

A REAL  
**CHRISTMAS**



**IS ROOTED IN REPENTANCE**

Second Sunday in Advent

# **ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH** | Bangor, WI

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*December 8, 2024*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we welcome you to St. Paul's. We especially welcome our guests who have joined us today. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news of God's forgiveness through Jesus.

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## **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP**

Lord of all, I can sometimes view this time of the year as a hectic time, one that brings more work and extra stress. Refocus my mind and heart today as I am reminded that it's the opposite: it's great relief thanks to what you bring about in my heart through repentance. Help me have a change of mind about my sin so I can fully appreciate and rest in the work of the Savior. In his name I pray. Amen.

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## **FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

Children's activity sheets are available near the entrance to the sanctuary. The church basement is also available with a live feed of the worship service along with a Kids' Corner for parents with children to utilize during the service if needed.

## **THANK OFFERING**

You may leave your offering in the plate in the lobby. The QR code to the right will provide the link to our online giving option. If you're visiting with us today you are welcome to give an offering, but don't feel compelled by guilt or embarrassment to do so. God wants all offerings to be made freely and with joy.



# SETTING THREE

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*The Service is a version of the historic liturgy of the Christian church that highlights the Word of God and the forgiveness, life, and salvation we receive through the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## CHOIR

*A Voice Cries Out*

*Stand*

## INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## CONFESSION

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

## DECLARATION OF GRACE

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD, HAVE MERCY

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

## HYMN

*655 Before You, God, the Judge of All sts. 1, 3*

*(short musical intro)*



1 Be - fore you, God, the judge of all, with grief and shame I  
3 O Je - sus, let your pre-cious blood be to my soul a

hum - bly fall. I see my sins a - gainst you, Lord,  
cleans - ing flood. Turn not, O Lord, your guest a - way,

my sins of thought and deed and word. They press me  
but grant that jus - ti - fied I may go to my

sore; to you I flee: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!  
house at peace to be: O God, be mer - ci - ful to me!

*Text: tr. Carl Döving, 1867–1937, alt.; Magnus B. Landstad, 1802–1880, abr.  
Tune: attr. Martin Luther, 1483–1546  
Text and tune: Public domain*

## The Word

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## FIRST READING

*Malachi 3:1–7b*

<sup>1</sup>Look! I am sending my messenger! He will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord, whom you are seeking, will come to his temple! The Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight, will surely come, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>2</sup>But who can endure the day when he comes? Who will remain standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like launderers bleach! <sup>3</sup>He will be seated like a refiner and a purifier of silver. He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and like silver. They will belong to the LORD and bring him an offering in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup>Judah and Jerusalem's offerings will be pleasing to the LORD as they were in the days of old, in years long ago.

<sup>5</sup>I will approach you to judge you. I will be quick to give testimony against those who practice occult arts, those who commit adultery, those who swear false oaths, those who cheat workers out of their wages, those who wrong a widow and a fatherless child, those who turn away a resident alien—all those who do not fear me, says the LORD of Armies.

<sup>6</sup>Certainly I, the LORD, do not change. That is why you, sons of Jacob, have not come to an end. <sup>7</sup>Since the days of your fathers, you have turned aside from my statutes and have not kept them.

Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD of Armies.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

576 *Amazing Grace*



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound— that  
 2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his  
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I  
 4 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but  
 Word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and  
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me  
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found, was blind but now I see.  
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.  
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text (sts. 1–3): John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.; (st. 4): A Collection of Sacred Ballads, Richmond, 1790  
 Tune: Columbian Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829, ed. Benjamin Shaw; ed. Charles H. Spilman  
 Text and tune: Public domain

SECOND READING

*Philippians 1:3–11*

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup>Every time I pray for all of you, I always pray with joy, <sup>5</sup>because of your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am convinced of this very thing: that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>I am equally convinced that it is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I have you in my heart, for both in my chains and in my defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all share in this grace with me. <sup>8</sup>Yes, God is my witness of how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus.

*continued...*

<sup>9</sup>And I pray that your love may still increase more and more in knowledge and every insight. <sup>10</sup>This will result in your approval of the things that really matter, so that you will be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Stand*

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Luke 3:4,6*

**Alleluia!**

**Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.**

**And all people will see God's salvation.**

**Alleluia!**

## **GOSPEL**

*Mark 1:1-8*

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <sup>2</sup>This is how it is written in the prophet Isaiah:

Look, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare the way for you.

<sup>3</sup>A voice of one calling out in the wilderness,

"Prepare the way of the Lord.

Make his paths straight."

<sup>4</sup>John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>5</sup>The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him. They were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

<sup>6</sup>John was clothed in camel's hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He preached, "One more powerful than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals! <sup>8</sup>I baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."



The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*316 On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry*



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es  
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin and fur - nished  
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and lift us  
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; come, then, and lis - ten,  
for a Guest with - in, and let us all our  
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
up to fall no more; O make your face on  
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings good news a - bout the King of kings.  
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
us to shine, and fill the world with love di - vine.  
we a - dore and Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

*Text: tr. composite; Charles Coffin, 1676–1749*

*Tune: Latin, 15th cent., adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

**SERMON**

*Mark 1:1–8*

**John's Preparations for Jesus Prepare Us Too**

*Stand*

## **APOSTLES' 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.**

*Be seated*

## **OFFERING**

*"I know, my God, that you test the heart, and you take pleasure in uprightness. In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things. Now with joy I see your people, who are present here to bring the offering freely to you" (1 Chronicles 29:17).*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior. **We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

**Move us to take to heart the words of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."**

You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

**Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**

Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

**Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical and emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. Pour out your compassion on the grieving and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

**Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.**

*Intercessory prayers may be added here.*

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

**Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.**

HYMN

317 When All the World Was Cursed



1 When all the world was cursed by Mo - ses' con - dem - na - tion,  
 2 Be - fore Saint John was born, he leaped in joy - ful meet - ing,  
 3 Be - hold the Lamb of God, who bears the world's trans - gres - sion,  
 4 O grant, dear Lord of love, that we re - ceive, re - joic - ing,



Saint John the Bap - tist came with words of con - so - la - tion.  
 con - fess - ing him as Lord whose moth - er he was greet - ing.  
 whose sac - ri - fice re - moves the dev - il's dread op - pres - sion.  
 the word pro - claimed by John, our true re - pent - ance voic - ing,



With true fore - run - ner's zeal the great - er one he named,  
 By Jor - dan's roll - ing stream, a new E - li - jah bold,  
 Be - hold the Lamb of God, who takes a - way our sin,  
 that glad - ly we may walk up - on our Sav - ior's way



and him, as yet un - known, as Sav - ior he pro - claimed.  
 he tes - ti - fied of him whom proph - ets had fore - told.  
 who for our peace and joy will full a - tone - ment win.  
 un - til we live with him in his e - ter - nal day.

*Text: tr. Paul E. Kretzmann, 1883–1965, alt.; Johann G. Olearius, 1635–1711, abr.*

*Tune: Ahasverus Fritsch, 1629–1701*

*Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 736889*

*Tune: Public domain*

*Stand*

## **PRAYER**

Blessed Lord, you have given us your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart that, being strengthened and comforted by your holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**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.**

## **BLESSING**

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.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

**CLOSING HYMN**

308 *There's a Voice in the Wilderness Crying*



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a  
 2 O — Chris - tians, you bring — good ti - dings; get  
 3 But the Word of our God is e - ter - nal; the



call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a  
 up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late  
 arm of the Lord is strong. He stands in the midst of the



high - way, a high - way for our God!  
 peo - ple the com - ing of their King.  
 na - tions, and he shall right the wrong.



The — val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the  
 Like the flow'rs of the field they — per - ish; like  
 He shall feed his — flock like a shep - herd, the



loft - y hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed  
 grass their works de - cay. The pow'r and — pomp of  
 lambs shall gent - ly hold, to pas - tures of peace shall



plac - es where the Lord our — God — may go!  
 na - tions shall — pass like a dream — a - way.  
 lead them, and — bring them — safe to his fold.

*Text: James L. Milligan, 1876–1961, alt.*

*Tune: Henry H. Bancroft, 1904–1988*

*Text: Public domain*

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# NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ADVENT WREATH

The symbolism provided by the Advent wreath next to the altar aids us in our Advent preparations for what we celebrate at Christmas as well as what we confidently anticipate with Christ's return. The first candle, called the *Prophecy Candle*, reminds us to watch with *hope* in the one promised. This week we light the second Advent candle, called the *Bethlehem Candle*, reminding us of Joseph and Mary's travels to Bethlehem and the peace that was soon to be announced.

## FELLOWSHIP HOUR TODAY

There will be Sunday School as usual today, but there will be no adult Bible study. Enjoy some coffee, snacks, and fellowship in between services in the church basement. The adult Bible study handout will still be printed for you if you'd like to study about *Joseph and His Brothers* from Genesis 37. Adult study will be back next week as we look at *Joseph's Troubles* (Genesis 39).

## ADVENT BY CANDLELIGHT – TODAY!

St Paul's Lutheran Church Ladies Aid will be hosting an Advent by Candlelight "Christmas Begins with Christ" for all women of the congregation and their female family members, friends and neighbors today, December 8<sup>th</sup>, at 2 p.m. in the church basement. Please join us for this wonderful afternoon of the word, music, and fellowship to help prepare your hearts for the Advent season before the holidays get into full swing.

## MIDWEEK STUDY

Our next midweek Bible study, *The God of the Covenant*, continues this week. Our study continues with The *Holiness* of the LORD, with The *Justice* of the LORD to follow. Join us on Tuesday nights and Wednesday mornings as we grow in faith and in a knowledge of the good things God has planned for us children of the new covenant.

## DIVINE CALL EXTENDED

We have extended a divine call to Mrs. Karla Leitz to serve as our 3K/4K teacher and ECM director beginning in the fall of 2025. She currently teaches at Memorial Lutheran School in Mason, MI. Please join us in praying for Mrs. Leitz as she considers joining our ministry here in Bangor!

## **KWIK TRIP CAR WASH CARDS**

We are excited to sell Kwik Trip Car wash cards as part of our fundraiser for our upcoming class trip. If you're interested in purchasing a card there is a flyer on the bulletin board in the lobby of church. If you have any questions, please call Susie Johnson at 608-790-8911 or Kelly Langrehr 608-633-1325.

## **WHEN CANCER COMES**

Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) has released a new 3-book series: *When Cancer Comes*. From Scripture and their own experiences, the authors share words of encouragement and gospel comfort with you and your loved ones as you face cancer—with God's hope. The three books are entitled *God, Why Is This Happening?*, *God, Where's My Hope?*, and *God, Can I Complain?* All three books have been purchased and placed in the basement cabinets if you're interested in checking them out from our church library.

## **LIVE NATIVITY**

Start a new family tradition of sharing the good news of Christ's birth with THOUSANDS by volunteering down at Riverside Park. Our church's weekend is December 21 and 22 (Saturday 5-10pm...Sunday 5-9pm). Many people are needed to staff the live nativity. Pick a night or two and come down for any amount of time you can spare. If you can't make that weekend, you may also volunteer December 7,8,14,15 or 25. Sign up using one of the following ways: 1) Under the event on the Live Nativity Riverside-Diorama Facebook page, 2) Text/call Sara Stratman 608-351-9234 or sara22stratman@gmail.com, or 3) Scan the QR code.



## **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY BOOK**

*Seeking a Gentle & Quiet Spirit in a Harsh and Noisy World* by Amber Albee Swenson is a twelve-lesson women's Bible study book that will challenge and encourage readers to pursue the unfading beauty described in 1 Peter chapter 3 while facing the varied land mines that our modern culture places in the Christian woman's path. You can order it at the QR code to the right.



## **LUTHER HIGH CONCERTS**

As Christmas draws closer, there are two upcoming concert opportunities at Luther High School! On Sunday, December 8, Coulee Chorale will present their Christmas Concert – "Prepare the Way



of the Lord" - at 2:00 pm. On Saturday, December 14, The bands and choirs of Luther High School will present their Christmas Concert – "Love's Pure Light" - at 7:00 pm. (*This is a different day of the week/time than in the past!*) Both are fantastic ways to celebrate our Savior's birth!

### **MEMORIAL GIVEN**

In memory of Charles Arndt, a contribution of \$1000 has been made to the St. Paul's Church Endowment Fund.

### **OFFERING SUMMARY** (includes online and memorials to Gen Fund)

2024 Weekly Budget: \$11,826.00	Budget to Date: \$567,648.00
Received Last Week: \$8,702.43	Rec'd to Date: \$376,502.20

### **LAST WEEK'S ATTENDANCE**

Thanksgiving Eve: 126    Online Viewers: 15    Total: 141  
8:00 am: 146    Online Viewers: 32    10:00 am: 79    Total: 257  
Sunday Bible Study: 40    Sunday School: 16    Tues./Wed. Bible Study: 25

# CALENDAR

<b>TODAY</b>	8:00 am	Worship
	9:10 am	Sunday School
	9:15 am	Fellowship Hour
	10:00 am	Worship
	<b>2:00 pm</b>	<b>Advent by Candlelight</b>
<b>MONDAY</b>	7:00 pm	Choir Practice
<b>TUESDAY</b>	7:00 pm	Bible Study
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	9:00 am	Bible Study (same as Tues.)
	6:30 pm	Public School Catechism Class
<b>NEXT SUNDAY</b>	8:00 am	Worship with Communion
	9:10 am	Sunday School
	9:15 am	Bible Study
	10:00 am	Worship with Communion

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## SERVING IN WORSHIP

**Presiding Minister**

Rev. James Korthals

**Accompanist**

Harriet Langrehr

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Password: gracealone

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