a way as gives us
2. Come, my Light, my Feast, my Strength: such a light as shows a
3. Come, my Joy, my Love, my Heart: such a joy as none can



breath; Such a truth as ends all strife;
feast; Such a feast as mends in length;
move; Such a love as none can part;



such a life as con - - - - quers death.
such a strength as makes _____ a guest.
such a heart as joys _____ in love.

SCRIPTURE

Louise Gram

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. For I the Lord love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.

HYMN

Come My Way

v. 3

See previous hymn

SERMON

“What’s Your Calling?”

Liz Nickerson

* HYMN

Here I Am, Lord

1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo-ple's pain.

All who dwell in deep - est sin my hand will save.
I have wept for love of them, they turn a - way.

I who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
I will break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?_____
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?_____

Refrain
Here I am, Lord.____ Is it I, Lord?____ I have heard you

call - ing in the night.____ I will go, Lord,____ if you lead me._

____ I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

GIVING MOMENT

Ben Emmrich

OFFERTORY

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come
Chancel Choir

Paul Manz

Peace be to you and grace from Him, who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed His blood that we might saved be.
Sing holy to our Lord, The Lord, Almighty God,
Who was and is to come; Sing holy, holy, Lord!

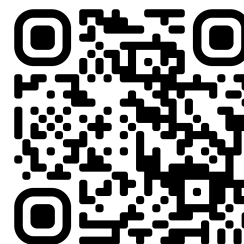
Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below, for Christ is coming soon!
Even so, Lord Jesus, quickly come, And night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, For Christ will be their All!
from Revelation 22

You can give to St. Pauls electronically:

Scan this code with your cell phone camera,

Church Center at spucc.churchcenter.com/giving,

PayPal at spucc.org/paypal, or Zelle to giving@spucc.org.



* FESTIVAL DOXOLOGY

Musical notation for the Festival Doxology, featuring four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise God all crea-tures here be - low;

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host:

Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Ho - ly Ghost; Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! A - men.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

A Dialogue on Our Statement of Faith

Pastor Liz: Let us affirm together our faith as we receive these new members into our church.

Congregation: We believe in God who has created and is creating.

President: God has come to us in Jesus Christ to reconcile and make us new. God works in us and others by the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: We trust God. God calls us to be the church.

Pastor Jeff: Will you promise to support this congregation with your time, talent and resources, participating regularly in the worship of Saint Pauls United Church of Christ and contributing to our life and ministry in the city?

New Members: We do promise. With you, we will celebrate God's presence, love and serve others, care for creation, seek justice and resist evil.

Pastor Liz: With your love, God will love. With your hands, God will touch the city. With your lives, God will bring justice and compassion to the world.

Congregation: We promise you our love, support and care.

All: Together we will 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!

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH


Jeff Carlson

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

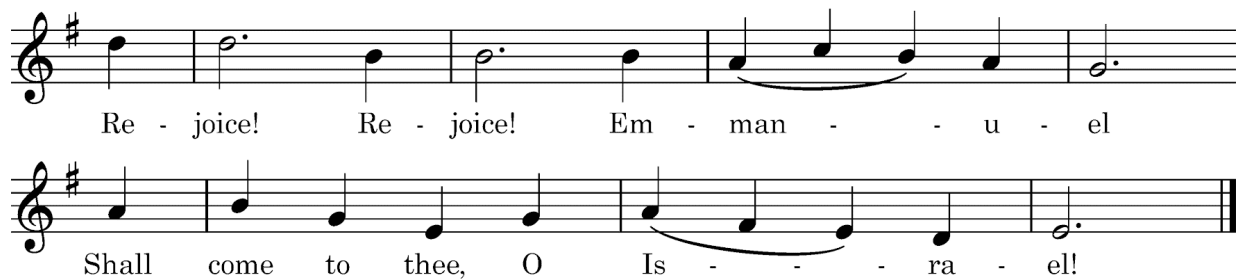
It Came Upon a Midnight Clear



1. It came up - on a mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
2. And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
who toil a - long the climb - ing way, with pain - ful steps and slow,
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, great news of joy we bring."
Look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
O rest be - side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing!

* BENEDICTION

* BENEDICTION RESPONSE



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el
Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

POSTLUDE

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Johann Pachelbel

If you would like someone to pray with you today, Stephen Ministers are present after the postlude at the right front of the Sanctuary.

Following Worship, all are invited for coffee and snacks and to shop our Advent Market in the gym, on the lower level.

ADVENT WREATH - Each week during Advent we light another candle in our Advent wreath to anticipate the coming of Christ, the light of the world. These candles symbolize the gifts of hope, love, joy and peace that Christ's coming brings. Today, we light the candle of Love.

PEACE CANDLE - We have added a peace candle to the Chancel. Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God. Please pray for peace daily for all the current wars raging in the world and in our hearts.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!



Thank you for welcoming us into your community, we are thrilled to be here. Our names are **Kevin and Elizabeth Clarke**. We have five wonderful children who live with us in Lakeview. Their names are Jack (9), Grady (7), Ryan (3.5) and our twins Charlotte and Cullen (14 months). For fun, when we are free from all the sports our kids play, we love to go on family walks through new nature preserves around the city and surrounding suburbs. We have been part of the Little Lights community for many years now; both Grady and Ryan have/are attending. Through this program, we have learned about St. Pauls and knew this was the community for us.



We are **Karl and Ashleigh Darin**. Karl grew up in Charlotte, MI, and Ashleigh in Joliet, IL. We were recently married and live in Lakeview near Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center. Karl works from home as COO of a nonprofit organization focused on economic development in greater Washington, D.C. Ashleigh is currently in her last year of nursing school after switching from her previous public relations/communications career. When not working or studying, we enjoy playing with our 8-year-old Lab mix, Peanut, as well as playing golf, traveling, and spending time with friends and family in the city. We're very much looking forward to joining the St. Pauls family.



We are **Marco and Ann Ferronis**. We moved to Chicago from Basel, Switzerland. Our adult son and daughter, son-in-law and two young granddaughters live locally. Ann is retired from teaching English as a Second Language and currently helps with the grandchildren and takes courses. Her hobbies include swimming and reading. Marco works in international agriculture and is on several agricultural boards. He also helps with the grandchildren and plays the piano. Together we enjoy languages, discussing interesting topics, cooking and doing volunteer work.



My name is **Tyler Harrington-Meinders**. I am originally from Chicago, growing up in the Rogers Park area. I now live with my husband, Troy, and cat, Milo. I discovered St. Pauls through my husband on Easter Sunday. I felt welcomed and empowered within the church and took it upon myself to become a member! I love to listen to music, workout, and play sports like volleyball, soccer, and basketball (which will be exciting to play against other members in the gymnasium one day.) I am excited to strengthen my bond with God, and to meet and befriend all the followers of the congregation. My dream job is to

become a software engineer as I have been obsessed with technology since I was a kid.



My name is **Mercedes Rida**. I grew up in Milwaukee after immigrating from Colombia in 1966 with my family. After graduating with a BS in nursing, I married and lived in Philadelphia and Madison before settling in Boston for 37 years. After raising my three children and being blessed with strong communities in the city, including that of the Old South Church, I moved in May 2022 to Chicago. I'm enjoying being close to my two girls and their families, the warm-hearted Chicagoans, and the beauty and history of this city.



We are **Lisa and James Rowley**. Lisa is originally from Aurora, IL, and James from Mount Vernon, NY. We met and married here in Chicago in 1992. We spent 28 years living in West Bloomfield, MI, a Detroit suburb, raising our two boys, Alex and Matthew. James had a long career as a pulmonary and sleep physician at Wayne State University, while Lisa was an active volunteer at the boys' schools and our church. In 2022, Alex, who had cerebral palsy, passed away, prompting our decision to relocate to Chicago to be closer to Matthew. James is now working at Rush University as a sleep physician.

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

- Childcare is available for babies and toddlers up to age 5 during worship from 10 to 11 a.m. in the Nursery and Toddler Room, downstairs. Activity “busy bags” are available in the Narthex for children to use during the service.
- SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION classes are in session. Students are dismissed with their teachers during the worship service and parents pick up children after the service in their classrooms.
- High School Sunday School class meets on the first and third Sundays of the month. Fall dates are: October 1, 15; November 5, 19; December 3 and 17. High schoolers meet immediately following the service in the Youth Lounge, downstairs. Parents and teens should join the High School GroupMe for up-to-date information.

TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

Clergy: Liz Nickerson, Jeff Carlson

Music Director: Kurt R. Hansen

Organist: Kevin Dzierzawski

St. Arbucks Quartet: Brendan Henry, piano; Alex Austin, bass; Matt Plaskota, drums; Kris Hansen, trumpet & vocals

Lay Liturgical Administrator: Kevin O’Brien

Scripture Reader: Louise Gram

Communion Coordinator: Jana O’Brien

Head Usher: Beatrice Jaji

Ushers: Doug Clark, David Faulkner

Gatekeeper: Dodd Brown

Greeter: Linda Loving

Camera Operators: Jim Alrutz, Marie Ankenman, Bob Ball, Brian Hafner

Custodian: Ramiro Gonzalez

Communion bread baked by Marcia Knudson.

BORN THIS WEEK IN DECEMBER

We give thanks for your life at St. Pauls. A perfect way to celebrate is by giving one dollar for each year of your life to our Birthday Fund, which supports A Just Harvest.

Dec. 10 Chris Dierks, Ginna Gentzen

Dec. 11 Cindy Ball, Ed Hohlbein, Hugo Osorio,

Dec. 12 Jake Gentzen, John Crouch

Dec. 13 Holland Emmrich, Julia Mercer, Tom Palkon

Dec. 14 Candy Lohnes, David Baker

Dec. 16 Carrie Bruggers, Tyler Raiman

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. PAULS

- TODAY SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT, *LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF LOVE*
10 a.m. - Worship, Communion
11:30 a.m. - Advent Market, Gym
- THURS, DEC. 14 ADVENT TAIZÉ SERVICE[♦]
7 p.m. - Service of sung prayer and meditation, Sanctuary
- SAT, DEC. 16 COOKIES WITH SANTA
10 a.m. - Cookies, crafts and pictures with Santa, Gym
- SUN, DEC. 17 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, *LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF JOY*
10 a.m. - Worship, Readings & Carols with youth choirs and brass
- TUES, DEC. 19 FOOD FOR THE SOUL
12 p.m. - Bring your lunch for a time of fellowship & Christmas caroling
- THURS, DEC. 21 WINTER SOLSTICE SERVICE[♦]
7 p.m. - Service, Labyrinth walk, Gym
- SUN, DEC. 24 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, *LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE*
10 a.m. - Worship
- CHRISTMAS EVE
5 p.m. - Family Service, Sanctuary
9 p.m. - Candlelight Service, Sanctuary
Christmas story, carols, candles, and choir

*Scan here for more
information about
Advent events*

[♦]*RSVP for childcare*



UPCOMING EVENTS

See our full event calendar online at spucc.churchcenter.com/calendar.

** Events marked with an asterisk are in a non-wheelchair accessible location.*

Contact the church office or group leader for more information.

TODAY - ADVENT MARKET - 11:15 - OSCAR MAYER ROOM

The Advent Market will help fund The Resurrection Project, a non-profit group in Chicago that is dedicated to advancing racial and social equity by empowering historically marginalized communities in areas of wealth building, healthcare, affordable housing, and education. Most recently, they have helped St. Pauls support our Venezuelan families.

TODAY - MOMS' GROUP - 11:15 - HIGH SCHOOL LOUNGE - Being a mom is the hardest job in the world! So come to the Youth Lounge after worship on the second Sunday of each month to gather with other moms with newborns through 10-years-old and support each other! Free childcare by trained professionals is available in the church nursery on the south wall of the Social Hall.

DEC. 18 - First and third Mondays - YOUNG ADULTS PICKLEBALL - 7 p.m., Gym
Come meet new people and have some fun. This is a group for folks in their twenties and thirties. Email us at youngadults@spucc.org.

DEC. 19 - CAROLING WITH FOOD FOR THE SOUL LUNCH GROUP - 12-1:30 p.m.,
Oscar Mayer Room

Sponsored by St. Pauls Social. Adults of all ages are invited. Pastor Jeff will lead a sing-along of Christmas carols and songs of the season. Make new friends and connect with old ones with lunch (please bring your own), fellowship, fun and faith. Just come if it is your first time. Those who have previously attended should please RSVP via the group email reminder. Coming at the last minute is fine, as well as needing to leave early! Join the monthly Food for the Soul group here: <https://tinyurl.com/522vwjkn>

DEC. 20 - WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL -12-12:45 p.m. Zoom.
The Wednesday Bible Study will meet only once in December with a special holiday edition: Christmas in the Gospel of Matthew. If you're not already a part of the group and would like to attend, RSVP to Jeff Carlson for the Zoom link, jcarlson@spucc.org. Ecclesiastes, part 2, will return in January.

TODAY'S MUSIC

Rejoice! - Richard Smallwood (b. 1948) is one of the top composers and performers of Gospel music. His group, The Richard Smallwood Singers, has toured the world. He is a graduate of Howard University, which counts Vice President Kamala Harris and so many other luminaries as alumni. He was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2006.

Of the Father's Love Begotten is a chant melody from the 13th century. The tune, DIVINUM MISTERIUM, translates as “divine mystery,” which certainly describes how God chose to come to be with us. The author of the Latin was Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-410), a Spanish poet, devout believer and lawyer. The translations were made by John M. Neale (1818-1866), who was born into an English evangelical home but developed great sympathies with Catholicism, and Sir Henry Wiliam Baker (1821-1877), an Anglican priest who wrote a number of hymn texts, among them *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*.

The text of ***I Come With Joy*** was written by Brian Wren (b. 1936), who is a pastor in the Congregational Church in England. He wrote the hymn as a summary of a series of sermons on the meaning of communion. The tune is an old American hymn, DOVE OF PEACE, from the *Southern Harmony Hymnal*, part of the Sacred Harp tradition. It was arranged by Austin Lovelace (1919-2010), who was organist and choirmaster for a number of years at First United Methodist Church in Evanston.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel is thought of as a Christmas carol, but its text definitely references the anticipation of Advent. The original Latin, VENI EMMANUEL, was translated in 1851 by J. M. Neale (1818-1866). He was a member of the British clergy and struggled with ill health his entire life. Neale also composed the texts for many other hymns, including *All Glory Laud and Honor*, and translated many other Latin texts, such as *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*.

Come My Way, My Truth, My Life is a text by George Herbert (1593-1633). He is recognised by many as the “Shakespeare of the Church.” Herbert was a contemporary of “The Bard” (1564-1616), and like Shakespeare, Herbert’s poetry lifted common religious practice to the spiritually sublime. THE CALL was composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) as part of *Five Mystical Songs*, a cycle for baritone, choir, and orchestra, composed between 1906 and 1911 and using the poetry of Herbert. Vaughan Williams then adapted THE CALL as a congregational hymn. The words are especially appropriate for a communion Sunday and is a “call” to Christ to return as part of our Advent preparation.

Here I Am, Lord, tune HERE I AM, LORD, does not appear in either of our hymnals, but has become a favorite of ours over the years. The composer and author, Daniel Schutte (b. 1947), wrote this hymn in 1981. He has composed more than 150 hymns, this one being his most popular, for Catholic worship services. He was born in Elm Grove, Wisconsin, and is a Jesuit priest.

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come was composed by Paul Manz (1919-2009) in 1953. He composed this anthem while in a hospital waiting room awaiting results of surgery on his child, who had been injured in an automobile accident. His son survived. It is performed widely, including for "Lessons and Carols" at King's College Cambridge in England. He was a graduate of Concordia College in River Forest and Northwestern University.

The text for ***Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*** was written by the great English hymn writer, Charles Wesley (1707–1788). He wrote more than 6,500 hymn texts. The composer of **HYFRYDOL**, Roland Hugh Prichard (1811–1887), was from Wales and was only 19 when he composed this great hymn tune.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall Come to Thee is our Advent Benediction Response. It is the refrain from the Advent carol, *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*. It expresses the faith that our Savior will be born and will return to fulfill prophecy.

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her, is one of the most recognised German Christmas hymns. The original music and text are both by Martin Luther (1483-1546), the founder of the Lutheran Church and the cause of the Reformation. The hymn had 15 stanzas (!), and Luther used it as a "game hymn" about the birth of Christ. Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706) is known for the popularity of his *Canon in D*, which is often requested at weddings as a processional. A worthy predecessor to Bach, he composed for choir, organ and instruments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THANK YOU to everyone who contributed to our annual gift drive for the youth at UCAN. Because of your generosity, St. Pauls donated 120 gifts this year! Thanks as well to our Outreach and Benevolence Committee members for coordinating.

GIVING ACTIVITIES

Ben Emmrich, Congregation President, will be the speaker for today's Giving Moment in observance of Commitment Sunday. There will be thermometers at the three entrances to the Sanctuary, and at a table staffed by Giving Committee members in the Gymnasium, illustrating the number of 2024 pledges received to date. The thermometers will be updated each week until January 15, when the Giving Campaign officially concludes. This past Monday, the Giving Committee held a Phonation/Textathon to remind members who pledged or gave to St. Pauls in 2023 to pledge again in 2024 by the end of today, if possible. Many members responded that they were planning to pledge by this date. We kindly ask that all members pledge as soon as possible. Thank you!

WELCOME NEW OFFICE STAFF - AUBRAEA!

Aubraea Cleveland is our new Office Administrator. Aubraea has more than 15 years extensive administrative experience across a broad range of functions. She holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration Healthcare Management from Western Governors University, which has equipped her with proficiency in technology and the unwavering desire to expand her knowledge base, making her a well-versed professional. Aubraea loves to travel and explore new places, but spending time with her family is of utmost importance to her. As a new resident of the Chicago area, she is excited to discover the city and bring her valuable skills and experience to the table. You can reach her at acleland@spucc.org.

A MUSICAL GIFT FOR YOU!

Our own St. Arbucks Quartet recorded an album, *Mid-Winter Gifts*, in February 2021 featuring music they have played during our worship services. It is available FREE to you and everyone online. Here is a link to the album on Spotify:

open.spotify.com/album/ÀFEGÁgRZPMTNBvaBJNborm.

And here is a link to the same album on Apple Music:

music.apple.com/us/album/mid-winter-gifts-ep/611741689.

It is exactly the same music on both sites, simply choose your preferred platform. Please feel free to share these links with your friends. You do not need a Spotify or Apple Music account to listen.

CALLING ALL KNITTERS AND CROCHETERS!

We are looking to have 17 scarves and/or hats handmade by members and friends to share with our Venezuelan guests for their first Chicago winter. The St. Pauls Handwork Group is gathering these and will provide yarn to anyone who needs it. Contact Lynn Dykstra Davis at Lrdykstra@aol.com if you would like to contribute a scarf or hat. You can drop off completed items at the office.

USE OF CHURCH REVENUE TASK FORCE -

We are looking to increase the funds the church receives from building rentals and use fees for events. We need your talent and creative ideas and are looking for people to serve on this task force to devise a plan. Interested? Contact Larry Damron at lawerencedamron@gmail.com

JOIN THE MOVEMENT - provided by SPARC

This Advent, as we await and prepare for the coming of transformational love in flesh and bone, Join the Movement toward Racial Justice again invites your engagement with generative connection between scripture readings for the season and contemporary abolition movements with an Abolition Advent Calendar. Learn more about these daily devotionals and embodied spiritual practices [here](#). We hope you will make these reflections part of your waiting, hoping and preparing this Advent, as you deepen your understanding of abolition as part of the work of practicing antiracism.

CREATION CORNER - provided by Green Team

What is the best packaging for wine?

Perhaps when you purchased wine bottles for these holidays, how the liquid was cultivated was noted, yet little was said about the packaging. The wine industry is highly traditional, yet packaging is an important contributor to greenhouse gasses, as glass requires a lot of energy (water and heat) to produce and is heavy to transport. What are the best packaging recommendations for the wine consumer? Opt for lighter vessels (PET and aluminum) for wines which do not need maturing. For wines which require cellaring, glass is still preferable. (Adapted from Salon.com, Samantha Maxwell, November 18, 2023).

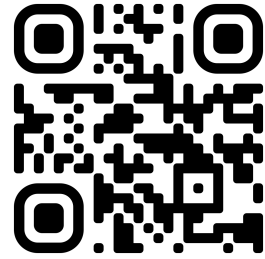
PASTORS' SABBATICAL SCHEDULE

St. Pauls provides three months of sabbatical to each of our pastors every seven years. Pastor Matt is on sabbatical until December 16

PLEDGING & GIVING INFORMATION

PLEDGE WITH BOLD GRATITUDE FOR 2024

Thank you to everyone who has already made a pledge for 2024! Your generous support of St. Pauls is greatly needed and much appreciated. If you have yet to pledge your time, talents or treasures for 2024, you can fill out a paper pledge form and put it in the offering tray or return it to the office. Or, you can pledge online at spucc.org/pledge or by scanning this QR code.



Making a pledge shares with us your intention to donate your time, talents and financial support. This information helps us plan and budget for the upcoming year.

Important Note: If your pledged financial support for 2024 is changing from this year, and you have a current recurring donation set up through one of our donation options, please adjust your recurring donation accordingly. Pledge forms do not authorize St. Pauls to create or update recurring donations. Email bookkeeper@spucc.org with questions or for help.

IRA QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS

If you have an IRA and are required, or will be required, to take a minimum annual distribution (RMD) from your account, you may be interested to know that there are tax advantages to taking your distribution as a direct contribution to a charitable organization such as St. Pauls.

If the distribution is made directly from your IRA to St. Pauls, then you enjoy two tax benefits: 1) the distribution does not count as taxable income and 2) the distribution does count towards satisfying your RMD if over age 73. The gift, called a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), must go directly from your IRA to the organization, and your total gifts cannot exceed \$100,000 per year. You can make QCDs after you reach age 70 ½, which is earlier than the current RMD age of 73. You cannot make QCDs from your 401K; it has to be rolled into an IRA first.

With the 2017 changes in the tax law, some have lost the ability to itemize their deductions, including charitable contributions, and are now taking the higher standard deduction. Making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a great way to still get a tax benefit for charitable giving. If you have questions about QCDs, consult your tax or financial advisor. Members of the Finance Committee are able to provide more information as well. Reach out to Committee chair Sally Fletcher at Treasurer@SPUCC.org

GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

ACTIVISM & ADVOCACY MINISTRY – Do you have a passion for reaching out to others? The St. Pauls Activism & Advocacy Ministry would love you to join us in keeping our church engaged in community outreach. For more information, contact Jennifer Kew, JenniferLKew@gmail.com, or Pastor Jeff, jcarlson@spucc.org.

BASKETBALL – Join us for a weekly Wednesday 7 p.m. pickup game! All skill levels welcome. Email Pastor Matt to get on the updates list, mfitzgerald@spucc.org.

BIBLE STUDY – Weekly on Wednesdays, noon-1 p.m. All are welcome! Contact Pastor Jeff for the Zoom link, jcarlson@spucc.org.

THE BOOK NOOK – Find your next good read or drop off books to share in the Social Hall. Donations are welcome – just add them to the shelf for “New Arrivals” or leave them on the floor next to the bookcase. We appreciate all genres, including books for kids. Questions, contact Linda Nitzsche, lindanitz@yahoo.com.

CAREGIVERS' GROUP – A caregiving role can be a source of love, joy and considerable stress, but it's easier when it doesn't feel like you're the only one. The St. Pauls Caregivers' Group is an informal support group of people who are responsible for the care of parents, partners, friends, or children with illnesses or disabilities. We gather via Zoom the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 10 to 11 a.m. Contact Pam Woll pamelawoll@sbcglobal.net with questions, or info@spucc.org to be added to the email list.

CHURCH CENTER – spucc.churchcenter.com is our portal for St. Pauls members and friends. See our calendar, register for events, update your information, join our photo directory, manage your online donations, see your giving history, and more!

CHURCH SCHOOL – God created us to be creative and to create! This is our theme for Church School this year. Each child will learn that they were created in God's own image. They will learn to love and value all people and to love themselves. Please fill out the one-time registration for the '23-'24 school year below. We have a nursery for children under 2, Preschool Child Care for children 2-5, and Sunday School/Confirmation I & II for 5-year-olds to high school. Email questions to Children's Program Coordinator Danielle Mayfield at danielle.mayfield@spucc.org. Register here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1850397

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 at marcia@volkonline.com.

EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM & CARDS – Follow this link for additional information: spucc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/178271.

GREEN TEAM – As people of faith, members of St. Pauls are called to “Care for Creation.” To that end, the Green Team is seeking new members, particularly young adults and youth, as we become a Creation Justice church recognized by the UCC. We would love to have you! If you are interested, please contact either of the new interim Green Team co-chairs, Ninon Freeman at nlanda05@yahoo.com or Rick Peterson at rnpeterson2017@gmail.com.

HANDWORK MEET-UP – If you enjoy handwork, you’re invited to sit together and stitch in community on the first Sunday of the month at our drop-in handwork group. We gather in a corner of the Social Hall for one hour after the worship service. New to handwork? We have expert knitters, crocheters, embroiderers, and sewers to help you get started with a project. We also welcome admirers of handwork should you wish to pull up a chair and join the conversation!

LITTLE LIGHTS is a St. Pauls early childhood program with classes for 2, 3, and 4-year-olds. We have limited spots remaining for the 2023/24 school year. Check out www.littlelightslp.org. If you would like to schedule a tour or have additional questions, contact Little Lights Director Erin Fitzgerald at littlelights@spucc.org.

MOMS GROUP – Being a mom is the hardest job in the world! So come to the Youth Lounge after worship on the second Sunday of each month to gather with other moms with newborns through 10 years and support each other! Each month will have a helpful theme for us to explore so we can become the best moms possible and form a tight-knit community. Free childcare by trained professionals is available in the church nursery on the south wall of the Social Hall. RSVP at spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/mom-s-group or contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

NEW MEMBER CLASSES – Join pastors, members, and others curious about St. Pauls for an upcoming New Member Class. Together we'll talk about faith and our community, and we'd love for you to be part of the conversation! We'll meet after worship, and childcare will be provided as needed (please let us know in your registration). See upcoming dates here: spucc.org/new_member_classes

PICKLEBALL – Have you tried the growing sport of Pickleball yet? We hold pick-up games in the St. Pauls gym every week. Sign up at the Church Center link below and show up at one of the allotted times! All skill levels are invited. If you have questions, call or text Steve Garrett at (312) 208-0636. Game Times: Tuesdays: 5:30-8:30 p.m; Fridays: 2-3:45 p.m. spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/pickleball

RETIREMENT GROUP – The Retirement Group meets at 10 a.m. in the Parlor on the third Tuesday of the month. Please join us to discuss our transition paths, ways we found ourselves here, what's meaningful, and what's next with or without planned health, funds or companionship. For more info, contact Marcia Knudson at marciaknudson@gmail.com.

ST. PAULS SOCIAL – Get better acquainted with other adults at St. Pauls. If you are interested in hosting, please contact Jen Luerksen at jenluerksen@yahoo.com. Subscribe to the distribution list below, or look out for future events in the bulletin calendar. spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/st-pauls-social.

SPARC (St. Pauls Anti-Racism Cluster) meets monthly to discern how we as a congregation can answer the call to live our faith in an age of injustice. We invite you to join us in identifying the educational opportunities, resources and actions to take on our journey toward racial justice. To participate or share your ideas, contact Cindy Ball at cindyball11@gmail.com.

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 Barb Kaiser (bkaiser2213@gmail.com).

UCC DAILY DEVOTIONAL PRAYER GUIDE – Every day there is a scripture passage and reflection that you can sign up to receive in your inbox! This is a great way to make time to reflect on God each day and grow in your faith. To sign-up visit ucc.org/daily-devotional.



YOUNG ADULTS – A group for fun and fellowship for folks in their twenties and thirties. Join our GroupMe group with the QR code or email us at youngadults@spucc.org.

YOUTH & FAMILY NEWSLETTER – Make sure you stay in the know with youth events! A weekly email is sent to parents to share activities, including Sunday School lessons and other useful news. Please contact Erin Fitzgerald at erin.fitzgerald@spucc.org to be added to the list.

YOUTH CHOIRS – If your child has any interest in music, please join us! Kecia Waldschmidt is leading Paul's People for 4th-8th graders. Breanna Coe and Karen Johnson are leading the Children's Choir for kids K-3rd grade. Rehearsals are 9:30 on Sunday mornings during the school year.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

ALTAR FLOWERS – Providing flowers for the altar is an excellent way to celebrate a special event in your life: an anniversary, a birthday, a holiday, or just because you like flowers. Sign up here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967767.

COMMON PANTRY COMMUNION SUNDAYS – We're collecting food for the Common Pantry every communion Sunday - usually the first Sunday of the month. See their wish list for most-needed items here: commonpantry.org/donations. Modest sized products are best for distribution (e.g., a few 24 oz. containers of cooking oil are preferable to a 64 oz. container). Leave items in the Narthex bin.

CALL FOR LIVE STREAM VOLUNTEERS – Love all things digital, especially fancy devices? Got a knack for capturing special moments on camera? Love to chat with family, friends and others? Want to contribute to a key outreach effort of St. Pauls? If you answered yes to any of the above questions, the St. Pauls Streaming Team needs you. Our team is expanding its mission and can use your help. If interested, come see us in the balcony after the service or reach out to Brian Hafner (bhafner2@att.net) or Bob Ball (Robert.f.ball@outlook.com).

CONSIDER THE LILIES – Are you looking for a way to get involved with the life of St. Pauls? Join the team that delivers our Sunday altar flowers to members and friends who need to know St. Pauls is thinking of them. The flower ministry is flexible and meant to be an easy and rewarding experience. Team members sign up for approximately one Sunday every three months. It is amazing how this simple gesture brings such joy and feelings of love to the recipient – not to mention the joy and love experienced by the deliverer. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please email lilies@spucc.org.

DRIVERS/TRANSPORTATION AIDS NEEDED FOR OLDER ADULTS – We are looking for volunteers to drive some older adults to church and accompany one of our congregants to church on Sunday mornings on the Pace bus round trip from their nursing facility. This is a great way for you to make a real difference for a fellow member. For questions or more information, please contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

GREETING TEAM – Would you consider being one of our Sunday morning greeters? Arrive at 9:30 a.m. and meet with ushers in the Narthex for quick announcements and a prayer. Then stand at the church doors and say “Hello” to attendees, greeting them with a smile, warm welcome and cheerfulness. The ushers are inside continuing to welcome attendees and distribute worship bulletins. Sign up here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2003199

LPCS VOLUNTEERING – Lincoln Park Community Services has a new volunteer opportunity on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., or 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. You will prepare LPCS-provided lunches for their street outreach program and welcome folks coming for drop-in services. To learn more about this program, contact volunteer coordinator Lynne Brenan at lynnebrenan@yahoo.com or (630) 542-7012. Learn more here: tinyurl.com/4sfbcmpx.

POP TAB PROGRAM: RONALD McDONALD HOUSE CHARITY – Help support the Ronald McDonald Charities by saving aluminum tabs from all kinds of cans: soda, canned foods, pet food, etc. Find a container and start collecting. Bring your pop tab donations to the Social Hall and add them to our collection bin. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce young children to helping others and recycling. Little things like pop tabs can make a big difference!

SCRIPTURE READER VOLUNTEERS – Volunteers are needed for the 10 a.m. in-person worship service each week to read the scripture passage of the day. Learn more and sign up here: spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967800

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please send announcements for St. Pauls-sponsored events to info@spucc.org no later than 10 a.m. on Wednesdays, for publication in the Friday email and next Sunday bulletin. You are welcome to share personal announcements and other event invitations in our Facebook Group, St. Pauls Together.

Please limit announcements to 100 words. Thank you!

SPECIAL MUSIC 2023-2024

“MASS APPEAL”

Once again, there is a theme for special music during the 2023-2024 season offered by our Chancel Choir during our 10 a.m. Sunday morning worship services. Please add these remaining dates to your calendar and please invite your friends to join us in person or online at spucc.org/streaming.

Mass Appeal is a way to look at one of the oldest forms of Christian liturgical worship in three very different ways. The goal is to share how the words of the liturgical Mass can be expressed in varied musical styles but always with the same goal: expressing the spiritual joy, longing, majesty, and supplication.

Sunday, March 17, 2024 - *Messe solennelle* by Louis Vierne. This French Romantic setting in Latin was composed for choir and organ in 1899. It showcases beautiful and majestic writing for both choir and a pipe organ with the breadth of colors available on our Phoenix and the talents of Kevin Dzierzawski.

Sunday, May 19, 2024 - *A Gospel Mass* was composed in 1982 by Robert Ray. This wonderful setting, largely in English, marries the spiritual energy and uplift of Gospel music with the timeless words of the Mass ordinary. This gives us a chance to showcase not only the Chancel Choir, but also our incredible St. Arbucks Quartet.

ST. PAULS PRAYS

Please clip this page and pray for those who are named below. To have your prayer request included, simply ask a pastor in person, on the phone or by email.

Our practice is to run each prayer request for four weeks and then remove it.

If you would like to continue a prayer request after four weeks, let a pastor know.

- Prayers for peace - in our city, nation and world.
- Loved ones of Eleanore Breunig Barth, at her death.
- Family and friends of Karen Rieck, at her death.
- David Sr., father of David Faulkner, who is dealing with cardiac and dehydration health concerns.
- Pastor Liz and family at the death of her Uncle Tim.
- Bill Mooney and family at the death of his father Bill.
- Pat Kirby, battling drug-resistant pneumonia.
- Liz Kurman recovering from elbow surgery
- Sister-in-law of Gloria Joseph, dealing with a cancer diagnosis.
- Leslie, sister of Mary Stainton, diagnosed with a brain tumor.
- Students and staff of the GCE school in Chicago, which recently closed.
- LeeAnne Tongue.
- Friends and family of Bo at his death.
- Leroy Johnson, husband of Karen L. Johnson, diagnosed with acute leukemia.
- New member Irem Metin, who is recovering from surgery. Please keep Irem, her husband William, and sons Aidan and Benjamin in your prayers.
- Sarah and her children, Emma and Jack, at the loss of their husband/father in an accident.
- Carole Crowley, recovering from a stroke.

Prayer, Support, Mental Health Resources

Even when you walk through the valley of shadows, God is with you. Help is available for every kind of issue. Contact one of the pastors today for support, referrals, and information that can help you and your loved ones.

ABOUT ST. PAULS

Making a Joyful Sound in the City!

St. 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 and Affirming" of LGBTQ+ people.

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 important, during the past 180 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.

Senior Pastor Matt Fitzgerald, mfitzgerald@spucc.org

Associate Pastor Jeff Carlson, jcarlson@spucc.org

Associate Pastor Liz Nickerson, lnickerson@spucc.org

For a complete list of St. Pauls Staff, Governance, and Lay Leadership
Please visit www.spucc.org/contact

St. Pauls United Church of Christ
2335 N Orchard St. | Chicago, IL 60614
(773) 348-3829 www.spucc.org

Free Parking is available Sundays from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
at the Lincoln Common Parking Garage, 2316 N. Lincoln Ave.
Parking validation is available in the Narthex.



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 LGBTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

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

