

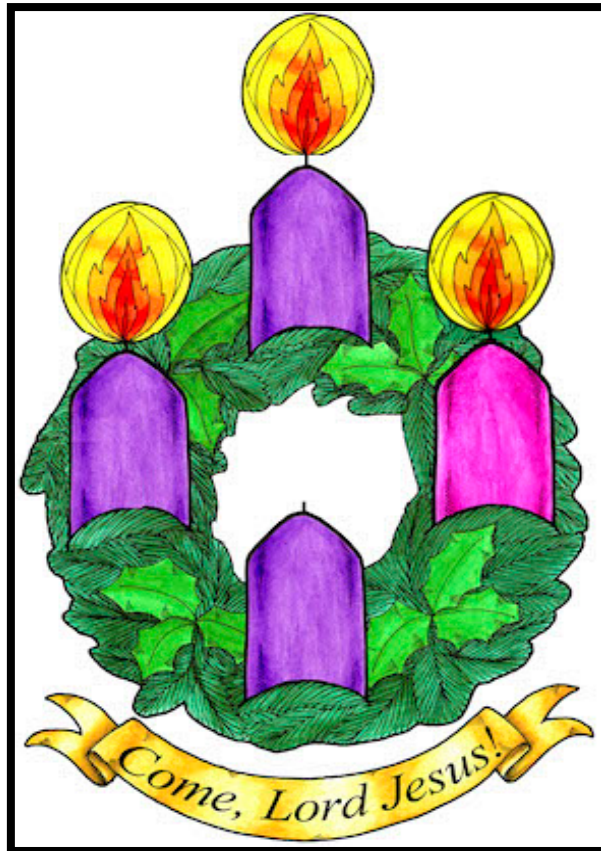
St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

2470 Wadsworth Blvd, Lakewood, CO 80214

Pastor: Thomas Schuetze, 303-428-5524, trschuetze@yahoo.com

Congregation President: Ed Chiappetti, 303-882-1776

Sunday School Superintendent: Derek Barthels



Heavenly Father, thank You for the witness of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus, our precious Savior. Thank You that John refused to be called the light, but instead pointed to the true Light, namely, Jesus Christ. Grant that, in daily life, our own desires and ambitions never get in the way of our witness to Jesus. When others see us, may they see a small reflection, dim though it may be, of what Jesus is and what He stands for. May they say of us: "If you are a Christian, I should like to be one, too." We ask it in Christ's name. Amen.

www.denverlutheran.com

Find us on Facebook at: "St Paul Ev. Lutheran Church"

Member Congregation:
Church of the Lutheran Confession
www.clclutheran.org



3rd Sunday in Advent – December 17, 2023

Order of Worship: Service of the Word

You will find today's order of worship printed on the liturgy insert tucked inside the front cover of the maroon *Lutheran Service Book* (in the hymnal rack). If you'd like to have a large print worship bulletin speak with an usher, who will be happy to share one with you.

Serving Us At God's House Today

Organist: Lisa Sprengeler

Ushers: Bob Rankin, Don Claeys

- ◆ Pre-Service Devotion: Psalm 145 (pew bible, p.557)
- ◆ Today's Hymns: *62, 349, 346 (1-3), 346 (4) (**printed on page 8*)
- ◆ Scripture Lessons: Isaiah 61:1-3,10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- ◆ Confession of Faith: The Apostles' Creed

Sermon Text – John 1:6-8,19-28

Theme

"Witness Effectively for the Coming Savior"

1. Understand your calling.
2. Speak with humility and clarity.

- ◆ Offering of Thankful Hearts
- ◆ Altar Prayer & Lord's Prayer
- ◆ Benediction
- ◆ Closing Hymn (346, stanza 4)

Today's Scriptures

First Lesson – Isaiah 61:1-3,10-11

The Year of the Lord's Favor

1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; 2 to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; 3 to grant to those who mourn in Zion— to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. | 10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to sprout up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations.

Psalm of the Day – From Psalm 71

God the Rock of Salvation

P In you, O LORD, do I take refuge:

C Let me never be put to shame!

P In your righteousness deliver me and rescue me:

C Incline your ear to me, and save me!

P Be to me a rock of refuge, to which I may continually come:

C For you are my rock and my fortress.

P For you, O Lord, are my hope:

C My trust, O LORD, from my youth.

P O God, from my youth you have taught me:

C And I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

P So even to old age and gray hairs:

C O God, do not forsake me.

P Until I proclaim your might to another generation:

C Your power to all those to come.

Second Lesson – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

*Instruction from the Lord
As We Await His Arrival*

16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit. 20 Do not despise prophecies, 21 but test everything; hold fast what is good. 22 Abstain from every form of evil. 23 Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

Sermon Text – John 1:6-8,19-28

The Testimony of John the Baptist

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. | 19 And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” 21 And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” 22 So they said to him, “Who are you? We need to 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,’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” 24 (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 They asked him, “Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” 26 John answered them, “I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” 28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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A Warm Welcome To Our Worship Guests. It is our prayer that your faith is strengthened today by the preaching of our Lord's pure Word and by the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs that our Scripture-based liturgy offers every week. St. Paul is a member of the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC). The CLC is represented by congregations throughout the United States and Canada, with affiliated churches in Africa, India, and neighboring nations. All of our churches confess the Bible to be the inspired and unerring Word of God. We invite our Guests to record their visit by signing the Guestbook and to come worship with us again.

This Week at St. Paul

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|---------------|----------|---|
| Today (12/17) | 9:30 am | Worship Service |
| | 10:45 am | Children's Christmas Eve Practice (followed by Choir Practice) |
| Sun (12/24) | 9:30 am | Worship Service |
| | 10:45 am | Children's Christmas Eve Practice (followed by Choir Practice) |
| | 6:30 pm | Children's Christmas Eve Service |

Children's Christmas Eve Practice will take place after the service today and next Sunday, at 10:45 am, with a choir rehearsal to follow. Choir members, please take note of the schedule change for our practices.

The Children's Christmas Eve Service will be held next Sunday at 6:30 pm. Our **Christmas Day Song Service** will be next Monday, December 25, at 9:30 am.

Remember in Your Prayers: The family of Wilma Oldfield (grandmother of Crystal Ruegge) who passed away on Sunday, December 3. Thank the Lord for His wonderful reminder: *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die"* (John 11:25-26).

Thanks to All who shared items for our annual Christmas potluck last Sunday (the food and fare was great!) and those who assisted with preparing the Christmas gift bags for our shut-ins. Much appreciated!

Synod News & Notes

- ◆ **A Replay of the Immanuel Lutheran Christmas Choral Service** *The King in the Cradle* from last Friday is online. The strings, flute choir, and band play the first portion. The choral service begins at the 47 minute mark. A copy of the program booklet is available (see pastor if you'd like one). The video is located at: bit.ly/23ccs.
- ◆ **New Link for ILC Morning Chapel.** Immanuel Lutheran College morning chapel services provide daily edification for the ILC family. It has also served people across the CLC through an email subscription service. Unfortunately, the previous email delivery service is no longer viable. A more reliable service has been set up, but previous users will need to re-subscribe. If you would like a morning chapel devotion sent to your email each day, go to <https://ilc.edu/faith-worship/chapel-list/>, scroll to the bottom, and sign up with your email address.
- ◆ **A reminder to keep our brothers and sisters in southern India in your prayers.** The area was hit by a typhoon and flooding, which caused damage to church roofs, members and pastors' houses. Many have had to evacuate and stay in temporary shelters. One of the chairmen who lives near the BELC seminary had to evacuate his house and he and his family are staying in the BELC office.
- ◆ **Severe flooding has hit the northern part of Tanzania,** affecting the TZ-CLC congregation in Mbulu. Although no deaths have been reported, Pastor Jeremiah states that twenty members are in need of food, blankets, and tents for temporary shelter. Pastor Jeremiah has visited the area to evaluate the needs and provide emergency supplies. Thank the Lord for keeping Pastor Solomon, his family, and the Mbulu congregation safe from death and serious injury. Pray for His blessings on the recovery efforts, and that He will continue to provide for and protect the members of His Mbulu flock.
- ◆ **2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip** – Applications are still being accepted for the 2024 CLC Mission Helper Trip to Africa. Mission Helpers will be privileged to help spread the Gospel to children in either Kenya/Uganda, Tanzania, or Zambia for about three weeks. *The application deadline is January 16.* Find more information and apply online at www.mht.lutheranmissions.org.
- ◆ **The December CLC World Missions Prayer List,** provided by Missionary Todd Ohlmann, is available in the tract rack. You may also view it at: missionaryohlmann.blogspot.com. *"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer" (Romans 12:12).*

Daily Bible Readings for Home Devotions

December 18-23

Mon Isaiah 40:1-2 The Lord has double comfort, double forgiveness, for His people suffering exile in a foreign land. This shows both their great need and His great compassion.

Tues Isaiah 40:3-5 The Lord is going to come to take His exiled people back home. A voice in the wilderness urges all to get rid of anything that might hinder His coming and make a road for Him in the desert.

Wed Isaiah 40:6-8 The comfort which the Lord brings is not based on earthly situations, which change and fade like grass and flowers. No, His comfort is based on the eternal truths of God's Word.

Thur Isaiah 40:9-10 Here is comfort that is worth proclaiming: "Here is your God!" He is stronger than any trouble, even death and hell. That He is "your" God means salvation for you!

Fri Romans 2:12-16 When Jesus comes again to judge, the secrets of people's hearts will be revealed. Then the righteousness which Christ has brought to us will be revealed as our greatest treasure.

Sat Matthew 3:1-12 John calls on all to repent and receive God's forgiveness in Christ. Matthew sees this as the greatest fulfillment of God's promised comfort in Isaiah 40, the paving of the way of the Lord in the wilderness.

Opening Hymn

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

62

Is. 59: 20

Veni, veni, Emmanuel

Latin author unknown, c. 1100

Tr., John M. Neale, 1851, 1859, ab.

S. S. S. S. S.

Veni, Emmanuel

Elain-song melody, c. 1200

1 Oh, come, Oh, come, Em-man - u - el, And ran-som cap-tive
 2 Oh, come, Thou Rod of Jes - - se, free Thine own from Sa-tan's
 3 Oh, come, Thou Day-spring from on high, And cheer us by Thy
 4 Oh, come, Thou Key of Da - - vid, come And o - pen wide our

Is - - ra - el That mourns in lone-ly ex - - ile here Un-
 tyr - an - ny; From depths of hell Thy peo - ple save And
 draw - ing nigh; Dis - perse the gloom-y clouds of night And
 heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that leads on high And

til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em-
 give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em-
 death's dark shad-ows put to flight. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em-
 close the path to mis - er - y. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em-

man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - - ra - el.
 man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - - ra - el.
 man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - - ra - el.
 man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - - ra - el. A-men.