

Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
December 24, 2023
9:00 p.m.

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

Worship begins with chimes.

The prelude is a time of reflection and preparation for the worship of God.

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.

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"Herod reigns but the stronger he is, the more sure, the more certain the wonder."

Joseph Brodsky

PRELUDE

Sospiri

Edward Elgar

Monty Adams, flute; and Phyliss Adams, harp
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Sure on this Shining Night

Samuel Barber

Breanna Coe, mezzo-soprano; flute and harp

Sure on this shining night
Of star made shadows round,
Kindness must watch for me
This side the ground.
The late year lies down the north.
All is healed, all is health.
High mystery holds the earth.
Hearts all whole.
Sure on this shining night
I weep for wonder, wand'ring far alone
Of shadows on the stars.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLES

Toccata from Symphony V
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

Charles Marie Widor

* PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O Come, All Ye Faithful



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!

* Please stand if you are able to do so.

* WELCOME

Liz Nickerson

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The prophets have proclaimed it and the
angels have announced it: Unto us a child is born. Unto us a savior is given.
Glory to God in the highest!

All: And on earth peace, goodwill.

One: Go tell it on the mountain.

All: Go tell it in the city.

One: This is good news of great joy.

All: Jesus Christ is born!

CHOIR

Soon and Very Soon
Chancel Choir
Nathan Streeter, tenor

Andraé Crouch

Soon and very soon,
We are goin' to see the King.
Hallelujah,
We're goin' to see the King.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY IN SCRIPTURE AND SONG

THE PROPHECY FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 9, 60 and 40, selections

CHOIR

El nacimiento
from Navidad Nuestra
Chancel Choir
Kris Hansen, tenor
Alex Hansen, bongos

Ariel Ramirez

*Noche anunciada, noche de amor,
Dios ha nacido, pétalo y flor,
todo es silencio y serenidad,
paz a los hombres, es Navidad.*

Night foretold, Night of love,
God is born, petals and flowers.
All is silent and serene.
Peace on earth at Christmas.

*En el pesebre mi redentor
es mensajero de paz y amor,
cuando sonrío se hace la luz
y en sus bracitos crece una cruz.*

In the manger, the Redeemer from above
Brings news of peace and love.
In Christ's smile a radiance glows.
And his tiny arms form a cross

*Angeles cantan sobre el portal
Dios ha nacido, es navidad*

Angels are singing above the scene.
God is born. It is Christmas.

*Esta es la noche, que prometió
Dios a los hombres y ya llegó,
es Noche Buena, no hay que dormir
Dios ha nacido, Dios está aquí.*

This is the night that God has promised,
God's gift to all and we see it unfold.
It's Christmas Eve; you don't need to sleep.
God is born. God is with us.

THE FULFILLMENT IN THE GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-7

CONGREGATION

O Little Town of Bethlehem



1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given!

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of his heav'n.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing Light;
 No ear may hear him com - ing, But in this world of sin,

The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 Where meek souls will re - ceive him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.

THE ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENT

Luke 2:8-14

* CONGREGATION

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, — “Glo - ry to the new - born King;

The first system of the musical score for the congregation part. It features a treble and bass staff in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is in the treble staff, and the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Peace on earth, and mer - cy mild — God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!”

The second system of the musical score. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, — Join the tri - umph of the skies;

The third system of the musical score. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, “Christ is — born in Beth - le - hem!”

The fourth system of the musical score. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, “Glo - ry — to the new - born King!”

The fifth and final system of the musical score. It concludes the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes.

CHOIR

Thy Little Ones, O Savior Dear

Danish Carol

Chancel Choir

Johann Peter &

Kurt R. Hansen, tenor

Abraham Schultz

*Her komme Jesus, dine små,
Til dig i Bethlehem at gå:
Oplys enhver i sjoel og sind
At finde vejen till dig ind!*

Thy little ones, O Savior dear
To thee in Bethlehem draw near
Enlighten us in soul and mind
That we the way to Thee may find.

We hasten Thee with songs to greet,
And humbly bow before Thy feet.
O sacred hour, O blessed night,
When Thou wast born, our soul's delight.

THE SHEPHERD'S VISIT

Luke 2:15-20

CONGREGATION

Away in a Manger

A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed, the lit - tle Lord
Je - sus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky___ looked
down where he lay, the lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.

The musical score is written on three staves in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The melody is simple and suitable for congregational singing. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

CHOIR

Peace, Peace, Wonderful Peace
Chancel Choir

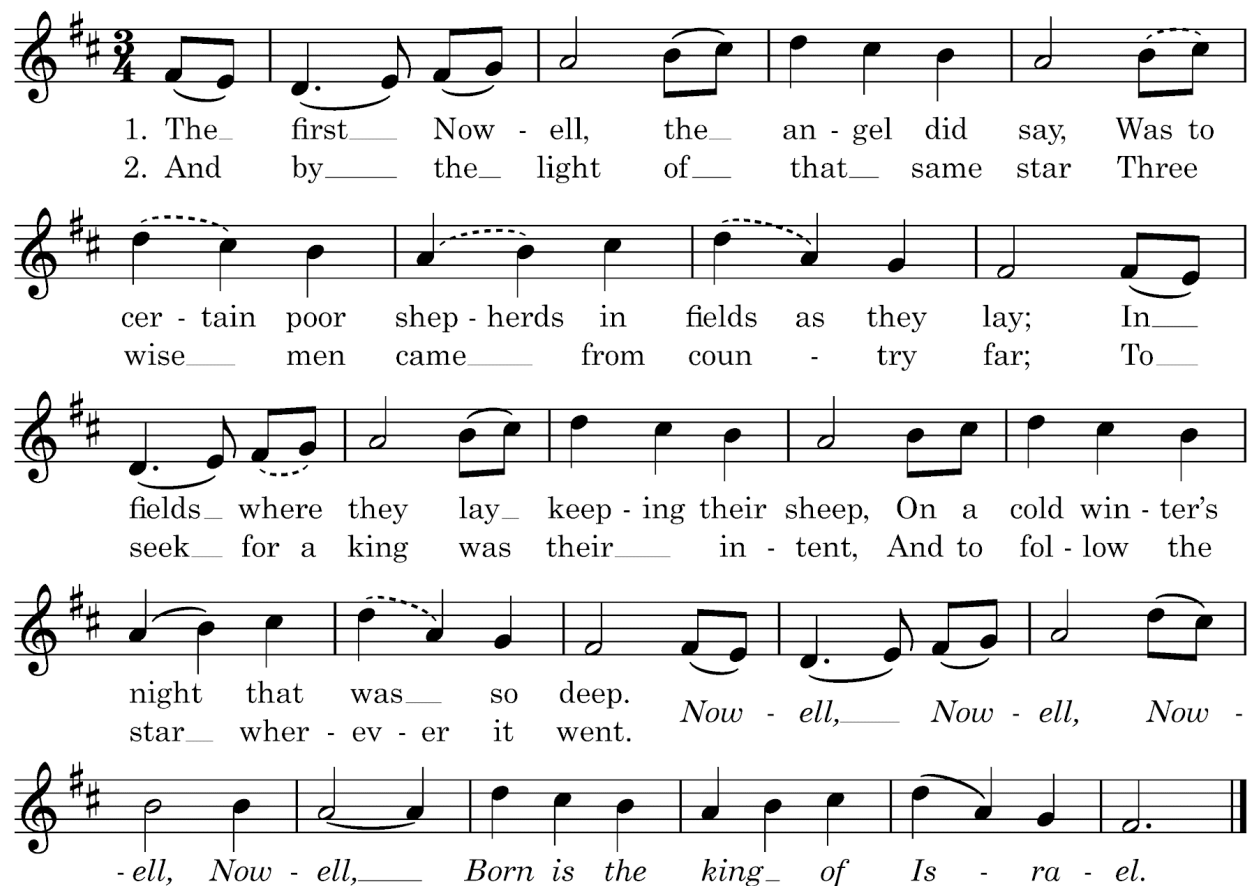
Gustav Nordqvist
Text-Edvard Evers
English-Norman Luboff

*Jul, Jul, strålande jul,
glans över vita skogar,
Himmelens kronor med gnistrande ljus,
Glimande bågar i alla Guds hus,
Psalm, som är sjungen från tid till tid,
Eviga längtan till ljus och frid!
Jul, Jul, strålande jul,
glans över vita skogar!*

Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Peace to the world is given.
Hushed are the angels, so still is the night.
Then in the East shone a heavenly light.
Join in the chorus, His praises sing!
Glory to God, to the newly born King!
Peace, peace, wonderful peace,
Peace to the world is given!

* CONGREGATION

The First Nowell



1. The first Now - ell, the an - gel did say, Was to
2. And by the light of that same star Three

cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; In
wise men came from coun - try far; To

fields where they lay keep - ing their sheep, On a cold win - ter's
seek for a king was their in - tent, And to fol - low the

night that was so deep. Now - ell, Now - ell, Now -
star wher - ev - er it went.

- ell, Now - ell, Born is the king of Is - ra - el.

THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

Matthew 2:1-12

CHOIR

Mary Had a Baby
Nancy Pifer. soprano

AfricanAmerican Spiritual
arr. William Dawson

Mary had a baby, My Lord!
Where was he born?
Born in a manger.
What did they call him?
King Jesus.

He is called King Jesus, Mighty Counselor,
King Emanuel, Mighty God, Everlasting Father.
Mary had a baby, My Lord!

SERMON

"A Sure and Certain Wonder"

Matt Fitzgerald

* CONGREGATION

Joy to the World

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,

THE PRESENTATION OF OUR GIFTS

Every dollar of our Christmas Eve offering is being 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.



CHOIR

Suantraí ár Slánaitheora
(Lullaby, go to sleep now.)
Sung in Gaelic
Maire O'Brien, soprano
Chancel Choir

Fiontán Ó Clearbhail

Seothó, seothuló.

Mo ghaol, mo ghrá 'gus m'éadail thú!

Mo stóirin úr is m'fhéirin thú!

Mo mhacán áluinn scéimheach thú.

Chan fiú féin bheith id' dhäil.

You are my son, my love and my
treasure!

My newborn gift, my darling little one!

My handsome little son.

I am not worthy to be with you.

Cé gur leanbh díblí thú

Cinnt' is Rína Rithe thú,

An t-oighre dlítheach fíor is tú

Ar Ríocht Dé no ngrást.

You are just a helpless child,

Yet you are the King of Kings,

The true and rightful heir

To the graces of the Kingdom of God.

THE CHRISTMAS EVE PRAYER

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.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

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

CHOIR

Stille Nacht
Chancel Choir

Franz Gruber

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hoch heilige Paar
Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh,
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh.

* CONGREGATION

Silent Night

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

POSTLUDE

Shine Lovely Christmas Star
from "A Gift of Song"

Mary Elizabeth Caldwell

Pat-a-pan

Burgundian Carol

Monty Adams, flute; and Phyllis Adams, harp

Tonight's offering will save lives.

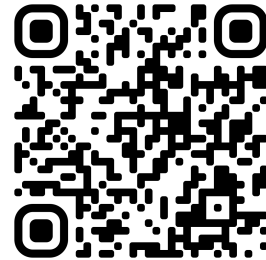
We are giving every dollar of this evening's offering away. All money collected will be given to support the work of UCAN. UCAN's vision is that youth who have suffered trauma can become our future leaders. St. Pauls members founded UCAN after the Civil War to care for orphans. Today, UCAN serves and 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:

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Nativity

by RS Thomas

The moon is born
and a child is born,
lying among white clothes
as the moon among clouds.

They both shine, but
the light from the one
is abroad in the universe
as among broken glass.

TONIGHT'S MUSIC

Sospiri, *Opus 70* was composed in 1914 by Edward Elgar (1837-1954). The original version is for string orchestra and harp. *Sospiri* is Italian for “sighs.” Elgar composed this just before the outbreak of World War I. Elgar is especially revered in England as a great composer of the Victorian period. His most well-known work is *Pomp and Circumstance*, which is played at nearly every graduation ceremony worldwide.

Sure On This Shining Night was composed in 1938 by Samuel Barber (1910-1981) to a poem by James Agee (1909-1955). The original version is for solo voice and piano. This transcription of the piano part was made by Phyllis and Monty Adams. Barber was one of the great American composers of the 20th century. His *Adagio for Strings* is his most well known and often heard work. James Agee was also a novelist and film critic. He wound up on the wrong side of the blacklist in the 1950s.

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.

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.

Soon and Very Soon was composed in 1976 by Andraé Crouch (1942-2015). Crouch was one of the bright lights of gospel music with many awards and a long and prominent performing and composing career. This text and rollicking music joyfully anticipates both the birth of Jesus and the second coming.

El nacimiento is from a Christmas cantata *Navidad Nuestra* composed in 1964 by Ariel Ramirez (1921-2010). Ramirez effectively made choral and instrumental arrangements of Christmas folk songs from his native Argentina. He is considered a chief exponent of Argentine folk music. His other most performed work is *Misa Criola*.

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.

Thy Little Ones, O Savior Dear was first published in 1927 in English and was composed by Johann Abraham Peter Schultz (1747-1800). He was born in Lüneberg, Germany, a baker's son. He rose to conduct opera in Berlin in addition to composing. The text was written by Hans Adolf Brorson (1694-1864). He was the son of a priest, was ordained himself, wrote many original hymn texts in Danish and, in addition, translated many German chorales. He is considered one of the greatest Danish hymn writers.

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.

Wonderful Peace is one of the best known Christmas carols from Sweden. It certainly expresses the longing we have to embrace the gift of peace given to us by the birth of Christ. Gustav Nordqvist (1886-1949) published his carol in 1921. In addition to composing, he was also a church musician and academic. The text by Edvard Evers (1853-1919) is his best known work. He became a parish priest in Sweden after earning his degree in theology. Norman Luboff (1917-1987) was a well known choral director and founder of the Norman Luboff Chorale, He was born in Chicago and studied with Leo Sowerby at the Chicago Conservatory. His chorale toured and he had a successful radio, TV and film career in Hollywood.

Mary Had a Baby was arranged by William Dawson (1899-1990). Dawson was choral director for many years at the Tuskegee Institute of Alabama. He was responsible, along with others of his generation like Hall Johnson, for making beautiful arrangements of spirituals that spread the performance and popularity of that music within and beyond the African American community. Tuskegee Choir gained international stature under Dr. Dawson's leadership. The text treats the birth of Jesus as both a tender infant and the "mighty God, Prince of Peace."

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.

Suantraí ár Slánaitheora was composed in 1979 by Fiontán Ó Clearbhaill (1922-1981). He began his career as a railway clerk for 27 years before pursuing a degree in music and happily finishing his professional life teaching in a secondary school in Ireland. He also conducted brass bands and composed.

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.

Shine Lovely Christmas Star was composed by Mary Elizabeth Caldwell (1909-2003). She was educated at the University of California-Berkeley then continued her studies at the Munich Conservatory followed by The Juilliard School of Music. She composed a wide range of choral and instrumental music.

Pat-a-Pan is a French carol from the 16th century and the Burgundy province. It was composed by Bernard de La Monnoye (1641-1728). The carol revolves around the birth of Jesus Christ and is told from the perspective of shepherds. *Patapan* is meant to mimic the sound of the drum.

TONIGHT'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Clergy: Liz Nickerson, Matt Fitzgerald, Jeff Carlson

Music Director: Kurt R. Hansen

Organist: Kevin Dzierzawski

Lay Liturgical Administrator: Kevin O'Brien

Acolyte Coordinator: Rebecca Sandoval

Acolytes: Chloe & Ivy Combs, Nate & Oliva Weglarz

Head Usher: Beatrice Jaji

Ushers: David Baker, Mary Brown, Dodd Brown, Lynn Dykstra Davis, Jeff Matthews,
Larry Simpson

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.