

## PREFACE

L: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever living God. But chiefly we are bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of our Lord; for he is the true Passover Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin, who by his death has destroyed death; And by his rising has brought us to eternal life. And so with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

“Holy, Holy”

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

L: Holy God, the Beginning and the End, our Salvation and our Hope, we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty. When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair, you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy. At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection, we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

**A: Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, both now and forever. Amen.**

## LORD’S PRAYER

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us,

**A: 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.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

L: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

**Communion Music Video**  
“Even So Come” by Chris Tomlin

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name.

**A: Amen.**

## SENT FOR WORK AND WITNESS

### BLESSING

L: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

### SENDING HYMN-

“Emmanuel” (W&P 36) Sing twice (Words on Screen)

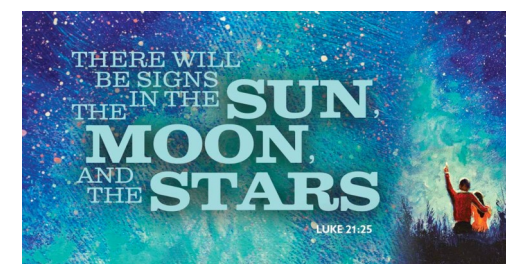
### DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

**A: Thanks be to God!**

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**Presiding Minister:** Pastor Christine McNeal  
**Worship Steward:** Mark Mackinson  
**Greeter/s:** Nathan Joerndt  
**Usher:** Tom Harms & Denny Leach  
**Lector:** Dawn Boitnott  
**Comm. Prep:** Jean Harrison  
**Communion Asst.:** Kris Lambert & Judy Sykes  
**Musician:** Julie Mehlberg  
**SS Teacher:** Mary Leach  
**Hospitality:** Darlen Miller & Pat Lund  
**Counters:** Marty Heller & Jean Harrison  
**Livestream:** Louis Kehinde



**St. Paul Lutheran Church**  
**December 1, 2024**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

**Introduction:** Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near. You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives at unexpected times. Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival. We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace.

**A: Amen**

### GATHERING HYMNS

“While We are Waiting, Come” - (words on screen)

“In a Far-Off Place, Jesus Comes” - (ACS 908)  
(Words on Screen)

### Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.

**Amen.**

L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

L: God of Mercy,

**A: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

L: God of might,

**A: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

**Amen.**

L: God in our midst,

**A: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

L: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✚ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

## GREETING

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**A: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

## Children's Message—Dismissal to Children's Chapel

## HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

**First Reading- Jeremiah 33:14-16**

L: A reading from Jeremiah

14 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness."

L: Word of God, Word of Life

**A: Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 25:1-10

A reading from Psalm

<sup>1</sup> To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

<sup>2</sup> **My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

<sup>3</sup> Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

<sup>4</sup> **Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

<sup>5</sup> Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

<sup>6</sup> **Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

<sup>7</sup> Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

<sup>8</sup> **You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

<sup>9</sup> You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

<sup>10</sup> **All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

L: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word

**A: Thanks be to God**

## Second Reading – 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

L: A reading from 1 Thessalonians

9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. 11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. 13 And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

*Please rise, as you are able, for the reading of the Holy Gospel.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**"Alleluia, Lord" (words on screen)**

## Gospel - Luke 21:25-36

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke

**A: Glory to you, O Lord.**

[[Jesus said:] 25 "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. 26 People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 27 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. 28 Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." 29 Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; 30 as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. 31 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. 32 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. 33 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 34 "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, 35 like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. 36 Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

**A: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## SERMON:

**Pastor Christine McNeal**

## Hymn of the Day

**"There is a Longing in Our Hearts" (ACS 1078)**

## Nicene Creed

L: Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed.

**A: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation**

**he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition will end "Lord in your mercy"

and the congregation will respond **"Receive our Prayer"**

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

L: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**A: And also with you.**

*You are invited to share a sign of God's peace with your neighbors by turning to the people near you saying, "Peace be with you."*

## OFFERING

*Offerings can also be sent by mail or given online. You can send a check to St. Paul Lutheran Church 210 Deerfield Rd Pontiac, IL 61764 or give online at [stpaulpontiac.org](http://stpaulpontiac.org)*

## Offering Prayer

L: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**A: Amen.**

## MEAL

*All are welcome at Christ's table. Communion is distributed in front of the altar by intinction. Please dip the wafer into the lighter colored liquid which is grape juice or the darker liquid which is wine. If you prefer not to receive communion you may come forward with your hands crossed over your chest to receive a blessing or you may remain in your seat.*

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

L: The Lord be with you.

**A: And also with you.**

L: Lift up your hearts.

**A: We lift them to the Lord.**

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**A: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**