

12/24/2020



St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

401 16th Ave. N.

Bangor, WI 54614

www.stpaulsbangor.com

Vacancy Pastor Steven Olson Cell: 706-339-5886 - Parsonage: 486-2754
Email: pastorstevenolson@gmail.com

Principal: Mr. Richard Bakken, Jr. School: 486-2641
Email: dbakken@stpaulsbangor.com

Luther High School – 783-5435

Welcome to St. Paul's! In the name of Jesus, the eternal God who came in the flesh this night, we welcome you! We're glad you could join us in praising our God. While the style of our Christmas Eve worship is different this year, we pray that the message rings out loud and clear. Our worship theme tonight is: "The Changeless Christmas in a changing world!" Because of COVID we have modified our service today. But Christ's birth is still the focus of our worship. Our joy to know this Christ-child as our Savior compels us to worship Jesus with renewed excitement and enthusiasm.

Personal Prayer Before Worship

Dearest Jesus, I thank you for this opportunity to worship you on the night of your birth. Open my heart by your Holy Spirit that through your Word I will be led to see my great need for a Savior and rejoice to have found him in the Child born in Bethlehem's manger. While many things are different in our lives this Christmas, the message of your birth to save us all remains timeless and changeless! No matter what is going on in the world around me fill my heart with Christmas peace. Hear me for your name's sake. Amen.

A Changeless Christmas for a Changing World!

A Hymn of Christmas Joy

“Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful”

7th & 8th grade sings verses 1-2

1. Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.

Refrain:

Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2. God, from true God, and Light from Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, to earth he comes,
Only begotten Son of God the Father.

Refrain

Congregation sings vs 3-4

3. Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav’n above.
Glory to God, all glory in the highest.

Refrain

4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy evening;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv’n,
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing.

Refrain

Welcome by Pastor Olson

Invocation

Pastor: We worship in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
Amen!

The Confession of Sins

Pastor: We begin our worship tonight with reminders that the Light of the world has come in the birth of Jesus Christ. How brightly his light shines in a world that is shrouded in darkness. We live in a world that is mired in the darkness of unrest and strife. Jesus was born over 2000 years ago into this world darkened by troubled consciences and sin-sick souls. The Apostle John writes:

Congregation: “*The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him*” (John 1:9-11).

Pastor: We are those people of whom the Apostle John writes. We are among those people who have been blindfolded by sin, unable to see the light of Jesus’ face shining brightly for our salvation. The Bible plainly tells us that if we say we are not darkened by sin we deceive ourselves, and the light of his truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just. He will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. With repentant hearts that are kindled by the flame of faith, we confess our sins to God pleading for his mercy for the sake of Jesus who was born to save us all!

Congregation: Dear Father in heaven, I have sinned against you and am no longer worthy to be called your child. My sins weigh heavy on my heart. I have been selfish and loveless in my actions toward you and toward my neighbor. You have every right to condemn me because of my sins. I plead for your mercy for the sake of Jesus, your Son, and my Savior.

Pastor: I bring you good news of great joy! In the town of David our Savior has been born! He is the light of the world, the light that no darkness can overcome! For by his humble birth, through his perfect life, by his sacrificial death, and in his glorious resurrection, God shines the glory of his favor upon you! Therefore, I say to you what God commands me to say: I forgive you all your sins for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior!

Congregation: Amen!

Pastor: With hearts filled with joy we listen to the children of our school share the promises of Christ’s birth to Old Testament believers. And we will hear them proclaim the good news that the promises have been fulfilled for us in Christ’s birth! May God

bless these children – and all of us – with an increase of faith and hope as we hear their familiar messages!

7-8 Recitation

Narration: Throughout the Old Testament, God’s people looked forward to the Good News of the coming Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed One, finally coming to earth to rescue people everywhere. The wait was long, yet now and again God sent a prophet to give the people added news of the coming Savior.

Recitation: Isaiah’s Good news said that the Savior would be born of a virgin, *“Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel.”*(Isaiah 7:14)

Recitation: Moses told the people some Good News when he wrote in Genesis 49:10, *“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until the one to whom it belongs comes. He will receive the obedience of the peoples.”*

Recitation: Micah added his own Good News in his fifth chapter, second verse when he wrote, *“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel. His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity”*

Recitation: Jeremiah also had some Good News to tell in his chapter 23:5, *“Listen, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, who will reign wisely as king and establish justice and righteousness on earth.”*

Narration: But the people of the Old Testament could only live in the promises of hope in the Good News. They would not see the Good News until the exact moment that God was ready to send His Son to earth.

Narration: Galatians 4:4-5 says, *“But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons.”*

Narration: To those in the Old Testament it seemed like that day would never come. To us it seems so very long ago.

Pre-K & K Recitation

Pre-K & K Song: In a Little Stable

Pre-K & K Song: The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy

1-2 Song: Away in a Manger

1-2 Recitation

Luke 2: 1-7

“In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. And everyone went to register, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

3-4 Recitation

Luke 2: 8-20

“There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified! But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ^[b] the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the

Lord has made known to us.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.”

3-4 Song: What Child is This?

5-6 Recitation

Narration: The New Testament is filled with passages that tell us what Christians did with the Good News. The following examples are given to us in the Book of Acts:

“Every day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.” Acts 5:42

“He sent his word to the people of Israel, proclaiming the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.” Acts 10:36

“...They preached the good news in that city and had gathered many disciples...” Acts 14:21

“...Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.” Acts 17:18

“Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began preaching the Christ to them.” Acts 8:5

“So those believers who were scattered went around proclaiming the gospel message.” Acts 8:4

Recitation: Again, Paul writes in Romans 5:8, *“But God shows his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”*

Recitation: Jesus’ disciple, John put it this way, *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.”*

5-6 Song (Chimes): God Loved the World So That He Gave (Congregation will sing verses 1, 3 and 4 following the introductory verse with the chimes)

1 God loved the world so that he gave
His only Son the lost to save
That all who would in him believe
Should everlasting life receive.

3 God would not have the sinner die--
His Son with saving grace is nigh.
His Spirit in the Word does teach
How we the blessed goal may reach.

4 Be of good cheer, for God's own Son
Forgives the sins that you have done.
You're justified by Jesus' blood;
Baptized, you are a child of God.

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Pastor: This is the night for which we have been waiting. The eternal Light, Jesus Christ, entered our dark world of sin by means of a humble birth. In our darkened hearts of sin God has sent his Spirit to enlighten our hearts by faith to shine with the glory of his grace!

An usher proceeds forward to light the Advent wreath candles, and the Christ candle in the center of the ring. As the candles are lit the congregation is invited to join in singing the hymn, “Joy to the World” as on the following page:

62 Joy to the World

Musical score for "Joy to the World" in G major, 3/4 time. The score consists of six staves of music with lyrics underneath. The lyrics are: 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And earth re - ceive her King; Let ev - 'ry all their songs em - ploy, While fields and thorns in - fest the ground; He comes to makes the na - tions prove The glo - ries heart pre - pare him room And heav'n and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Re - peat the make his bless - ings flow Far as the of his right - eous - ness And won - ders na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture sing, And sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - curse is found, Far as the curse is found, Far of his love, And won - ders of his love, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing. peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy. as, far as the curse is found. won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt.
Tune: ANTIOCH (CM with Repeat) George F. Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.

Children’s Message (children ages 3-10 are invited to come forward and sit at a safe distance from one another and sit in front of the steps)

Christmas Prayer

Pastor: Let us pray.
O God, you made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that, as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth, we may also come to the fullness of his joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Confession of Faith
(Explanation of the second article of the Apostles’ Creed, by Martin Luther)

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.
He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.
All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.
This is most certainly true.

Sermon: Luke 2:10-12
¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: ¹¹ Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

The Christmas Thank Offering

A Responsive Prayer at Christmas

P: Let us pray to God our Father and worship Christ our Savior, everlasting God and Mary's Son.

P: Heavenly Father, to whom glory is sung in the highest and peace is proclaimed to people on earth, give to Your holy Church the peace of sins forgiven and Your continued favor and merciful good will. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: On Christmas night You sent the angels to preach the good news of Jesus' birth. Give to all pastors of our Church courage to lead us boldly to the Christ Child. Fill us with joy that we may each make known abroad the glad tidings concerning this Child, that more may be given faith to confess Him as Lord. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: Bless our country, all her public servants, all her citizens, and all who are in authority over us. Cause Your glory to dwell among us, and let mercy, truth, and justice prevail everywhere, that throughout our land and to the ends of the earth people may come to know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: Merciful God, we thank You for the peace we enjoy as your citizens in spite of the fear that has gripped so many because of the Coronavirus. Even though our Christmas celebration looks differently this year, we offer our worship and praise to you with the same gusto and excitement as we had when we were children and heard the story of your birth for the first time. May we never lose the zeal to tell the story of your birth with our own lips. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: Remember, we pray, the homeless, hungry, and oppressed, and give them hope. Protect the lonely and homebound of our parish. Grant peace and healing to the sick and suffering. Guide the journeys of those who travel. Comfort those who mourn. Create a new and contrite heart in the erring and faith in those who have not heard the good news. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: Lord God, make a manger in the hearts of all who have come to worship the Christ Child this evening that they may treasure up and ponder the marvelous gifts of salvation that You give to us in this Holy Child. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: In the birth of Your Son, O God, you have clothed us with eternal life. We remember with thanksgiving all those who have died in the faith. Unite our voices with theirs that we may join the heavenly song of angels. Oh, come, let us adore Him,

C: Christ the Lord!

P: For all these things and whatever else You would have us ask, we implore You to hear us gracious Father, through Jesus Christ our Savior, whom together with the Holy Spirit we praise, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Distribution of the Candles

*Ushers will distribute the candles. Please help the ushers by passing the candles down your row until everyone has one. **Parents, please note:** if you don't wish to have your child holding a candle, please let the ushers know as they are distributing the candles to your row.*

The Lighting of the Candles

*Pastor Olson will light his candle from the Christ Candle, for our light and our life come from Jesus alone. The ushers will light their candles from pastor's candle. Those sitting closest to the center aisle will in turn light their candles from the ushers' candles. Continue by lighting all the candles in the row. **REMEMBER: Be sure to dip your unlit candle into the lit candle to avoid spilling hot wax!** As the candles are being lit, we will join in singing "Joy to the Word." When all the candles are lit, the overhead lights will be turned off and we will conclude our worship service in the glow of the candlelight. Please remember to keep your candle perpendicular to the floor at all times. Thank you!*

The lights are dimmed.

A Christmas Prayer

Pastor: When all was still and it was midnight, your eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gracious good will to all people on earth for you are God with us, Immanuel, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, the one and only true God, who has also taught us to pray ...

Lord’s Prayer

C: 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Congregational Hymn: CW # 60

“Silent Night! Holy Night!”

CHRISTMAS

60

Silent Night! Holy Night



1 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! All is
2 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Shep - herds
3 Si - lent night! Ho - ly night! Son of

calm, all is bright, Round yon vir - gin
quake at the sight. Glo - ries stream from
God, love's pure light Ra - diant beams from

moth - er and child. Ho - ly In - fant, so
heav - en a - far; Heav'n - ly hosts sing,
thy ho - ly face With the dawn of re -

ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
Al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sav - ior, is
deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy

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

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792–1848, abr.; tr. John F. Young, 1820–85.
Tune: STILLE NACHT (Irregular) Franz X. Gruber, 1787–1863, alt.

Note: It was Christmas Eve, 1818, when the now-famous carol was first performed as Stille Nacht Heilige Nacht. Joseph Mohr, the young priest who wrote the lyrics, played the guitar and sang along with Franz Xaver Gruber, the choir director who had written the melody.
(Brad Gollnik is our guitarist and will sing a short refrain at the end of the hymn.)

The Christmas Blessing

Brothers and sister, go in peace.
Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

Congregation: Amen!

Silent Prayer

Extinguishing of the Candles

After the silent prayer Pastor Olson will extinguish his candle and will also ask you to extinguish your candles. **Please use your hand as a splash guard** so that no wax is spilled on the floor, your chair, or the person sitting near you. Thank you. The ushers will collect the candles as you exit the worship area.

Merry Christmas

... to each and every one of you. May the peace of forgiveness and the joy of the Savior warm your hearts with God's love as you bask in the glory of his Son! God's peace is with you on earth this night and always!

Altar flowers are placed in memory of **Hans Linse** by his Grandmother Carol Hesselberg.

Christmas Day

We do conduct a special festival service of praise to God tomorrow morning at 9:00 am. We invite you to return for that service to marvel anew at the grace and mercy of God!

Have A Blessed Christmas!

Permission to reprint the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #736889-A. All rights reserved.