

12/27/2020



St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

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THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

As things now stand, the "Christmas season" seems to begin right after Thanksgiving (sometimes much sooner!) The streets were decorated with lights, the stores were decked out with red and green, and your favorite radio stations were playing non-stop Christmas music before the last piece of pumpkin pie was consumed! The Hallmark channel played their corny Christmas movies even helping you to "count down the days until Christmas!" The excitement built to a climax on the morning of December 25! And we got to watch "A Christmas Story" all day long! Then everything stopped! Abruptly! Christmas was over! Once bright and beaming trees were ready for the chipper! People are stocking up for New Year's! People are ready to go back to their normal lives. Christmas is packed away and over for another year!

Hold on! Do you know that the traditional Christian celebration of Christmas is supposed to be much different? The season of Advent begins soon after Thanksgiving (not Christmas!) and for nearly a month Christians await the coming of Christ in a spirit of expectation, singing hymns of longing. Then, on December 24th, people put up Christmas trees in anticipation of the celebration of Christ's birth the next day! On Christmas Day the 12 days of Christmas are supposed to begin! The Christmas season is supposed to end on January 6 with the feast of the Epiphany, the appearing of the Wise Men in Bethlehem. What has happened?

Exhortations to follow the Christian calendar rather than the secular one is a losing battle! Most people are simply too tired after Christmas Day to do much celebrating and they are tired of hearing Christmas carols!

The "real" 12 days of Christmas are important. They are important because they give us a way of reflecting on what the Incarnation of Jesus, the Christ, means in our lives. Christmas commemorates the most momentous event in human history—the entry of God into the world he made, in the form of a baby. Let us celebrate the 12 days of Christmas and worship Christ this Christmas season with joy in our hearts!


THE WORSHIP SERVICE

OPENING HYMN # 51

I AM SO GLAD WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES

CHRISTMAS

51 I Am So Glad When Christmas Comes




1 I am so glad when Christ - mas comes, The

2 The lit - tle child of Beth - le - hem, He

3 He lives a - gain in heav - en's realm, The

4 I, too, shall sing my Sav - ior's praise, My

5 And so I love each Christ - mas Eve, And




night of Je - sus' birth, When Beth - l'em's star shone

was a king in - deed! For he came down from

Son of God to - day; And still he loves his

joy, my crown, my Lord; For he has made me

I love Je - sus, too; And that he loves me



as the sun, And an - gels sang on earth.

heav'n a - bove To help a world in need.

lit - tle ones And hears them when they pray.

his own child By wa - ter and the Word.

ev - 'ry day I know so well is true.

Text: Inger Marie Wexelsen, 1832–1911, abr.; tr. Norman A. Madson, 1886–1962, st. 1, 4, alt.; Peter A. Sveeggen, 1881–1959, st. 2-3, 5, alt.
St. 1, 4 © 1982 Concordia Publishing House. All rights reserved. Used by permission;
St. 2, 3, 5 © Augsburg Publishing House. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Augsburg Fortress.
Tune: JEG ER SAA GLAD (CM) Peder Knudsen, 1819–63.

GREETING

M: The grace of our Lord (✠) Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

CALL TO WORSHIP

P: This is how God showed his love among us:
C: **He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.**

P: This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us
C: **And sent his son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.**

P: Dear friends, since God so loved us,
C: **We also ought to love one another.**

P: No one has ever seen God;
C: **But if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.**

P: We know that we live in him and he in us,
C: **Because he has given us of his Spirit.**

P: We have seen and testify
C: **That the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.**

P: On Christmas Day, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit set into motion the work of God by which God offers to sinful man the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and salvation!
C: **We worship the Triune God, the only true God, our Savior-God! Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sins to him:
C: **O Lord, our God, we confess that our love for you and your Word has often been only lukewarm. We confess that our pride and our selfishness and our arrogance have robbed you of the glory you deserve. We have lived our lives looking for what we can get out of life instead of what we can put into life to show our love for you. We have sinned in more ways than we can remember. God, be merciful to us sinners.**

P: “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.” Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners – to save you and me! It is because of Christ has come that I can assure you that God has forgiven all your sins. You are at peace with God! “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” Amen.

HYMN OF PRAISE: # 43

CHRISTMAS

To THEE MY HEART I OFFER (VERSE 1)

43 To Thee My Heart I Offer



1 To thee my heart I of - fer, O Christ - child
2 My heart with - in is glow - ing, O Christ - child
3 What brought thee to the man - ger, O Christ - child,
4 Let me be thine for - ev - er, O Christ - child

sweet and dear, Up - on thy love re - ly - ing; Oh,
sweet and dear. I love thee, Lord and Sav - ior; Oh,
sweet and dear? Thy love for me, a stran - ger—Oh,
sweet and dear. Up - hold me with thy mer - cy; Oh,

be thou ev - er near! Take thou my heart and give me thine,
be thou ev - er near! I see thee in a man - ger laid,
be thou ev - er near! O Lord, how great is this thy love
be thou ev - er near! From thee I glad - ly all re - ceive,

And let it be for - ev - er mine, O Je - sus,
Near cat - tle rest - ing un - a - fraid; I see thy
That reach - es down from heav'n a - bove, Thy love for
And what is mine to thee I give; My heart, my

ho - ly, un - de - filed, My Sav - ior meek and mild.
deep hu - mil - i - ty And low - ly bow to thee.
us, by sin de - filed, That made thee, God, a child!
soul, and all I own—Let these be thine a - lone.

Text: Ausserlesenes . . . GesangBuchlein, Trier, 1653, abr.; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, St. Louis, 1941.
Tune: CORDIS DONUM (76 76 88 86) Ausserlesenes . . . GesangBuchlein, Trier, 1653.

THE WORD

SALUTATION

(This greeting has deep roots in Christian worship and marks the beginning of the Word section and the Sacrament section of the service.)

[M]: The Lord be with you.
[C]: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

[M]: Let us pray.

Almighty God, in mercy you sent your one and only Son to take upon himself our human nature. By his gracious coming deliver us from the corruption of our sin and transform us into the likeness of his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

[C]: Amen.

BE SEATED

THE WORD OF GOD

FIRST LESSON:

ISAIAH 45:20-25

“GOD HAS MADE KNOWN HIS SALVATION!”

Gather! Come! Draw near together,
you survivors from the nations.
They have no knowledge—
those who are lifting up their idols of wood
and praying to a god that cannot save.
21 Make an announcement and come close.
Let them consult together.
Who made this known ahead of time?
From time past who announced it?
Was it not I, the Lord?
There is no god except me,
a righteous God and Savior.
There is no one except me.
22 Turn to me and be saved, all you ends of the earth,

because I am God,
and there is no other.
²³ I have sworn by myself.
From my mouth a righteous word has gone out,
and it will not return unfulfilled.
Indeed, to me every knee will bow,
and every tongue will swear allegiance.
²⁴ “Only in the Lord,” they will say of me,
“Only in the Lord is there true righteousness and strength.”
To him they will come and be ashamed—
all those who are angry at him.
²⁵ In the Lord, all the descendants of Israel will be justified.
They will be praised by him.

THE VERSE OF THE DAY

[M]: Alleluia. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Alleluia. (Colossians 3:15a)

THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: COLOSSIANS 3:12-17

“**WEAR YOUR CHRISTMAS CLOTHES!**”

¹² Therefore, as God’s elect, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. ¹³ Bear with one another and forgive each other if anyone has a complaint against anyone else. Forgive, just as Christ^[c] forgave you. ¹⁴ And, in addition to all these things, put on love, which ties things together in perfect unity. ¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, to which you were also called, in one body. And be thankful.
¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And everything you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

THE GOSPEL: LUKE 2:25-40

“**SIMEON BEHOLDS THE CHRIST!**”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.
²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child

Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:
²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you now dismiss your servant in peace.
³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation,
³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people,
³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”
³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”
³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.
³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

[M]: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

[C]: Praise be to you, O Christ!

CONFESSION OF FAITH (Luther’s Explanation to the 2nd Article of the Apostle’s Creed)

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.

PLEASE BE SEATED.

PRESENTATION

77 In His Temple Now Behold Him

1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him; See the long - ex -
2 In the arms of her who bore him, Vir - gin pure, be -
3 Je - sus, by your pres - en - ta - tion, You who did for

pect - ed Lord. An - cient proph - ets had fore - told him;
hold him lie, While his a - ged saints a - dore him
us en - dure, Let us see your great sal - va - tion,

God has now ful - filled his Word. Now to praise him,
Ere in faith and hope they die. Al - le - lu - ia!
Seal us with your prom - ise sure, And pre - sent us

his re - deem - ed Shall break forth with one ac - cord.
Al - le - lu - ia! See th' in - car - nate God most high!
in your glo - ry To your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.

Text: Henry J. Pye, c. 1825–1903, alt.
Tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY (87 87 87) Henry Purcell, 1659–95, adapt.

SERMON:

LUKE 2:25-40

OFFERING

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

[M]: Lord God, heavenly Father, Creator and Sustainer of the universe, we praise you for the special love you have shown us, your fallen and sinful creatures. You have kept your word and sent your Son to be born as the promised Savior and Redeemer.

Lord Jesus Christ, we marvel at your servant-like heart, which moved you to do your Father’s will and take on our flesh. You became fully human so that you might live the holy and perfect life we could not live, endure the agony of the cross, and suffer death as our substitute.

O Holy Spirit, we thank you for your saving work of bringing us to faith in our newborn Savior. You have opened our eyes to see that, despite his humble appearance and lowly circumstances, this child who lies in Bethlehem’s manger is the mighty God, the Redeemer of the world.

God of our salvation, as you have brought us to faith in the Christ Child, so we ask you to work powerfully also in the hearts of those who do not yet know him or who do not know him in truth. Grant that the world’s attention to the Christ Child may not be only a seasonal attraction or a sentimental novelty. Rather, bring sinners to faith that they may see him as the answer to life’s problems here and the sure hope of life eternal in heaven with you.

Dear Father in heaven, we flood your throne with prayers of thanksgiving. Theresa Heft, the wife of Nathan Hefti, endured successful cancer surgery. We plead for your continued blessings on her treatments going forward. Restore her to good health according to your good and gracious will and give the Hefti family peace and joy as they enter the new year cradled safely in your loving care.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

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

Silent prayer.

Let the joyous message of Christmas be preached in the whole world, and may it find ready acceptance in believing hearts, for the eternal benefit of lost souls, for the extension of your kingdom, and for the glory of your holy name. Amen.

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.

Matthew 6:9-13

HYMN: # 50

“Once in Royal David’s City”

The author of this hymn had overheard her godchildren telling one another how dreary the catechism seemed to them. To address that problem, she wrote this hymn to help the children understand the 2nd Article of the Apostle’s Creed especially the fact that Jesus Christ was “conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary.”

CHRISTMAS

50 Once in Royal David’s City

1 Once in roy - al Da - vid’s cit - y
2 He came down to earth from heav - en
3 But our eyes at last shall see him
4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble

Stood a low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a
Who is God and Lord of all, And his
Through his own re - deem - ing love, For that
With the ox - en stand - ing by Shall we

moth - er laid her ba - by In a man - ger
shel - ter was a sta - ble, And his cra - dle
child, so dear and gen - tle, Is our Lord in
see him, but in heav - en, Set at God’s right

for his bed; Mar - y was that moth - er mild,
was a stall; With the poor and mean and low - ly
heav’n a - bove, And he leads his chil - dren on
hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren crowned,

Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
To the place where he is gone.
All in white, his praise will sound.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–95, abr., alt.
Tune: IRBY (87 87 77) Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–76.

THE CLOSING PRAYER

M: Almighty God, we thank you for sending the Holy Spirit through your Word to teach us the things Jesus came into the world to do to forgive our sins and give us a new and eternal life. Help us treasure the Christmas message and strengthen us by that message to share the good news of salvation with other and to live our lives according to that message. We ask this for the sake of your Son and our Savior Jesus Christ, who was born to save us all and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

M: 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.

C: Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN: # 64

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

CHRISTMAS

64

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

1 Let us all with glad - some voice Praise the
2 To this vale of tears he comes, Here to
3 We are rich, for he was poor; Is not
4 O Lord Christ, our Sav - ior dear, Bless us

God of heav - en, Who, to bid our
serve in sad - ness, That with him in
this a won - der? There - fore praise God
and be near us. Grant us now a

hearts re - joice, His own Son has giv - en.
heav'n's fair homes We may reign in glad - ness.
ev - er - more Here on earth and yon - der.
glad new year. A - men, Je - sus, hear us!

Text: *Ander Theil Des Dressdenischen GesangBuchs*, Dresden, 1632; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
Tune: LASST UNS ALLE (76 76 Trochaic) *Ander Theil Des Dressdenischen GesangBuchs*, Dresden, 1632, alt.

Announcements

This Week:

Sunday: 12/27 **Worship 8 and 10 am**
 No Bible Study or Sunday School
Thursday: 12/31 **New Year's Eve worship with communion 7 pm**
Sunday: 1/3/2021 **Communion Worship 8 and 10 am**

Starting January 3, 2020, Pastor Galen Riediger of Christ Lutheran Church in West Salem will be our vacancy pastor. He may be reached at 608-786-1250, Ext. 113 or at griediger@christlutheranwestsalem.com

Call Meeting: Remember that there will be a pastoral call meeting at noon next Sunday, January 3, 2021. Pastor Schultz from St. John's in Barre Mills will be conducting the meeting.

St Paul's Church/School is seeking to hire a part-time Church/School Secretary. 15-20 hours per week. For a complete job description, please contact Jeff Parr at treasurer@stpaulsbangor.com Application deadline is January 15, 2021.

Mr. Eric Duve is holding a call to teach 4th grade at Eastside Lutheran School in Madison, Wisconsin. Please keep him in your prayers as he decides where he can best serve the Lord. He welcomes your guidance as he contemplates this call. You may call him on his cell phone: 989-385-0032. Email him at: eduve@stpaulsbangor.com. Or, call the school office and he will return your call when he can: 486-2614.

Thank you: The pastor and the teachers at St. Paul's are most grateful for the outpouring of love and support that we have received during the Christmas season. Continue to pray for your church and school asking God to bless our efforts to continue teaching people to know Jesus.

Pastor Olson will finish his duties as vacancy pastor following the New Year's Eve service this week. It has been a refreshing and enjoyable experience for him to share the Word of

God with you. He is especially grateful for the congregation's patience with him as he learned how to do the work of the ministry here.

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.

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

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".

Offering Summary (includes online and memorials to Gen Fund)
Weekly Budget: \$9,948.43 **Budget to Date: \$497,421.50**
Received 12/20/20: \$8,671.69 **Rec'd to Date: \$437,087.62**
Received 12/24/20: \$7,902.00
Received 12/25/20: \$2,046.00

Attendance - 12/20/2020
8:00 am: 74 10:00 am: 64 Total: 138
Attendance - 12/24/2020
4:30 pm: 77 6:00 pm: 42 Total: 119
Attendance - 12/25/2020
Total: 70