

December 31, 2023

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

***Please silence cell phones.***

*Bibles for use during worship are available at each entrance to the Sanctuary.  
Assisted listening devices and Bluetooth hearing aid guides are in the Narthex.  
The Nursery and Toddler Room are open for children ages 0-5, from 10 to 11 a.m.  
However, there is no childcare today, December 31st.*

THOUGHT FOR PREPARATION

"This is where we come with our hopes, invisible before us,  
untouched and still possible."

W.S. Merwin

PRELUDE

*Divinum Mysterium*  
Scott Banjavcic, organ

Wilbur Held

INTROIT

*From Heaven Unto Earth I Come*  
Kurt R. Hansen

CHIMES

WELCOME

Liz Nickerson

\* WELCOMING EACH OTHER

\* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Oh God, you sent your son into a realm of clerics and kings

**All: to teach the wise and save the world.**

One: Give us eyes to see and ears to hear.

**All: Give us new lives and humble hearts!**

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

\* HYMN

*Once in Royal David's City*



1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a  
2. He came down to earth from heav - en, who is  
3. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his

low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her  
God and Lord of all, And his shel - ter was a  
own re - deem - ing love; And that child so dear and

ba - by, in a man - ger for his bed: Mar - y  
sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall; With the  
gen - tle is our Lord in heav - en a - bove; And he

was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
poor and mean and low - ly, lived on earth this Sav - ior low - ly.  
leads his chil - dren on to the place where he has gone.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Matt Fitzgerald

**God of silent nights and starry skies,  
you surround us with signs of your presence.  
We fail to notice or grow tired of looking.  
Forgive our dull eyes and jaded lives.  
Make us alert, freshly alert, newly alert  
to the ways you make yourself known.  
Amen.**

## MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

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

## RESPONSE

### *Away in a Manger*

Away in manger, no crib for a bed.  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the sky look down where he lay.  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep in the hay.

## SCRIPTURE

David Faulkner

*Luke 2:22-40*

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,  
according to your word,  
for my eyes have seen your salvation,  
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
a light for revelation to the gentiles  
and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, broke into an anthem of praise to God, and then began to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

**\* 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)*

\* RESPONSE

*Away in a Manger*

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you Lord Jesus, protect me I pray,  
And stay by my side until night turns to day.

Be near me Lord Jesus, I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever and love me I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven to live with you there.

SERMON

"Shovel the Snow"

Matt Fitzgerald

\* HYMN

*Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*



1. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice\_\_\_\_ with heart and soul and voice;\_\_
2. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice\_\_\_\_ with heart and soul and voice;\_\_
3. Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice\_\_\_\_ with heart and soul and voice;\_\_



now give heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now you know of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



Ox and ass be - fore him bow, a - sleep with - in the  
God has o - pened heav - en's door, and you are blessed for -  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -



man - ger now. Christ is born to - day,\_\_\_ Christ is born to - day!  
- ev - er - more. Christ was born for this,\_\_\_ Christ was born for this!  
- last - ing hall. Christ was born to save,\_\_\_ Christ was born to save!

OFFERTORY

*What Songs Were Sung*  
Todd Coe, tenor and Scott Banjavcic, organ

John Jacob Niles

We cannot tell  
We do not know  
What songs were sung  
So long ago  
When Mary birthed  
Her own sweet Son  
And peace and love  
Became as one.

The Son of God  
The Scripture said  
Was virgin-born in a tiny shed  
While lowly shepherds  
Stood hard by  
And heavenly sound  
Filled up the sky.

Now let us then  
Uncovered all  
Before this creche and lowly stall

Where men and angels dignify  
God's gift His Son  
In humility.

We do not know  
We cannot tell  
What songs were sung  
Or what starlight fell  
Or where the holy mysterys stand.  
For so many years  
And so many lands.

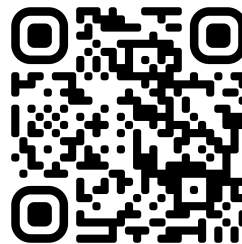
We cannot tell  
We do not know  
What songs were sung  
So long ago  
When Mary birthed  
Her own sweet Son  
And peace and love  
Became as One.

*You can give to St. Pauls electronically:*

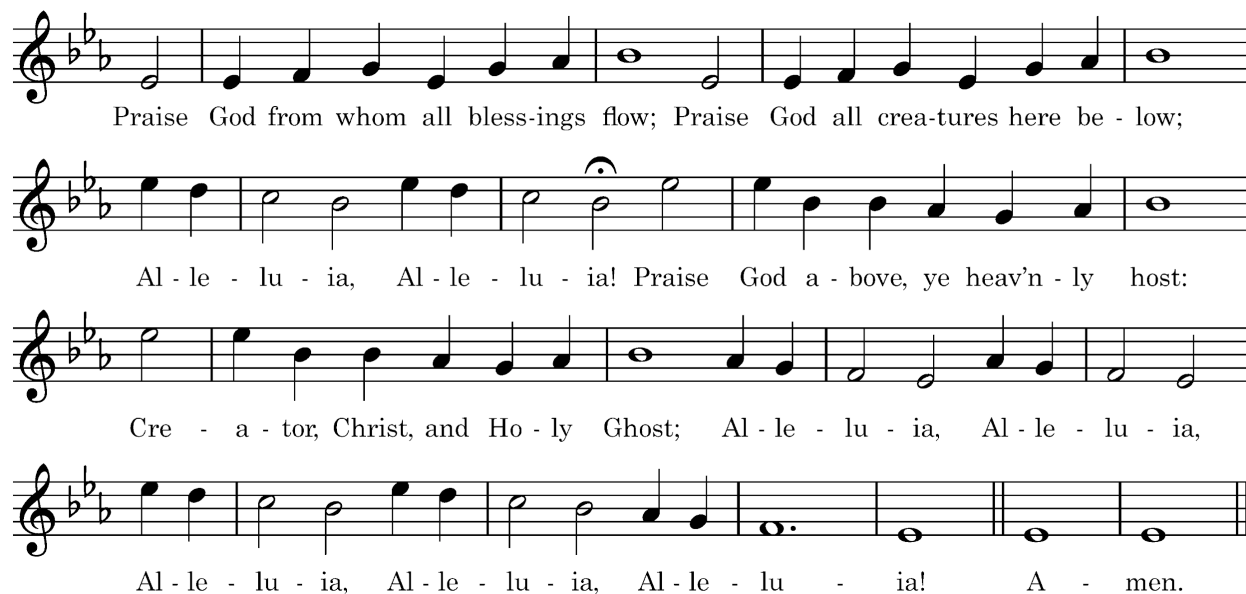
*Scan this code with your cell phone camera,*

*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).*



\* FESTIVAL DOXOLOGY



Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; Praise God all crea-tures here be - low;  
Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God a - bove, ye heav'n - ly host:  
Cre - a - tor, Christ, and Ho - ly Ghost; Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,  
Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia! A - men.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

\* HYMN

*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,

\* BENEDICTION

\* BENEDICTION RESPONSE

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o, Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - - o.

POSTLUDE

*Rejoice!*  
St. Arbucks Quartet

Richard Smallwood

***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, downstairs, directly beneath the Sanctuary.***

**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

- **There is no childcare today, December 31st.**
- Childcare is available for babies and toddlers up to age 5 during worship from 10 to 11 a.m. in the Nursery and Toddler Room, downstairs. Activity “busy bags” are available in the Narthex for children to use during the service.
- SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION classes are in session. Students are dismissed with their teachers during the worship service and parents pick up children after the service in their classrooms.
- High School Sunday School class meets on the first and third Sundays of the month. Winter 2024 dates will be announced soon. High schoolers meet immediately following the service in the Youth Lounge, downstairs. Parents and teens should join the High School GroupMe for up-to-date information.

## TODAY’S WORSHIP LEADERS

**Clergy:** Liz Nickerson, Matt Fitzgerald

**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:** David Faulkner

**Head Usher:** Beatrice Jaji

**Ushers:** Doug Clark, David Faulkner

**Gatekeeper:** Dodd Brown

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

**Custodian:** Ramiro Gonzalez

## BORN THIS WEEK IN DECEMBER/JANUARY

*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. 31 Tyler Harrington-Meinders, Justin Hartanov, Jessica Parman, Claire Nitzsche

Jan. 1 Addie Kohler, Dante Williams, Nathan Chamberlain

Jan. 3 Aaron Lawson, Brian Earl, Susan Michod, Theresa Busker

Jan. 5 Carter Kuhlman, Charles Hall, Christy Frisch, Sally Glowiak

Jan. 6 Liz Harper

## 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.*

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:mfitzgerald@spucc.org).

**JAN. 7 - CHILDREN'S BIBLE OFF BROADWAY REHEARSALS BEGIN** - All youth ages 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:lnickerson@spucc.org).

### **JAN. 15 - UCAN MLK DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE** - 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

UCAN's Nichols Center - 3605 W. Fillmore Street, Chicago

St. Pauls is invited to join our friends at UCAN to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by serving others, remembering those we've lost, and promoting peace in our community. Dr. King's willingness to serve and encourage solidarity inspires us. On this day, we will stand together with UCAN staff, family members, friends, and participants to remember lives lost and build a stronger foundation for peace. The program will include a prayer for the community, a service project to assemble comfort kits for anyone suffering loss, and a catered lunch. Register online at: [ucanichicago.org/mlk-day](http://ucanichicago.org/mlk-day).

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **A MUSICAL GIFT FOR YOU!**

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

[open.spotify.com/album/ÅFEGÁgRZPMTNBvaBJNborm](https://open.spotify.com/album/ÅFEGÁgRZPMTNBvaBJNborm).

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

[music.apple.com/us/album/mid-winter-gifts-ep/611741689](https://music.apple.com/us/album/mid-winter-gifts-ep/611741689).

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

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

#### **MESSIAH/COMPLEX**

SPARC celebrates the peace and awe of this season by introducing *Messiah/Complex*, a visually stunning, open and affirming Canadian film celebrating the incredible text of *The Messiah* in a 21st century-worthy reimagining. As SPARC (St Pauls Anti-Racism Cluster) endeavors to explore ways to live our faith in an age of injustice. The vision here incorporates Indigenous spirituality and examines our relationship with God, family, and the physical world. Anti-racism is also opening ourselves to perspectives, gifts, and the Divine we can't perceive without reaching beyond our own experience. Use the link below to register for your free ticket; cast that link to your largest home screen. Link: [atgtheatre.com/upcoming/messiah-complex](https://atgtheatre.com/upcoming/messiah-complex).

### **CREATION CORNER - provided by Green Team**

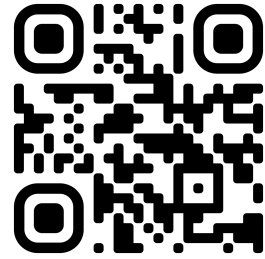
#### **REFLECT ON CREATION JUSTICE**

Look back at the past year. What actions did you take for the environment? Celebrate what has been done. Challenge yourself to add new actions in the coming year. What have you seen or heard about that you can incorporate into your faith commitment for creation justice? The challenge is great, but God's Holy Spirit guides and sustains us. New Year's resolutions notoriously end up broken, but we are in covenant with God. Yes, we fail, but God is faithful and extends us the grace of beginning again. The new year signals grace-filled beginnings.

## 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 Time: Tuesdays: 5:30-8:30 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 Luerksen at [jenluerksen@yahoo.com](mailto:jenluerksen@yahoo.com). Subscribe to the distribution list below, or look out for future events in the bulletin calendar. [spucc.churchcenter.com/groups/saint-pauls-groups/st-pauls-social](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 [cindyball11@gmail.com](mailto:cindyball11@gmail.com).

**STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. PAULS** – If you're in need of support through a tough time and would like to be matched with someone who would support you with companionship and prayer, or you're feeling called to offer support, speak to Pastor Jeff Carlson ([jcarlson@spucc.org](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. Sign up here: [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](http://tinyurl.com/4sfbcmpx).

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

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

## TODAY'S MUSIC

The Introit, ***From Heaven Above Unto Earth I Come***, is one of the most recognised German Christmas hymns. The original music and text are both by Martin Luther (1483-1546), the founder of the Lutheran Church and the cause of the Reformation. The hymn had 15 stanzas (!), and Luther used it as a “game hymn” about the birth of Christ. The tune, VOM HIMMEL HOCH, takes its name from the first line of text in German.

***Once in Royal David's City*** became popular as the traditional opening carol of the “Festival of Lessons and Carols” broadcast each year from King’s College Chapel at Cambridge in England. The text was composed in 1848, not long after the founding of our St. Pauls, by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), the wife of the bishop of Ireland. She wrote many hymn texts specifically for children. The tune, IRBY, was composed in 1849 by Henry J. Gauntlett (1805-1876). Gauntlett became the organist at his father’s church and, after beginning a career in law, gave it up to become a full-time church musician. He even held patents on organ mechanical parts.

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.

***Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*** is a translation of the original Latin by John Mason Neale (1818-1886). He was born into an evangelical home, became an Anglican clergy, but had real sympathies for Catholicism. IN DULCI JUBILO, which means “in sweet rejoicing,” is an early undated folk dance.

***What Songs Were Sung*** is an American folk song curated and arranged by John Jacob Niles (1892-1980). Niles is often referred to as the “Dean of American Balladeers.” He was at the heart of the American folk song revival in the 1950s and 1960s along with such luminaries as Pete Seeger; Joan Baez; Peter, Paul and Mary; and Bob Dylan. He was born in Kentucky and became a serious student of Appalachian folk music. He transcribed melodies and words that were shared with him as part of the oral tradition. *What Songs Were Sung* is one of the songs Niles transcribed. After serving in the Army Air Corps in World War II, he remained in France to study music and then returned to America to continue his studies at the Cincinnati Conservatory.

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 beloved texts is *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*. ANTIOCH was composed by George Frideric Handel (1685-1759), who also composed *Messiah*, and was adapted as a hymn by Lowell Mason (1792-1872). For his contributions, Mason is often referred to as the father of American church music.

***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.

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

### **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](http://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. Arbuckle 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.
- Betty Voice being treated for sepsis.
- Family and friends of Karen Rieck at her death.
- David Sr., father of David Faulkner, who is dealing with cardiac and dehydration health concerns.
- Pat Kirby, hospitalized for tests.
- Liz Kurman recovering from elbow surgery
- Sister-in-law of Gloria Joseph, dealing with a cancer diagnosis.
- Leslie, sister of Mary Stainton, diagnosed with a brain tumor.
- Students and staff of the GCE school in Chicago, which recently closed.
- Leeanne Tongue.
- Friends and family of Bo at his death.
- Leroy Johnson, husband of Karen L. Johnson, diagnosed with acute leukemia.
- New member Irem Metin, who is recovering from surgery. Please keep Irem, her husband William, and sons Aidan and Benjamin in your prayers.
- Sarah and her children, Emma and Jack, at the loss of their husband/father in an accident.
- Carole Crowley, recovering from a stroke.

### **Prayer, Support, Mental Health Resources**

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

## ABOUT ST. PAULS

*Making a Joyful Sound in the City!*

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

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

Most important, during the past 180 years we are glad to have introduced thousands of children and adults to the amazing, inclusive, life changing, uplifting love of God. We do so in worship that is traditional, but far from conventional.

Senior Pastor Matt Fitzgerald, [mfitzgerald@spucc.org](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 LGBTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

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