

December 3, 2023  
First Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Cantata

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.*

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"Restore us, O God, let your face shine, that we may be saved." Psalm 80: 9

PRELUDE *Infant Holy* Keith Chapman  
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE - The Candle of Hope The Mack Family

INTROIT **St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass** Glenn McClure  
***Altissimo***  
(Sung in Italian)  
Todd Coe and Nathan Streeter, soloists  
Chancel Choir  
Potts and Pans Steelband  
Matt Potts, Founder and President

You are the Holy Father, King of Heaven, King of Earth.  
You are the only God, God in three Persons.  
You are the Good of all good, the highest good.

CHIMES

WELCOME Kurt R. Hansen

\* WELCOMING EACH OTHER

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

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Hallelujah! Sing to God a brand-new song.

**All: Hallelujah! Praise God in the company of all who love him.**

One: Let us praise God's name in dance; strike up the band and make great music! And why?

**All: Because God delights in his people,  
adorns us with salvation garlands! Hallelujah!**

\* HYMN

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*



1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
2. O come, thou Day - spring, come\_\_\_\_\_ and cheer Our spir - its by thine
3. O come, thou Wis - dom from\_\_\_\_\_ on high, And or - der all things,
4. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind All peo - ples in one



Is - - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile\_\_\_\_\_ here, Un -  
ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of\_\_\_\_\_ night, And  
far\_\_\_\_\_ and nigh; To us the path of knowl - edge show, And  
heart\_\_\_\_\_ and mind; Bid en - vy, strife, and quar - rels\_\_\_\_\_ cease; Fill



- til the Son of God\_\_\_\_\_ a - pear.  
death's dark shad - ows put\_\_\_\_\_ to flight. *Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -*  
cause us in her ways\_\_\_\_\_ to go.  
the whole world with heav - en's peace.



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

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jeff Carlson

**We confess that we don't like waiting.  
We stare at presents and want to open them NOW.  
Some have no presents to wait for at all.  
Help us to dwell in the joyful anticipation of HOPE.  
Help us to see and help others that may face no hope at all.  
In the midst of daily stresses help us to tune in...  
To look around and see others in need ...  
Help us prepare.  
Prepare to welcome the new life we were meant to live.  
Prepare to give and receive unconditional love.  
Prepare to see and listen to the needs of others.  
Prepare to let go of anger and resentment.  
Prepare to forgive and accept forgiveness.  
Prepare to be peacemakers.  
Prepare to believe that something new is possible.  
Prepare to accept the gift we are about to receive.  
Amen.**

MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

ANTHEM

**St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass**

McClure

***Kyrie***

(Sung in Greek and Italian)

Christina Potts, steel drum solo

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.  
Most high, glorious God, illuminate the darkness of my heart, and give  
me right faith, certain hope, perfect love, profound humility, wisdom  
and understanding,  
O Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true commandment.

SCRIPTURE

Meg Tazelaar

*Mark 13: 28-37*

“Take a lesson from the fig tree. From the moment you notice its buds form, the merest hint of green, you know summer’s just around the corner. And so it is with you. When you see all these things, you know he is at the door. Don’t take this lightly. I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for this one, too—these things will happen. Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.

“But the exact day and hour? No one knows that, not even heaven’s angels, not even the Son. Only the Father. So keep a sharp lookout, for you don’t know the timetable. It’s like a man who takes a trip, leaving home and putting his servants in charge, each assigned a task, and commanding the gatekeeper to stand watch. So, stay at your post, watching. You have no idea when the homeowner is returning, whether evening, midnight, cockcrow, or morning. You don’t want him showing up unannounced, with you asleep on the job. I say it to you, and I’m saying it to all: Stay at your post. Keep watch.”

\* 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!**

*(adapted from the United Church of Canada)*

\* HYMN

*Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates*



1. Lift up your heads, O might - y gates; be - hold the  
2. Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a  
3. So come, my Sov - ereign; en - ter in! Let new and



glo - rious\_\_ Rul - er waits! The Sov - ereign One is  
tem - ple,\_\_ set a - part From earth - ly use for  
no - bler\_\_ life be - gin; Your Ho - ly Spir - it



draw - ing\_\_ near; the Sav - ior of\_\_ the\_\_ world is here.  
heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.  
guide us\_\_ on, un - til the glo - rious crown be won.

RESPONSE

**St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass**

McClure

***Gloria***

(Sung in Latin)

Breanna Coe, Terry Hansen, Nadia Jimènez,  
Nancy, Pifer, Nathan Streeter, and Todd Coe, soloists

Glory to God in the Highest. We praise You, O Lord, we give You  
thanks. Lord God, You Who take away the sins of the world have  
mercy on us. Who sit at the right hand of the Father, for You alone  
are holy, You alone are Lord, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God  
the Father.

***Alleluia***

(Sung in Italian)

Nancy Pifer, Amy Petersen Beck and Terry Hansen, trio

You are the Holy Father, King of Heaven, King of Earth.

You are the only God, God in three Persons.

You are the Good of all good, the highest good.

Lord God, living and true.

You are love, You are charity.

You are wisdom: You are humility; You are patience;

You are beauty; You are repose; You are security;

You are joy; You are our hope;

You are justice; You are moderation, You are our every  
superabundant richness;

You are splendor; You are meekness;

You are the protector;

You are our guardian and defender;

You are the stronghold; You are refreshment.

You are our hope, You are our faith, You are our charity,

You are all our sweetness,

You are our eternal life:

All-powerful God.

GIVING MOMENT

Karen Johnson

OFFERTORY

**St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass**

McClure

***Credo***

(Sung in Latin)

Kecia Waldschmidt, soloist

I believe in one God, Father almighty, and in one Lord; He became flesh, was crucified, died and was buried, and rose again. I believe in the Holy Spirit. I confess one baptism.

***Santo***

(Sung in Italian)

Breanna and Todd Coe, soloists

Holy, holy, holy Lord our God; holy, holy, holy – bless the Lord.

Let us praise the Lord, the sum of all goodness,  
the highest good, Most High Lord.

Glory, honor, and blessing, holy Lord!

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and divinity, glory,  
honor, and blessing.

Bless the Lord, all you works of God, all you his  
servants, great and small!

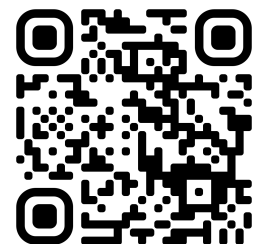
Let us praise Him, let us exalt Him now and forever, Holy Lord!

*You can give to St. Pauls electronically:*

*Scan this code with your cell phone camera,*

*Church Center at [spucc.churchcenter.com/giving](http://spucc.churchcenter.com/giving),*

*PayPal at [spucc.org/paypal](http://spucc.org/paypal), or Zelle to [giving@spucc.org](mailto:giving@spucc.org).*





PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

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.**

RESPONSE

**St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass**

McClure

***Agnus Dei***

(Sung in Latin)

Nadia Jimenez, soloist

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

\* BENEDICTION

Kurt R. Hansen

\* BENEDICTION RESPONSE

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

POSTLUDE

*Joy to the World*

G. F. Handel

Potts and Pans Steelband

arr. Matt Potts

***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 in the Social Hall,  
located downstairs directly below the Sanctuary.***

**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 Hope.

**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.

### **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.
- Confirmation class fall dates are: October 1, 15, 29; November 19; and December 3.
- 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 MUSIC**

***Infant Holy*** is a beautiful Polish carol, especially beloved in the Anglican carol tradition. It may date as far back as the 13th or 14th century, but was only published in 1908. Many of us associate the carol with the annual *Festival of Lessons and Carols* from the King's College Chapel at Cambridge, England. Keith Chapman (1945-1989) was an American concert organist and composer. He is best remembered for his symphonic style of playing and his long tenure at the Wanamaker Organ at the Wanamaker's Department Store in Philadelphia.

***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*.

***St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass*** was composed in 1997 by Glenn McClure. McClure is a composer, speaker, and scholar. For more than 20 years, Mr. McClure has dedicated himself to building artistic and academic collaborations among students, scientists, classical and indigenous musicians. Mr. McClure has taught at the Eastman School of Music and currently serves on the faculties of Paul Smith's College and SUNY Geneseo.

*Some notes from the composer...*

***St. Francis in the Americas: A Caribbean Mass*** celebrates the marriage of Latin American cultures and the spiritual legacy of the medieval Italian saint, Francis of Assisi. Followers of "Il Poverello," the little poor man from Assisi, have left their mark on this hemisphere with cities named for the saint (San Francisco, Los Angeles), and customs such as the Christmas nativity scenes we see at holiday time. This concert mass sets several of Francis' writings into languages and musical styles of the New World. The instrumentation features steel drums (invented in the islands of Trinidad and Tobago in the mid-20th century) and other percussion instruments from Latin American traditions. Just as Francis said that his cathedral was the whole world, we see that his simple wisdom could not be limited to one language or musical tradition. We hope you enjoy this musical mosaic of the writings of one of the world's most beloved saints.

This *Mass* combines choir and soloists with various percussion instruments from Latin American traditions. Though the Agnus Dei uses African and Caribbean drums and rattles, the other movements feature the steel drum. The steel drum was invented on the island of Trinidad in the mid-20th century. In response to a legal ban on the use of drums, musicians began searching for other ways to play their music. Eventually, they discovered that pounding dents into the bottom of a 55-gallon oil barrel could create pitches. Decades later, this instrument is now capable of playing music styles ranging from calypso to classical, from samba to jazz. Furthermore, in only a few decades this instrument has become popular all over the world. The steel drum's versatility continues to grow with every new music style it encounters.

### ***Kyrie***

This piece weaves the Greek text “Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy” and a prayer written by Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) into the fabric of a Caribbean Samba. Francis wrote this prayer at a pivotal moment of conversion. After he had given up the lavish life of a rich young man, he prayed before a crucifix in a broken down church that commanded him to go “rebuild my church.” This humble prayer was the beginning of Francis’ life of service, just as the Kyrie marks the humble beginning of our liturgy, a liturgy that calls us to a life of service.

### ***Gloria***

In contrast to more lively settings of the “Gloria” text, this piece creates a melancholy mood with the presence of two melodies: *Amazing Grace* (a British tune entitled *New Britain*, and text written by reformed slave trader, John Newton) and *Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child* (a mournful African American Spiritual). Even though Old Testament scriptures commented on the tragedy of slavery, Christianity still inspired both the slaves and slave owners of the New World. The *Gloria* explores this painful paradox of our history by placing a melody of a slave trader next to a melody of a slave. This piece resonates with the Book of Job by exploring the mysteries of innocent suffering. Latin American cultures were born out of the conflicts and collaborations of Native populations, Europeans and West Africans; therefore, this piece expresses “Glory to God” within the context of their tragic history.

### ***Alleluia***

This movement is composed in the dance style of a Calypso. The women’s trio trades Alleluias with the full choir, and the movement finishes with a long list of why we sing of the greatness and compassion of God. (This note by Kurt R. Hansen.)

### ***Credo***

Unlike the mysterious nature of the *Gloria*, the *Credo* is a powerful, confident statement. The soloist sings over a pulsating salsa rhythm. The complex overlapping drum rhythms are combined with a subtle rhythm pattern sung by the choir. In this way, the choir becomes another rhythm instrument. The overall form, a twelve bar blues chord progression, makes an additional reference to the African contributions to Latin American cultures while hand clapping refers back to the contributions of Spanish music culture.

### ***Santo***

The “Santo” sets another one of Francis of Assisi’s poems in the liturgical context. The music includes references to a traditional Mexican melody and a “comparsa” rhythm. The driving rhythm of this piece is reminiscent of a great deal of Latin American liturgical music. Whereas Northern European liturgical music often emphasizes the solemnity of prayer, Latin American and African liturgical music often emphasize the lively, dance-like quality of prayer.

### ***Agnus Dei***

The “Agnus Dei” or “Lamb of God” is arranged in the style of African singing for choir and percussion. The call and response form is a regular feature of African American singing. The Kenyan work entitled *Missa Luba* inspired the rhythmic style of singing that you find in this movement.

The tune for ***Lift Up Your Heads***, TRURO, was composed by Charles Burney (1726-1814). Burney was a music historian and composer, who apprenticed with a well known English Baroque composer, Thomas Arne (1710-1778). The words were written by the famous English hymnist and Methodist preacher, Charles Wesley (1707-1788).

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.

## **Chancel Choir**

Kurt R. Hansen, Music Director

Kevin Dziersawski, Organist

### **Sopranos**

Katie Alrutz  
Shannon Banjavcic  
Nadia Jimenez  
Gay Kelly  
Jennifer Kew  
Karin Magnuson  
Nancy Pifer \*  
Ashley Shaluga  
Grace Stauskas  
Meg Tazelaar  
Kecia Waldschmidt  
Pam Woll

### **Altos**

Cindy Ball  
Amy Barton  
Lois Basil  
Terry Brancaccio Hansen  
Carrie Bruggers - Librarian  
Breanna Coe \*  
Micki Fayhee  
Karen Johnson  
Winnie Kearns  
Jana O'Brien  
Amy Petersen Beck  
Pat Ruch  
Jade Luo Santos  
Pam Woll

### **Tenors**

Todd Coe  
Andy Davis  
Doug Heyboer  
Rick Peterson  
Nathan Streeter

### **Basses**

Bill Borden  
Jim Brandt  
Jeff Carlson  
Allen Heineman  
Graham Hicks  
Mark Huddle  
Julian Jarzebowski  
Lee Lichamer \*  
Mark Mosley  
Mark Swanson  
Doug Walters

\* Section leader

## **Potts and Pans Steelband**

Matt Potts, Founder and President  
Jack Agress, Bass                      Dan Bretz, Percussion  
Christina Potts, Cello  
Anthony Jay Houston, Percussion and Vice President  
Matt Potts, Double Seconds  
Reese Connor, Lead

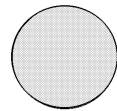
**What is a steel drum?** - This is a truly Caribbean instrument that was originally created by noting the dents in the top of a 55-gallon oil drum had a clear and true pitch. By varying the number and size of the dents in a concave lid, it was possible to create a range of pitches. Now the steel pans are created as musical instruments and their sound is a staple of Caribbean music.

**THE CHRISTMAS TREE IS A CHRISMON TREE** - A Chrismon is a symbol of Christ. All the designs have been passed down through centuries of Christian tradition and are made of white and gold, to symbolize the purity and the majesty of Christ. Our chrismons have been made by members and friends of St. Pauls, and the tree itself was a gift to the church in 1997 from the Crowley and Opp-Ekdahl families. It takes 15,300 lights to illuminate the 17' tree.

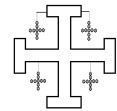
Thank you to our tree and poinsettia decorators: Lorne Frank, Greg Basil, Fernando Diaz, Marcia Opp, Doug Clark, Barb Kaiser, Jill Minetz, Deborah Bayly, Barb Arsenault, Ninon Freeman, Jan Bail, Jennifer Gourley, Jerry Bennefield, and David Faulkner.

See how many of the symbols you can find. Some of the symbols are:

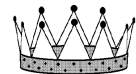
The CIRCLE, a symbol of eternity, of God.



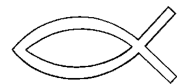
The CROSS, in all its variations, a reminder of the saving work of Christ.



The CROWN, a symbol of the victory of Christ.



The FISH, an early Christian symbol.



The ORB, is Heaven and Earth.



The DESCENDING DOVE, represents the Holy Spirit at Christ's baptism.



The TRIANGLE, THREE INTERTWINED CIRCLES, symbols for one God in three persons, the Trinity.



The STARS are made of crosses, showing the connection between the birth and death of Jesus.



The BUTTERFLY, a symbol of the resurrection.



The DOGWOOD, branches form a cross.



The LILY OF THE VALLEY represents Christ's humility.

ALPHA and OMEGA, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet represent Jesus saying that He is the beginning and the end.





## **TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS**

**Clergy:** Jeff Carlson, Liz Nickerson

**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:** Meg Tazelaar

**Head Usher:** Beatrice Jaji

**Ushers:** David Baker, Fred Pearson

**Gatekeeper:** Dodd Brown

**Greeter:** Linda Loving

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

**Custodian:** Ramiro Gonzalez

## **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. 3 Jack Knight, Mehgan Keeley, Olivia Nach

Dec. 4 Katherine Schuller, Laura Van Zeyl, Linhard Stepf, Mark Smith

Dec. 5 Chris McGuire, Jason Colosi-McCann, Joel Finkle

Dec 6. Cherilynn Panko, Shannon Castle

Dec. 7 Mallory Schmitt

Dec. 8 Greta Schmahl, Maria Schmahl

Dec. 9 Jennifer Earl, Kitty Egan, Shanna Due, Vanessa Eldridge

## ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. PAULS

- TODAY FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, *LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF HOPE*  
10 a.m. - Worship, Christmas Cantata - *A Caribbean Mass* with steel band
- WED, DEC. 6 LITTLE LIGHTS CHRISTMAS SHOW  
5 p.m. - Concert & Art Show, Sanctuary
- SUN, DEC. 10 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<sup>†</sup>  
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<sup>†</sup>  
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*

<sup>†</sup>***RSVP for childcare***



## UPCOMING EVENTS

*See our full event calendar online at [spucc.churchcenter.com/calendar](http://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.*

### **DEC. 4 - 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](mailto: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](mailto:jcarlson@spucc.org). Ecclesiastes, part 2, will return in January.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **WELCOME NEW OFFICE STAFF - AUBRAEA!**

Aubraea Cleveland is our new Office Administrator. You can reach her at [acleveland@spucc.org](mailto:acleveland@spucc.org).

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.

## **PLEDGING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Giving Committee is having a Phone-A-Thon on Monday night starting at 6 p.m. and they will be calling everyone who hasn't pledged yet. Get your pledges in today if you don't want a call! We are asking for a 20% increase in giving this year. Thank you to everyone who has already pledged! Commitment Sunday is December 10.

## **ADVENT MARKET ITEMS NEEDED**

The Advent Market is on Sunday, December 10, and 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. We need new or gently used items such as jewelry, candles, frames, handmade items, Christmas decorations, toys, etc. (Please, no clothing unless it is holiday specific.)

The **drop-off dates are:**

**December 3:** 9 a.m.-12 p.m.,

**December 8:** 10 a.m.-3 p.m., and

**December 9:** 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Questions, please text or email Carrie Bruggers at (773) 294-4446 or [crbruggs@gmail.com](mailto:crbruggs@gmail.com).

## **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](mailto:Lrdykstra@aol.com) if you would like to contribute a scarf or hat. You can drop off completed items at the office.

## **JOIN THE MOVEMENT - provided by SPARC**

This Advent, as we await and prepare for the coming of transformational love in flesh and bone, 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, [ucc.org/abolition-advent-calendar](http://ucc.org/abolition-advent-calendar). Learn more about these daily devotionals and embodied spiritual practices here, [tinyurl.com/37umnzjb](http://tinyurl.com/37umnzjb). 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**

### **Reducing Food Waste (Suggestions from Pete Peterson, World Wildlife Fund)**

The EPA estimates that during the holidays food waste increases by about 25%.

Perhaps we are driven by images of bountiful tables filled with family favorites and specialty products. Many of these images arose when food insecurity was high; for example, as during the Great Depression in the 1930s.

We live in a time of abundance for most people. However, to waste food is to waste natural resources and contribute to global warming. This holiday season consider:

- Plan just enough and let go of the image of the groaning board;
- Emphasize vegetarian offerings;
- Look for biodegradable containers to distribute leftovers;
- Freeze what you cannot use for later enjoyment;
- Share with neighbors!

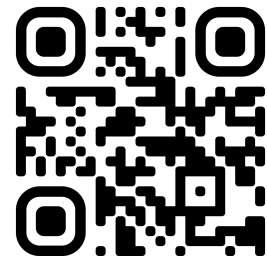
## **PASTORS' SABBATICAL SCHEDULE**

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](https://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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:JenniferLKew@gmail.com), or Pastor Jeff, [jcarlson@spucc.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:pamelawoll@sbcglobal.net) with questions, or [info@spucc.org](mailto:info@spucc.org) to be added to the email list.

**CHURCH CENTER** – [spucc.churchcenter.com](http://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](mailto:danielle.mayfield@spucc.org). Register here: [spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1850397](http://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](mailto:marcia@volkonline.com).

**EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM & CARDS** – Follow this link for additional information: [spucc.churchcenter.com/people/forms/178271](http://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](mailto:nlanda05@yahoo.com) or Rick Peterson at [rnpeterson2017@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](http://spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/mom-s-group) or contact Pastor Liz at [lnickerson@spucc.org](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](mailto:marciaknudson@gmail.com).

**ST. PAULS SOCIAL** – Get better acquainted with other adults at St. Pauls. If you are interested in hosting, please contact Jen Luerssen at [jenluerssen@yahoo.com](mailto:jenluerssen@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](http://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 [cindyzinn11@gmail.com](mailto:cindyzinn11@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](mailto:jcarlson@spucc.org)), Marti Pechnyo ([mpechnyo@gmail.com](mailto:mpechnyo@gmail.com)), or Barb Kaiser ([bkaiser2213@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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. There are still many dates available this year!

Sign up for 2023 dates at [spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1517246](http://spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1517246).

Sign up for 2024 flowers at [spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967767](http://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](http://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](mailto:bhafner2@att.net)) or Bob Ball ([Robert.f.ball@outlook.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto:lynnebrenan@yahoo.com) or (630) 542-7012. Learn more here: [tinyurl.com/4sfbcmpx](https://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 for 2023: [spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1508612](https://spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1508612)  
Sign up for 2024 reading: [spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967800](https://spucc.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/1967800)

### **BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Please send announcements for St. Pauls-sponsored events to [info@spucc.org](mailto: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](https://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, over 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](mailto:mfitzgerald@spucc.org)

Associate Pastor Jeff Carlson, [jcarlson@spucc.org](mailto:jcarlson@spucc.org)

Associate Pastor Liz Nickerson, [lnickerson@spucc.org](mailto:lnickerson@spucc.org)

For a complete list of St. Pauls Staff, Governance, and Lay Leadership  
Please visit [www.spucc.org/contact](http://www.spucc.org/contact)

**St. Pauls United Church of Christ**  
**2335 N Orchard St. | Chicago, IL 60614**  
**(773) 348-3829   [www.spucc.org](http://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 LGPTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

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