

12/13/2020



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

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

In Advent the Word of God bids us prepare for the coming of Christ. The readings for Advent have this urgency to them: Since he is surely coming again in judgment, we desperately need for him to come to us first in grace. For without that coming in grace we will perish at his coming in judgment. Since the word “advent” means “coming,” it is good for us to be familiar with his coming as a Babe in Bethlehem, his coming into our hearts by faith, and his coming again on the last day!

THE ADVENT GATHERING RITE

Gathering rites have been used in the Christian worship service as a replacement for the opening section of the service in different seasons of the Christian church year. The Advent “gathering rite” enhances the sense of the season by emphasizing the Christian’s longing for Christ to come and fulfill his promises to us. The verses sung by the cantors change each week in keeping with the theme of that Sunday in the season. Congregational participation allows all of us to become familiar with a basic theme and tune to take with us throughout the week contemplating the significance of the season in our everyday life.

OUR WORSHIP SERVICE

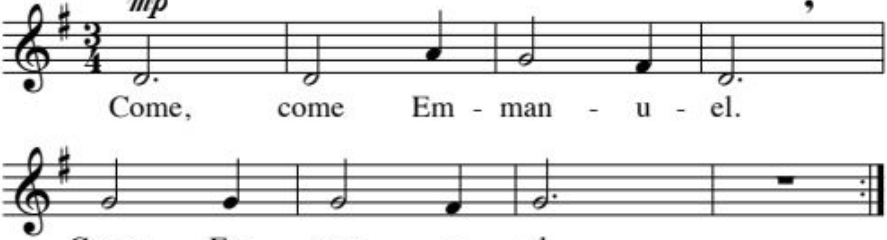
A strange question for you to consider: “Do you want the Savior who promised to come?” Many didn’t when Jesus arrived. John found that to be true as he wrote in the gospel lesson today. Many people just want the festivities of Christmas. They don’t want the Light of salvation to shine exposing the ugliness of our sinful behavior. Perhaps it is a fair question for all of us: “What do you want for Christmas?”

THE COMMON SERVICE

ADVENT GATHERING SONG

James J. Chepponis

Gently
mp



Come, come Em - man - u - el.

Come, Em - man - u - el.

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(The soloist(s) will begin the service by singing the “Advent Gathering Song.” Please repeat it and again after each verse)

1. For the Spirit of God has come...
2. Tell of freedom to captives, and come ...
3. For God’s justice and praise will come ...
4. We rejoice in the Lord, and come ...
5. The Almighty works marvels, so ...
6. Oh make straight his way and come ...

STAND

M: We worship in the name of the God the Father, the Creator of the world, and in the name of Jesus Christ, God the Son, and in the name of the Comforter, God the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

LORD, HAVE MERCY

M: The Lord Jesus comes to us and offers his grace and love. It is good for us to repent of our sins and to plead for his mercy.

C: Lord have mercy on us.

M: Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into the peace of God’s kingdom. You come in Word and Sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.

C: Christ have mercy.

M: You will come in glory with salvation for your people.

C: Lord have mercy.

M: May almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen.

ABSOLUTION

M: The almighty God has been merciful to us and has sent his Son to die for all. For his sake, he forgives us our sins and calls us from darkness to his marvelous light. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen. (spoken)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Let us pray: Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen. (spoken)

THE WORD OF GOD

The Epistle Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Cherish the message that comes from God’s Word. Wrapped in that message are the most beautiful of Christmas presents, bought by Christ and carried to us by the Holy Spirit. The message prepares you for the real Christmas and for the real joy that God wants you to have in Christmas. It is the joy of peace with God even when conscience accuses; don’t despise the preaching of that message as though it were old news not worthy of repetition. Test all the customs of Christmas in your heart and home and hold fast to those that focus on Christ. Shun the evil, the debauchery that many pass off as *Christmas Spirit*. The *Christmas Spirit* is the joy of holiness because of sin washed away. It is the joy of knowing that God is faithful and will not leave us or forsake us no matter what happens to us in this life; for the Light of the world is on his way, right around the corner, and he will not disappoint or fail to keep his Word!

¹⁶ Rejoice always. ¹⁷ Pray without ceasing. ¹⁸ In everything give thanks. For this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. ¹⁹ Do not extinguish the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not treat prophecies with contempt. ²¹ But test everything. Hold on to the good. ²² Keep away from every kind of evil.

²³ May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

The Gospel Lesson: John 1:6-8; 19-28
John was so excited to point the people to Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and the joy of salvation. But the people didn’t seem to care to listen! John’s joy was that he, unworthy though he be, was privileged to tell the world about Jesus! Make that your joy this Christmas!

⁶ There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light. ¹⁹ This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹ And they asked him, “Who are you then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” “No,” he answered. ²² Then they asked him, “Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’^[a] just as Isaiah the prophet said.” ²⁴ They had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵ So they asked John, “Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?” ²⁶ “I baptize with water,” John answered. “Among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one coming after me,^[b] whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie.” ²⁸ These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.


The Sermon Hymn: # 12

ADVENT

“Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes”

12

Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior
2 He comes the cap - tives to re - lease, In Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Your wel - come

prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre -
pris - on held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, And with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst; The i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring With your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–51, abr., alt.
Tune: CHESTERFIELD (CM) Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820, alt.

The Sermon: Malachi 4:1-6

4 “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. ² But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. ³ Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things,” says the LORD Almighty.

⁴ “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵ “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

The Confession of Faith: *The Apostle’s Creed*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell,
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Offering

The Advent Prayer

M: Come, dear Savior. We long for your appearing!

Come to cheer us with your promises, as you once cheered your ancient people throughout their long night of waiting and watching.

Come to restore our hope. Rouse us from the slumber of despair; lift our hearts from petty, earthbound goals; and direct our eyes above, from where you will soon come to make all things right again.

Come and work in us a godly grief and a genuine sorrow over sin. Forgive us for the shameful way we have dishonored you and the shabby way we have dealt with one another. Through your mighty Word, stir up in us a ceaseless yearning to give ourselves to others, as you have given yourself for us.

Come also to rekindle our joy as we prepare to celebrate your first coming. Do not permit a frenzied busyness to rob us of your peace or to deprive us of times to ponder and to wonder at your Word. Set our hearts apart from the bustle and the clamor and the jostle of these days. Fill us with the quiet delight of finding you in the manger and keep hearts and minds undisturbed by the great throng that streams by uncaring.

We pray also for those enduring great sorrow, for those undergoing spiritual trial and for those whose restless hearts have no knowledge of your coming. Comfort, strengthen, and illumine them with the sweet peace born of your love, and keep them in the way of peace by your Holy Word.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer

M: Come quickly, dear Lord, and fill our longing eyes with the light of your coming! We wait, we keep watch, and in you we put our hope.

C: Amen.

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 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.

The Hymn: # 28 (verses 1-4)


“Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”

ADVENT


28 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has
2 What the fa - thers most de - sired, What the
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's
4 Wel - come, O my Sav - ior, now! Joy - ful,
5 Crush for me the ser - pent's head That, set



tru - ly kept his word And at last to
proph - ets' heart in - spired, What they longed for
help - er, Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold
Lord, to you I bow. Come in - to my
free from doubt and dread, I may cling to



us did send Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
man - y a year Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
race be - hold— Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
heart, I pray; Oh, pre - pare your - self a way.
you in faith, Safe - ly kept through life and death,

6 And, when you shall come again
As a glorious king to reign,
I with joy may see your face,
Freely ransomed by your grace.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–59, abr.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
Tune: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND (77 77) *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn*, Wittenberg, 1524.

The Closing Prayer

M: O Lord, God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people.
Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow
on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen. (spoken)

THE BENEDICTION

M: The Lord bless you and keep 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.

C: Amen. (spoken)

The Closing Hymn: # 28 (verses 5-6) “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord”

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Announcements

This Week:

Sunday: 12/13 **Worship 8 and 10 am**
Bible Study 9:15-9:40
Sunday School 9:00-9:40 at School

Tuesday: 12/14 Bible Study, 7 pm - Haggai & Zachariah
Wed: 12/15 Bible Study, 9 am - Haggai & Zachariah
Confirmation classes, 3:30 pm

Sunday: 12/20 **Worship 8 and 10 am**
Bible Study - 9:15-9:40
Sunday School 9:00-9:40 at School

With the Lord - Becky Langrehr passed away on Thursday, December 10 at the age of 78. Services are pending. May the words that Simeon spoke when he held the baby Jesus in his arms, bring comfort to those who mourn, "My eyes have seen your salvation".

Jessie and Rachel Kassera will be confessing their faith in the rite of confirmation during the 8:00 am service today. We welcome them along with their children Kadence and Kody into the St. Paul's church family. We pray that God will give them courage to live the faith they confess today. We also pray that God will continue to strengthen their faith as they assemble with us around the means of grace for spiritual nourishment! **WELCOME!**

Pastor Weigand has returned the call to serve as pastor here at St. Paul's. The congregation is planning to have a call meeting at noon on Sunday, January 3, 2021. (The Synod puts a moratorium on extending calls during the Christmas season.)

2021 Church envelopes are now available downstairs. Please pick yours up as soon as possible. If you are able, please deliver to those that are unable to attend church services due to COVID concerns.

In Memory of Verna Wehrs \$500 has been given to the Church Repair fund by her family.

Usher Schedules are available in the narthex. Please pick up your copy.

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL on December 27th! Parents of Sunday School children, please take note of this. Sunday School classes will resume on January 3 at 9:00 am at the school.

St. Paul's Church Records Update: Please take a moment to complete the form in the narthex to update our church records with current names, address, emails and cell phone numbers. You may also do this electronically at www.stpaulsbangor.com and click on "Sign Up for our Newsletter".

Upcoming Worship Services:

Christmas Eve services at 4:30 and 6:00 pm;

Christmas Day worship at 9:00 am;

New Year's Eve worship w/communion at 7:00 pm

Virtual Children's Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Due to COVID restrictions and concerns for our children, our Christmas Eve service will look differently than in years past. The day school children will record their Christmas messages to the congregation earlier in the month and these recordings will be shown in the Christmas Eve worship services. The service will close with the dimming of the lights and worshipping by candlelight. Please invite your friends to join us for our Christmas worship services - what better time to share our hope in Christ than at Christmas?

Offering Summary (includes online and memorials to Gen Fund)

Weekly Budget: \$9,948.43

Budget to Date: \$477,524.64

Received 12/6/20: \$8,125.55

Rec'd to Date: \$410,873.30

Attendance - 12/6/2020

8:00 am: 70 10:00 am: 70 Total: 140