

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025

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

"Mary did not cry, 'I cannot. I am not worthy,' Nor, 'I have not the strength.'
She did not submit with gritted teeth, raging, coerced Bravest of all humans,
consent illumined her." Denise Levertov

PRELUDE *Infant Holy* Keith Chapman
Kevin Dzierzawski, organ

CHIMES

INTROIT *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People*
Chancel Choir

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE - The Candle of Peace Karen Fisher & MHP family

WELCOME Matt Fitzgerald

* WELCOMING EACH OTHER

* CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Day will dawn upon us!

All: A child shall be born unto us!

One: The Son of God, full of truth and light.

**All: His name shall be Wonderful, Counselor,
Mighty God, Prince of Peace!**

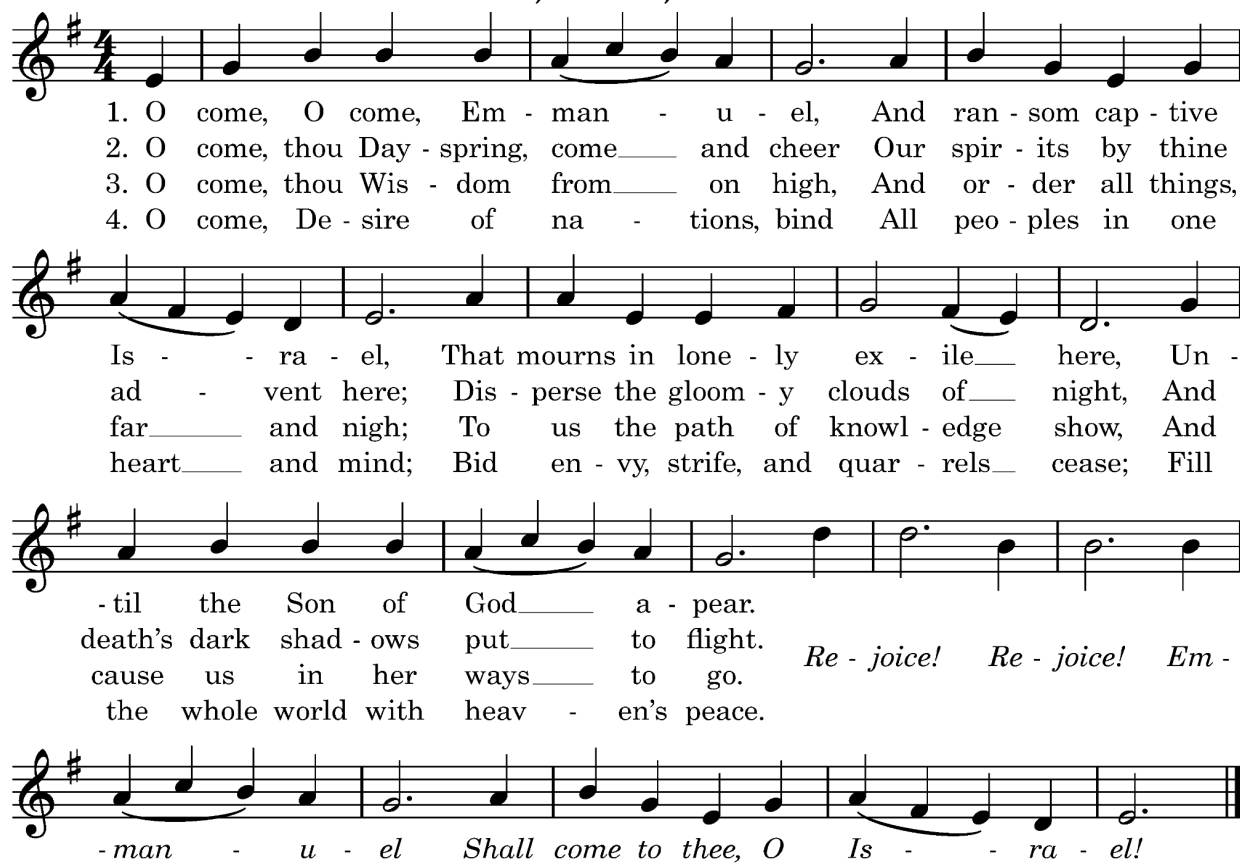
One: Prepare the way of the Lord in the wilderness!

All: Come quickly, Emmanuel!

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

* 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

One: It was cold.

Mary and Joseph were afraid,
 poor, and uncertain.
None of this stopped the birth.

**All: Oh God, we confess that
 we are still cold and still afraid,
 poor in so many ways
 and even more uncertain
 than Jesus' teenaged mother.
 Forgive our poverty of imagination.
 Forgive the uncertainty
 our empiricism inflicts on faith.
 Forgive our cold hearts.
 Forgive our timid hope.
 Shine your light upon us.
 Help us see that *none of these things will stop Christ's birth.*
 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

Es ist ein' Ros entsprungen

Kurt R. Hansen, tenor

SCRIPTURE

Cici Coquillet

Matthew 1:18-25

The birth of Jesus Christ happened like this. When Mary was engaged to Joseph, just before their marriage, she was discovered to be pregnant—by the Holy Spirit. Chagrined and noble, Joseph did not want to see her disgraced. He planned to break off the engagement quietly. But while he was turning the matter over in his mind an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife! What she has conceived is conceived through the Holy Spirit, and she will give birth to a son, whom you will call Jesus (‘the Saviour’) for it is he who will save his people from their sins.”

All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet—‘Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bear a son, and they shall call his name

Emmanuel’. (“Emmanuel” means “God with us.”)

When Joseph woke up he did what the angel had told him. He married Mary, but they did not enjoy their wedding night until she had given birth to a son.

* 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)

*RESPONSE

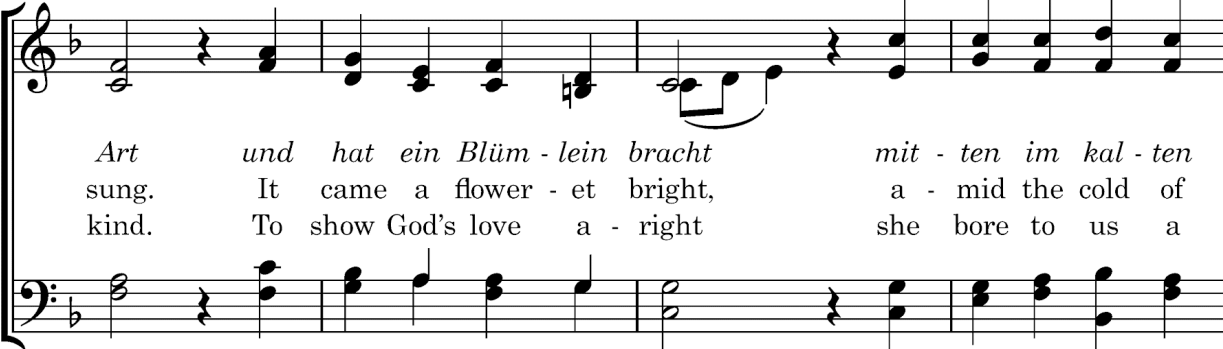
Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming




Solo Es, ist ein' Ros ent - sprun - gen aus ein - er Wur - zel
 1. Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der stem has
 2. I - sa - iah had fore - told it, the Rose I have in



zart, wie uns die Al - ten sun - gen: von Jes - se kam die
sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as saints of old have
mind, With Mar - y we be - hold it, the Vir - gin Moth - er



Art und hat ein Blüm - lein bracht mit - ten im kal - ten
sung. It came a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
kind. To show God's love a - right she bore to us a



Win - ter wohl zu der hal - ben Nacht.
win - ter, when half spent was the night.
Sav - ior, when half spent was the night.

SERMON

"Inconceivable!"

Matt Fitzgerald

* RESPONSE

What Child Is This



1. What child is this, who laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is sleep-ing?
2. Why lies the Child in man-ger bare where ox and ass are feed-ing?
3. Bring gifts of in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, join in ju - bi - la - tion;



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herdswatch are keep-ing?
Give heed, draw near; for sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.
The Ho - ly Child, though meek and mild, has come with God's sal - va - tion.



This, this the an - gels sing, is Christ, God's ho - ly of - fer - ing;
Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
Raise, raise the song on high, the moth - er sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste your praise to bring the babe, the child of Mar - y!
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the child of Mar - y!
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the child of Mar - y!

OFFERTORY

Lux aurumque
(Sung in Latin)
Chancel Choir

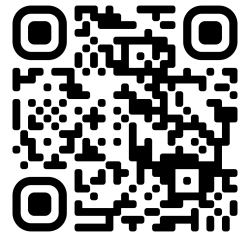
Eric Whitacre

Lux
Calida,
Gravisque
Pura velut aurum
Et canunt angeli molliter
Canunt molliter
Modo natum.

Light
Warm
And heavy
Pure like gold
And angels sing softly
They sing softly
To the newborn babe.

ELECTRONIC OFFERING OPTIONS

*Scan this code with your cell phone camera,
Church Center at spucc.churchcenter.com/giving,
PayPal at spucc.org/paypal, or Zelle to giving@spucc.org.*



WELCOME CARD

*If you are a visitor, welcome! Thank you for
worshiping with us today!
If you would like to learn more about the church, please
scan the QR code.*



PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Jeff Carlson

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

* HYMN

On This Day Earth Shall Ring



1. On this day earth shall ring With the song
2. His the doom, ours the mirth; When he came
3. God's bright star, o'er his head, Wise men three
4. On this day an - gels sing; With their song



chil - dren sing To the Lord, Christ our King, Born on earth to
 down to earth, Beth - le - hem saw his birth; Ox and ass be -
 to him led, Kneel - ing low by his bed, Lay their gifts be -
 earth shall ring, Prais - ing Christ, heav - en's King, Born on earth to



save us; Him the Fa - ther gave us.
 - side him From the cold would hide him. *Id - e - o - o - o,*
 - fore him, Praise him and a - dore him.
 save us. Peace and love he gave us.



Id - e - o - o - o, *Id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!*

* BENEDICTION

* BENEDICTION RESPONSE



Re - jice! Re - jice! Em - man - - u - el



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

POSTLUDE

O Little Town Of Bethlehem
 St. Arbucks Quartet

arr. Carl Strommen

ADVENT WREATH - Each week during Advent, we light a 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 brings. Today, we light the candle of **peace**. Each week, a different member of the Migrant Housing Project (MHP) Team will light a candle. There was no room at the inn for Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, but at St. Pauls we have room for our Venezuelan migrant families. Some of our migrant families will accompany MHP members, as their schedules allow. Many of these families work on Sunday mornings. All of our families have achieved legal working status in the U.S. Our Christmas Eve offering will be dedicated to the MHP Legal Aid Fund.

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.

A Surprise Christmas Gift! Pledges Received by January 16 Will Be Matched. The Giving Committee is happy to announce that we have received an unanticipated Christmas gift! A Saint Pauls member pledged \$50,000 to our 2026 campaign, to be used as a matching fund for any and all pledges or increases to existing pledges, received by January 16th. Between December 19 and January 16th, the first \$50,000 in new or increased 2026 pledges will be doubled! To make a pledge, fill out a pew card or pledge online at spucc.org/pledge. To increase a pledge already made for 2026, contact our Bookkeeper, Claire, at bookkeeper@spucc.org.



TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Clergy: Matt Fitzgerald, Jeff Carlson

Music Director: Kurt R. Hansen

Organist: Kevin Dzierzawski

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

Scripture Reader: Cici Coquillet

Advent Wreath Lighter: Karen Fisher and an MHP family

Head Usher: Beatrice Jaji

Gatekeeper: Dodd Brown

Camera Operators: Nana Addadzi-Koom, Jim Alrutz, Marie Ankenman, Bob Ball, Brian Hafner, Trevor Hafner

Custodian: Ramiro Gonzalez

We are grateful for the generous gift of Jim Miller in memory of his beloved wife, Pattie O'Reilly Miller. His gift funded the poinsettias on our altar.

Would you like to donate altar flowers? Sign up here: tinyurl.com/4w6fu5js.

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. 22 Krixbel y Fausto Jr Velazco Navarro, Lexi Patton

Dec. 23 Jim Alrutz, Kristy Combs, Megan Behnke, Steve Hansen, Valerie Schimp

Dec. 24 Steve Garrett

Dec. 25 Chuck Mize, Kevin Tavas, Matthew Burns

Dec. 26 Sarah Zelonis, Sue Holt

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.

You may also share your request at tinyurl.com/3j6sayku.

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.

- The family and friends of Kevin O'Brien on his unexpected death this week.
- Paul Scanlan, Sare Scanlan's father, and Mark Huddle's brother-in-law, who is hospitalized with a heart infection.
- Liz Kaplan, Mark Huddle's girlfriend, who is undergoing treatment for stage 4 lung cancer.
- Angie, struggling to recover from multiple surgeries.
- Alicia Braun and her family on the death of her father, Joseph Kroenert.
- Kate and Angus Atkins-Trimnell, Pastor Liz's sister and brother-in-law, for the death of Angus's father, Ralph Trimnell.
- Families undergoing treatments for infertility.
- Barbara Benjamin's husband, Tom Coffield, recovering from surgery.
- Prayers for Rick Sensenbrenner's mother, Marie, as she navigates various health conditions.
- The Camp Mystic families who are suffering unimaginable loss from the July 4th floods.
- Peace for all of God's children.
- Jeffrey Whitridge and Greg Clemons at the death of Jeffrey's brother, Mark.
- Lorri Wirsum's daughter, Ruby, facing health concerns, and her daughter-in-law, Trish, on the death of Trish's mother, Sandy Henderson.
- Donn Schimp and his family as Donn continues cancer treatment.
- Dianne Witkowski, as she deals with cancer chemotherapy.

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.

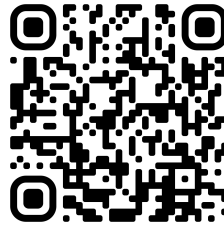
ADVENT & CHRISTMAS AT ST. PAULS

SUN, DEC 21 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, *LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF PEACE*
10 a.m. - Worship

WED, DEC 24 CHRISTMAS EVE
5 p.m. - Family Service, Sanctuary
9 p.m. - Candlelight Service, Sanctuary
Christmas story, carols, candles, and choir

*Scan here for more
information about
Advent events*

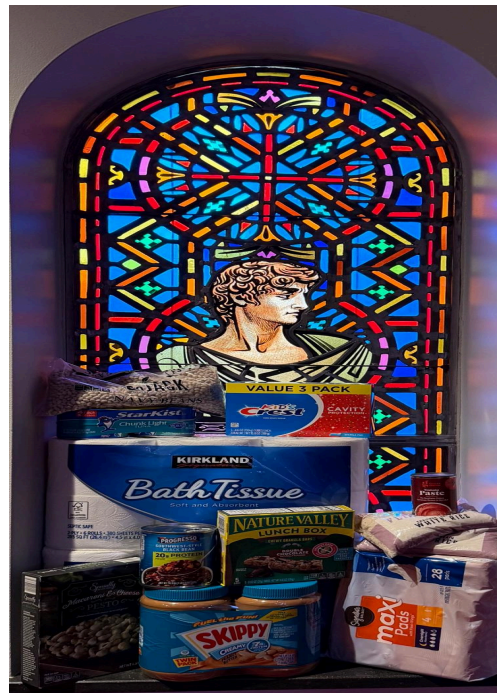
✦ *RSVP for childcare*



CHRISTMAS GIVING

We are going to “Fill the Sills” throughout the holiday season. Common Pantry has requested:

- ✓ protein
- ✓ diapers (adult and child)
- ✓ wipes
- ✓ feminine hygiene products
- ✓ shopping bags with handles
- ✓ cooking oil
- ✓ dish soap
- ✓ bath soap
- ✓ coffee
- ✓ kids snacks
- ✓ spices & herbs
- ✓ salt and pepper



To donate directly to the Common Pantry, go to www.commonpantry.org/.

UPCOMING EVENTS

TODAY – YOUTH BAKE SALE TO SUPPORT LA TIENDITA AT SOCIAL HOUR - 11 a.m., Social Hall

A St. Pauls high school student and her friends are volunteering at La Tiendita, a free store that supports immigrant families. Their bake sale will raise funds to create winter care packages for migrant families. So enjoy some homemade baked goods and help families in need!

DECEMBER 25 – INVITATION TO CHRISTMAS BRUNCH

Join us for a Christmas Day brunch potluck at St. Pauls. Sure to be included is a wassail cup, conviviality and fellowship! All ages welcome.

Time: 11-3 pm

Place: St. Pauls

Contact: Ninon Freeman for additional information, reservations and food/drink

Suggestions: 312-447-1330 and nlanda05@yahoo.com.

JANUARY 4, 2026 – BIBLE OFF BROADWAY REHEARSALS

Bible Off Broadway is coming on February 1, 2026! If you have kids age 3 through high school, remember that January's church school program is Bible Off Broadway rehearsals! Starting January 4, bring your kids to the Social Hall by 9:30 a.m. sharp each Sunday for the rehearsal kickoff. Whether on stage or behind the scenes, we'll have something for every young person to do and enjoy. Please fill out the BOB Parent Survey at www.surveymonkey.com/r/QDF538W so we know what your child would like to do!

JANUARY 7, 2026 – NEW YEAR, NEW BIBLE STUDY BEGINS! - Noon, Zoom

What did it mean for the early Christians to follow Jesus in the midst of a violent world empire? How were they to live as an alternative community that looked like Jesus and not like Rome? These are questions they faced and that we also face in our post-Christian world. This winter we'll be studying 1 & 2 Peter and Jude, small books that wrestle with these big questions. Led by Jeff Carlson, we meet every Wednesday over Zoom for about 40 minutes. Sign up here: tinyurl.com/y3w7fkpw.

JANUARY 11, 2026 – LUNCH MAKING FOR LPCS - 11:15 a.m., Kitchen

Right after church, come to SPUCC's kitchen and help make sack lunches for the residents of Lincoln Park Community Services. We provide all the needed food, but volunteers are asked to contribute \$25 each to help cover food costs for the lunches. Donations can be made via cash, Venmo, or Zelle. We're typically done by 12:15 p.m.

If you're interested, please use Church Center to sign-up: tinyurl.com/e4m9v9zz.

JANUARY 11, 2026 – DINNER MAKING FOR LPCS - 4 p.m., Kitchen

Join us in preparing and delivering dinner for residents of the Lincoln Park Community Shelter. We meet at SPUCC at 4 p.m. and deliver the meal to LPCS (600 W. Fullerton) around 6 p.m. We provide the needed food, but volunteers are asked to contribute \$25 each to help cover food costs for the dinner. Donations can be made via cash, Venmo, or Zelle.

If you're interested, please use Church Center to sign-up: tinyurl.com/5dmys5hc.

JANUARY 28, 2026 – COOKIES FOR A CAUSE (BAKE YOUR FAVORITE COOKIES AT HOME NOW!) - 5:30 p.m., Kitchen

Join the St. Paul's cookie bakers for dinner, socializing, and cookie making on Wednesday, January 28. Meet us in the kitchen at 5:30 p.m. (or when you can). We eat dinner around 6:30 p.m. Cookies will be donated to A Just Harvest and the Lincoln Park Community Shelter. If you can't attend but want to contribute, drop off cookies labeled with your name and "MARCIA" at the church by Wednesday, January 28. To reserve a spot or find out what supplies are needed, contact Marcia Volk at marcia@volkonline.com or (773) 307-6866, or Gloria Joseph at glrjoseph@yahoo.com.

FEBRUARY 1, 2026 – NEW MEMBER CLASS - 11:15 a.m., Room 211

Join pastors, members and others curious about St. Pauls for our 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. See upcoming dates here: spucc.org/new_member_classes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NEW! OPT-IN TO TEXTING FROM ST. PAULS

Want to receive reminders and announcements via text?
Simply scan the QR code and fill out the form!



THEOLOGY AND POETRY IN A YEAR

What does it mean to say God is in control? What does Jesus accomplish? How should I live as a Christian? What kind of authority does the bible have? Led by Pastor Matt, this group is for those who want a clear understanding of Christianity. REGISTER HERE: tinyurl.com/2hhd7bfe Rather than reading the work of a theologian, we will read eight poems a month, then meet over Zoom for a monthly class, for one year. Each set of poems will speak to a key Christian doctrine. You don't need to love (or even like) poems to join this lively, powerful program. At the end of the year, you'll understand Christianity better than ever, and may be transformed in other ways. Meetings will be in the evening, standing date TBD.

INTERGENERATIONAL ORCHESTRA – MUSICIANS WANTED

Our Intergenerational Orchestra will again perform in worship on March 8, 2026. Orchestra members include pre-teens, teenagers and adults of all ages and abilities. We especially encourage young people and new members to participate! The orchestra is open to anyone who plays an orchestral string instrument or a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument. Rehearsals are on Sundays immediately after church for an hour, on 2/8, 2/15 and 2/22. Contact Mark Mosley at (773) 732-0625 or mwmosley@gmail.com to learn more. Join us as we “Make a Joyful Sound in the City!”

OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT WITH CHURCH GOVERNANCE

Have you been looking for an opportunity to become more involved in the St. Pauls community? The Nominating Committee is beginning to fill vacancies on the Church Council and our Standing Ministries. Every Ministry has vacancies to fill with terms beginning in March 2026. You can learn about the Council and Ministries at spucc.org/Governance. To be considered for a position, please reach out to Nominating Committee Chair Jan Bail at JanBail@me.com or (773) 472-5678.

DECEMBER’S BLAST FROM THE PAST

For many years, "The Christmas Tree Ship" captained by St. Pauls member Herman Schuenemann, "Captain Santa", brought trees down from the north and docked at the southwest corner of the Clark Street bridge to sell his trees and also give them away to those in need. On November 23, 1912, Schuenemann's ship went down in a storm near Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and all aboard perished. Schuenemann's wife, Barbara, and daughters, Elsie, Hazel and Pearl, continued the business into the 1930s. A bronze plaque on the bridge, given by St. Pauls, commemorates the sinking.

CHURCH SCHOOL REGISTRATION

Please register your K-6th Sunday School students, 7th and 8th grade Confirmation students, and High School class members by scanning this QR code.



PALESTINE STUDY GROUP

Join us as we discuss the new book *One Day, Everyone Will Always Have Been Against This* by Omar El Akkad. In this accessible and powerful work, a novelist examines the West's response to the destruction of Gaza. Contact David Burnett at burnett.db@gmail.com.

YOUTH CHOIRS

Does your child like to sing? Sign them up for one of our youth choirs! We rehearse Sunday mornings: Kinderchapel Singers (preschool) 9:50-10 a.m., Social Hall. Children's Choir (K-3rd) 9:30-9:55 a.m., Chapel. Paul's People (4-8th) 9:30-9:55 a.m., Parlor. Reach out to Tom Clancy (KS) tm.ferrin@gmail.com, Breanna Coe (CC) breannacoe@gmail.com, or Kecia Waldschmidt (PP) keciagerman@hotmail.com for more information. Come make a joyful sound in the city with us!

CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

There are many ways you can serve as a volunteer with the children and youth ministry at events, with Sunday School, and in the nursery. If you love nurturing children, this is a fun way to make a difference! Volunteers complete a background check and always serve in pairs of two, following our child safety policy. Whether you can help for a few hours a month or on a regular basis, your time and kindness will make a meaningful impact. Sign up for a Sunday nursery childcare slot here: tinyurl.com/2j5dy6fp or contact Pastor Liz at lnickerson@spucc.org to learn more about other opportunities to help.

VOLUNTEER AS A SOCIAL HOUR HOST

Visiting a new church can feel intimidating—especially walking into Social Hour without knowing anyone. We're looking for volunteers to serve as Social Hour hosts. The role is simple: be on the lookout for people you don't know, greet them, and help them feel welcome. They might be new to St. Pauls or simply someone you haven't yet met. Either way, you'll brighten their day and make new friends. You can volunteer once a month, once a quarter, or whenever it works for you. Sign up to host on an upcoming Sunday here: tinyurl.com/3f384fcm.

ST. PAULS MIGRANT HOUSING PROJECT LEGAL FUND

St. Pauls housed five Venezuelan migrant families in our building over the past two years. Today, nearly every single member of these families has achieved legal status, helping to safeguard their presence in Chicago for the time being and allowing them to work. Such legal aid is costly and ongoing. In a time of wild anxiety and uncertainty for these new friends, you can help make a difference for our migrant families by supporting our legal aid fund. If you'd like to make a donation, please choose "Migrant Housing Project - Legal Fund" from the drop-down menu on our giving page: spucc.churchcenter.com/giving.

HAVE SOME ODD JOBS? WE'VE GOT SOME WILLING WORKERS!

As they continue to work at supporting themselves financially, members of our migrant family friends would love to work for you. They are available for such tasks as house cleaning, handyman repairs, moving items, painting, deck-staining, demolition & clean-up, and carpentry on things like deck and dry-wall. We have been assigning work at a rate of \$25/hour and ask that the jobs be a minimum of 3–4 hours. You can find out more by contacting our Migrant Housing Project Coordinator David Brown at dbrown@harrington-brown.com.

"HEALING HEARTS" PET SUPPORT GROUP: ST. PAULS PET LOSS COMMUNITY

Are you struggling with losing a beloved furry friend/companion/animal assistant? Losing a pet can be one of the most heart-wrenching experiences in life. At Saint Pauls, we understand the deep bond you shared with your beloved pet/family member and we're here to offer support, understanding and a virtual shoulder to lean on. To join, visit tinyurl.com/healing-hearts-support. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month from 7–8 p.m. Age 18+ only, 30 participants maximum.

LITTLE LIGHTS ENROLLMENT 2025–2026

Fall Incentive Rewards program: Register for 25-26 classes by December 2025 and receive \$500 off tuition! Flexible class options and days available. We model and facilitate problem-solving strategies, build empathy and develop self-regulation skills. Through hands-on learning and play, children will benefit from structured socialization and gain a greater sense of themselves within our St. Pauls community. If you are interested in learning more about early education classes for your child, visit our website at www.littlelightslp.org or contact Erin Fitzgerald at erin.fitzgerald@spucc.org.

LOSS AND GRIEVING DISCUSSION GROUP

We've all lost someone we loved. Whether you lost someone you loved last month, last year, or five years ago, you can still grieve that loss. Grief changes, but it never goes away. Would you be interested in sharing stories with others who are in similar situations? We're not therapists, just your friends and neighbors who are also grieving and would like to share our ideas and learn how others are coping. We're planning to start a grief support group at St. Pauls, but we need to make sure there's interest. Please contact Pam Woll at pamelawoll3333@gmail.com if you think this might benefit you.

CREATION CORNER- provided by Green Team

Plastic Free Holiday Gifts! The following plastic-free holiday suggestions are from the "Beyond Plastics" website, beyondplastics.org:

1. Support local farming with a share or partial share of a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) box.
2. Promote democracy with a newspaper subscription, whether print or electronic.
3. Choose plastic-free gifts that reduce waste; these can be as humble as wax paper bags or as elegant as stores who provide refillable cosmetics, olive oil, even cat litter.
4. Purchase a gift certificate on-line.
5. Give an experience: meals, massages, memberships, on-line subscriptions, etc.
6. Shop at independent stores, particularly bookstores and local artisanal cooperatives.
7. Shop vintage and thrift stores and re-gift.

STEPHEN MINISTRY AT ST. PAULS

Our Stephen Ministers are here for you if you are going through a tough time.

Extensively trained in compassionate Christian caregiving, Stephen Ministers are matched confidentially with someone in our congregation who is going through a crisis, such as the death of a loved one, a diagnosis, a divorce, a job loss, etc. They meet with you once a week for an hour to offer support through listening, companionship and prayer. If you wonder whether having a Stephen Minister might be helpful for you, please speak with Pastor Jeff, jcarlson@spucc.org. Every one of us could benefit from a Stephen Minister at some point in our lives.

St. Pauls UCC
Giving Campaign 2026
October 12, 2025 - January 11, 2026
Total: \$848,079.28
Total households pledged: 163

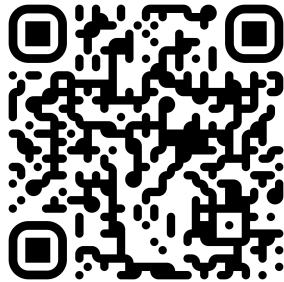
\$1,000,000
\$950,000
\$900,000
\$800,000
\$700,000
\$600,000
\$500,000
\$400,000
\$300,000
\$200,000
\$100,000

What More Are We Building?

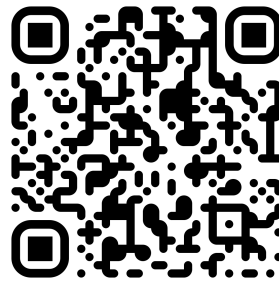
WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

Scan the QR codes to discover ways to connect with others.

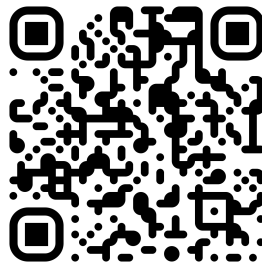
JOIN A GROUP



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



SUBMIT AN ANNOUNCEMENT



For St. Pauls sponsored events, please fill out the new form **by 10 a.m. on Wednesdays for publication in the Friday email and next Sunday bulletin**. Share personal announcements/events on our Facebook group page, St. Pauls Together. **Please limit announcements to 100 words.** Thank you!

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 until 1908. Many of us associate the carol with the annual Festival of Lessons and Carols from Kings 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.

The original German text for ***Comfort, Comfort O My People*** was written in 1671 by Johann Olearius (1611-1684). He was born into a family of Lutheran theologians and became a Lutheran pastor. The translation was by Katherine Winkworth (1828-1878), who translated many famous German hymns. She was born in England but moved with her mother to Dresden in 1845. The tune, GENEVA 42, also known as the first line of the hymn, FREU DICH SEHR, takes its name from the *Genevan Psalter of 1551* and also Psalm 42 upon which the text is based.

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

Theodore Baker (1851-1934) translated the original German into the English we love, ***Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming***. He was born in New York City and immigrated to Germany, where he spent the rest of his life. His famously created Baker's Biographical Dictionary of Musicians first published in 1900. ES IST EIN' ROS was first published in 1599 in the Cöln Gesangbuch.

The poetry for ***What Child Is This*** was written by W. Chatterton Dix (1837-1898). He composed many hymn texts, but unlike most hymnodists, Dix was a businessman, not clergy. GREENSLEEVES is an English ballad of unknown origin from the 16th century.

Lux Aurumque was composed in 2000 by Eric Whitacre (b. 1970). Whitacre is one of the most prominent American composers, especially of choral music. This motet gained international fame in 2009 when Whitacre recorded a virtual choir of thousands of video submissions. The text was originally in English and attributed to Edward Esch, a recluse, according to Whitacre. The English was translated to Latin

by poet Charles Anthony Silvestri (b. 1965), a friend of Whitacre. The story concerning Esch becomes more interesting, because it might be Whitacre's *nom de plume* as a poet. Edward Esch Whitacre is the name that was chosen for Whitacre's son. This anthem was purchased by the St. Pauls Monday Night Prayer Group in memory of Bill Kennedy, who was a long time member of the Chancel Choir.

On This Day Earth Shall Ring is a Latin hymn that was translated by Jane M. Joseph (1894-1929). She was an English composer and poet. She was a student of Gustav Holst, the composer of *The Planets*. Holst encouraged what he saw as her great talents. Joseph retained the original Latin Refrain *Ideo, o, o, gloria in excelsis Deo*. Therefore, glory to God in the highest! The tune, PERSONENT HODIE, is also Latin and unattributed.

The arrangement of ***O Little Town Of Bethlehem*** is by Carl Strommen (b. 1939). He began his college career as a literature major but completed his Masters of Music at the Eastman School of Music. He has received a number of awards for his compositions from American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).

Special Music Theme 2025-2026

Joyful Sounds

Enjoy another year of special music during worship services.

Mark these dates in your calendar!

Sunday, March 15, 2026 - Lenten Cantata

***Jesu meine Freude* - Bach**

June 13, 2026 - 7 p.m.

***Gospel Mass* - Robert Ray**

A benefit for the National Gospel Music Museum with Pilgrim Baptist Church, UCAN and St. Sabina Church.

Greater Harvest Missionary Baptist Church

5141 South State Street

Chicago, IL

ABOUT ST. PAULS

Making a Joyful Sound in the City!

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

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

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

Senior Pastor Matt Fitzgerald, mfitzgerald@spucc.org

Associate Pastor Jeff Carlson, jcarlson@spucc.org

Associate Pastor Liz Nickerson, lnickerson@spucc.org

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

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

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



WELCOME TO SAINT PAULS UCC!

Welcome to those whose hearts are on fire with faith,
and to those who bring their doubt inside our doors.

Welcome to our first time guests and
our longtime members.

Welcome to single people, tiny children,
grandparents and families of all configurations.

Welcome to those who rejoice and to those who grieve.

Welcome to LGBTQ+ people.

Welcome to each and to everyone.

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