

Christmas Eve
Family Service with Nativity
December 24, 2023
5:00 p.m.

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

*Children are encouraged to choose a costume from the Narthex
and wear it during the service. Please return all costumes after worship.
Please silence cell phones.*

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide
with us, our Lord Emmanuel." *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, verse 4

PRELUDE

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Lewis Redner

St. Arbucks Quartet

arr. Carl Strommen

Brendan Henry, piano; Alex Austin, bass; and Matt Plaskota, drums

Kris Hansen, soloist

WELCOME

Matt Fitzgerald

* WELCOMING EACH OTHER

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In the beginning was the word

All: and the word was with God and the word was God

One: He was in the beginning with God, and all things came into being through
him

All: In him was life and the life was the light of all people

One: The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.

All: Jesus the light of the world is coming!

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

* HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful

vv. 1 & 3

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, —
3. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing, —

come ye, O come — ye to Beth - - le - hem;
Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven — a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee — be all glo - - ry given;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

O come, let us a - dore him, — Christ, — the Lord!

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

THE PROPHECY FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES *Isaiah 9: 2; 6–7*

ANTHEM

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Breanna and Todd Coe, soloists

O Holy Night!

The stars are brightly shining;

It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!

Long lay the world in sin and error pining,

Till he appear'd and the soul felt its worth.

A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices,

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!

Fall on your knees,

Oh, hear the angel voices

Oh, night divine;

Oh, night when Christ was born.

Oh, night divine.

Oh, night divine.

Truly He taught us to love one another;

His law is love and His gospel is peace.

Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother,

And in His name all oppression shall cease.

Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,

Let all within us praise His holy name.

Fall on your knees . . .

THE ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENT *Luke 1: 26-33; 38*

CAROL

Angels We Have Heard on High

An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
And the moun-tains in re - ply Echo - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
Glo - - - - - ri - a
in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -
- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - - o.

The musical score is written on five staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first two staves contain the main verses, and the last three staves contain the chorus, which is repeated twice. The lyrics are: 'An - gels we have heard on high Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains, And the moun-tains in re - ply Echo - o - ing their joy - ous strains. Glo - - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - - - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - - o.'

THE FULFILLMENT IN THE GOSPEL *Luke 2: 1; 3-7*

CAROL

Away in a Manger

Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for -
- ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in
your ten - der care, and fit us for heav - en to live with you there.

The musical score is written on three staves in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: 'Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay close by me for - - ev - er and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care, and fit us for heav - en to live with you there.'

THE SHEPHERDS VISIT *Luke 2: 8-16*

CAROL

The First Nowell

The first Now - ell, the an - gel did say, Was to
cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; In
fields where they lay keep - ing their sheep, On a cold win - ter's
night that was so deep. Now - ell, Now - ell, Now -
ell, Now - ell, Born is the king of Is - ra - el.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI *Matthew 2: 1-12*

CAROL

We Three Kings

vv. 1 & 5

1. We three kings of O - ri - ent are; bear - ing gifts we
2. Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I bring to
3. Frank - in - cense to of - fer have I; in - cense owns a
4. Myrrh is mine; its bit - ter per - fume breathes a life of
5. Glo - rious now be - hold him a - rise; King and God and
tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain,
crown him a - gain, King for - e - ver, ceas - ing ne - ver,
De - i - ty nigh; prayer and prais - ing, voi - ces rais - ing,
gath - er - ing gloom; sor - rowing, sigh - ing, bleed - ing, dy - ing,
sac - ri - fice: Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,
fol - low - ing yon - der star.
o - ver us all to reign.
wor - ship - ing God on high. O star of won - der, star of light,
sealed in the stone - cold tomb.
sounds through the earth and skies.
star with roy - al beau - ty bright, west - ward lead - ing,
still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light.

GOD'S STORY IS OUR STORY

All children are invited as we call up their character to come forward to the manger. *Parents are also welcome to come forward with their children.*

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS

Jeff Carlson

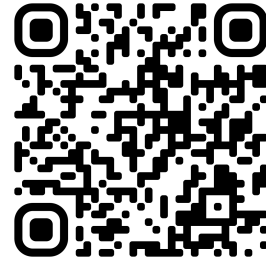
Every dollar of our Christmas Eve offering is given to UCAN. UCAN serves and impacts more than 21,000 at-risk children, youth and families across Illinois.

You can give to the Christmas Eve Fund electronically by:

Scanning this code with your cell phone camera,

At spucc.churchcenter.com/giving,

Or through Zelle or PayPal to giving@spucc.org.



OFFERTORY

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
St. Arbucks Quartet

arr. Bradley Sowash

O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Lord of Lords appear.
Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

CHRISTMAS EVE REFLECTION AND PRAYER

Liz Nickerson

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.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*Those seated on the aisles, light your candles from the candelabras
and pass it down your row.*

* CAROL

Silent Night

vv. 1 & 3

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright
2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Shep - herds quake at the sight,
3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light

Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child, Ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild
Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav'n - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia;
Ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, — Sleep in heav - en - ly peace. —
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! — Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! —
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth, — Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth. —

BENEDICTION

CAROL

Joy to the World

vv. 1 & 2

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - ior reigns: Let men their
 3. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

-ceive her king; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him room,
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness,

And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 And won - ders of his love, And won - ders of his

And heav'n and na - ture sing, And
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re -
 And won - ders of his love, And

sing, And heav'n and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing.
 -peat the sound - ing joy,
 won - ders of his love.

POSTLUDE

Toccata from Symphony V
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Charles Marie Widor

Hush

Sssh.

Can you hear it?
An expectant silence,
a hushed anticipation,
as if the very galaxy
is holding its breath.
There are some truths
even the stars know,
like darkness,
like loneliness
and how the night
can be a living thing.
And how once, long ago,
the night waited in wonder
along with the darkness
and the loneliness,
for the sound of a baby's cry,
for the miraculous⁷⁷
to come down
to the earth mundane.

— written by Lucinda Hynett, in ***Alive Now***

Tonight's offering will save lives.

We are giving every dollar of this evening's offering away. All money collected will be given to support the work of UCAN. UCAN's vision is that youth who have suffered trauma can become our future leaders. St. Pauls members founded UCAN after the Civil War to care for orphans. Today, UCAN serves and impacts more than 21,000 at-risk children, youth and families across Illinois. Their work includes a therapeutic youth home, support for pregnant and parenting teens, foster care placement and violence intervention and prevention. Please give generously through the offering plate, or by any of our online giving methods:

You can give to the Christmas Eve Fund electronically by:

Scanning this code with your cell phone camera,

At spucc.churchcenter.com/giving,

Or through Zelle or PayPal to giving@spucc.org.



TONIGHT'S MUSIC

The poetry for ***O Little Town of Bethlehem*** has a wonderful story. Phillips Brooks (1835-1893), an American, took a trip to Israel in 1865 at the close of the Civil War. The Reverend Brooks spent Christmas in Bethlehem in 1866, and this poem poured forth in 1868 as a result of that visit. ST. LOUIS, which is the tune most Americans know, was also composed in 1868 by Louis Redner (1831-1908), a Sunday School superintendent in Philadelphia. It was composed the night before it was sung at his church, and it is the only one for which he is remembered.

O Come, All Ye Faithful, known by the Latin tune title ADESTE FIDELES, is definitely a carol that we sing on Christmas Eve, BUT how appropriate the words are after a separation from each other for more than a year, *O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant...* The words and music are attributed to John Francis Wade (1711-1786), who wrote the text originally in Latin. He left England in 1745 because of the persecution of Catholics. The English text was added by Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880), an Anglican priest, in the mid-19th century.

O Holy Night (*Minuit, chrétiens*) was composed in 1847 by Adolph Adam (1803-1856). The poetry was written in 1847 by Placide Cappeau (1808 -1877). The original title, *Cantique de Noël*, and text are in French. Adam also composed a great deal of music for the theater and ballet. Cappeau was a wine dealer, but the focus of his life was literature.

Angels We Have Heard on High is originally an 18th century French Noël (carol) freely translated by James Chadwick (1813-1882), an Irish Catholic priest. GLORIA is from the text of the joyfully cascading Latin refrain, which we sing as a Benediction Response after Christmas and during Epiphany.

The original text for ***Away in a Manger*** was written by Martin Luther (1483-1546) for his own children. The English text for the first stanza that is so familiar is unattributed. The tune, MUELLER, was composed by American James R. Murray (1841-1905). He was a friend of another great 19th century American hymnodist, William Bradbury. He also fought in the Civil War.

The author of the text for ***The First Nowell*** (or Noël) is anonymous and dates from 1833. The tune, THE FIRST NOEL, is a traditional English carol. Nowell is a more common spelling of the word. Noël is the French word that many of us see more often and means Christmas.

We Three Kings is a truly American hymn. It was composed in 1857 by an Episcopalian priest, John H. Hopkins (1820–1891). His father was the Bishop of Vermont. Hopkins was also an ecclesiologist, which means he was interested in church art. He designed stained glass and other church ornaments.

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 like *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*.

Our own St. Arbucks Quartet recorded ***O Come, O Come Emmanuel*** on an album this past February, ***Mid-Winter Gifts***, 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/5FEG6gRZPMTNBvaBJNborm, and Apple Music: music.apple.com/us/album/mid-winter-gifts-ep/1611741689. It is the same music on both sites, simply choose your preferred platform. You do not need a Spotify or Apple Music account to listen. Please feel free to share these links with your friends.

The story of ***Silent Night (Stille Nacht)*** is so sweet. On Christmas Eve in 1818, Franz Gruber (1787-1863), an Austrian church organist and choir master, faced a disaster. The organ became unplayable that day. He composed, played guitar and sang *Stille Nacht* for Christmas Eve services that night. The text was written by Joseph Mohr (1792-1848) in 1815. It has become one of the most beloved of all carols in any language.

The text for ***Joy to the World*** was composed in 1719 by the famous British poet and theologian, Isaac Watts (1674-1748). Watts' great contribution was setting the entire Book of Psalms poetically. This is a paraphrase of both Psalms 98 & 96. One of his most well beloved texts is *Our God, Our Help In Ages Past*. ANTIOCH was composed by George Friderick Handel (1685-1759), who also composed *Messiah*, and was adapted as a hymn by Lowell Mason (1792-1872). Mason is often referred to as the father of American church music for his contributions.

The ***Toccata*** from *Symphony V in F Major, Op. 42, No. 1* was composed in 1879 by Charles-Marie Widor (1844-1937). This fiery work is beloved not only at St. Pauls, but also organists and audiences around the world. The *Toccata* shows off the composing skill of Widor, the technical prowess of the organist, and the huge range of colors of larger instruments. Widor, along with Louis Vierne (1870-1937), were the great French Romantic symphonists for the organ. Vierne held the post of Organist at the Cathedral of Notre Dame in Paris and Widor held the same position at St. Sulpice, also in Paris.

TONIGHT'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Clergy: Matt Fitzgerald, Jeff Carlson, Liz Nickerson

Music Director: Kurt R. Hansen

Organist: Kevin Dzierzawski

Lay Liturgical Administrator: Kevin O'Brien

Head Usher: Beatrice Jaji

Ushers: Mary Brown, Dodd Brown, Ninon Freeman, Fred Pearson

Gatekeeper: Dodd Brown

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

Custodians: Ramiro Gonzalez, Louis Luri

UPCOMING EVENTS

JAN. 3 – WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY -12-12:45 p.m. Zoom.

We're exploring the book of Ecclesiastes and its call to embrace and enjoy life, even in the midst of all its absurdity. 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.

JAN. 3 -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.

JAN. 7 - CHILDREN'S BIBLE OFF BROADWAY REHEARSALS BEGIN - All youth age 4 through 18 are encouraged to participate in this amazing musical production in a way that works for them! This year's Sunday morning rehearsals will run from January 7-28, with the in-worship production staged during the Sunday, February 4 worship hour. For details contact: janaobrien1@gmail.com.

JAN. 8 and 15 - 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.

JAN. 14 – MOMS' GROUP - 11:15 -12:30 p.m., Youth Lounge - gather with other moms with newborns through 10 year olds to 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 provided. Contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org.

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.

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.