

song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.  
**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.**

## 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:

**“Gloria” (Just Refrain, ELW 289)**

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

L: Holy, living and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth. We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

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-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world. Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: Carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

**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: Glory to God in the highest. Come to the table of peace.

**Communion Music Video - “Jesus Born On This Day”  
by Avalon**

**“Happy Birthday Jesus” (words on screen)**

**“The First Noel” (ELW 300)**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

L: God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**A: Amen.**

**Candle Lighting** (*For safety and to reduce wax dripping, please tip the unlit candle into the lit candle*)

**Hymn: “Silent Night” (words on screen)**

## SENDING

### BLESSING

L: God bless you and keep you, ✝ Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

**Children’s Song—”Joy to the World” (video)**

**SENDING HYMN- “Joy to the World” (words on screen)**

## DISMISSAL

L: Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news!

**A: Thanks be to God!**

**Presiding Minister:** Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

**Worship Steward:** John Mehlberg

**SS Teacher:** No SS

**Greeters:** Greg & Tami Putnam

**Musician:** Julie Mehlberg & Sandy Erickson

**Lector:** Becky Edinger

**Ushers:** Mark Mackinson

**Communion Prep:** Marian Brown

**Comm. Asst:** Denny & Mary Leach

**Counters:** Cody Leach & Jake Dixon

**Hospitality:** None

**Livestream:** Louis Kehinde



**St. Paul Lutheran Church**

**December 24, 2023**

**Nativity of Our Lord:  
Christmas Eve**

**Introduction:** “In winter’s deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus’ birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Altar flowers are sponsored by Judy Sykes in honor of Karen Hoegger

## 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 HYMN

**“O Come, All Ye Faithful” (ELW 283)**

## Confession and Forgiveness

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation.

**Amen.**

L: Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

L: God of Glory, God of Peace

**A: we confess, that we have shunned the light that reveals the truth about us. We cling to worldly things rather than sharing the gifts of this earth. We trust ourselves above all. Save your people O God: sustain the rivers and trees that sing your praise: and free us to live boldly in the light and truth of Jesus our Savior.**

**Amen.**

Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God’s promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In ✝ Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.

**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

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**A: Amen.**

## Children's Message

## HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

### First Reading- Isaiah 9:2-7

L: A reading from Isaiah

2The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. 3You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. 4For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. 5For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 6For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

L: Word of God, Word of Life

**A: Thanks be to God.**

### Psalm 96

A reading from Psalm 96

1Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

**2Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

3Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

**4For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

5As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.

**6Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

7Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

**8Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord.**

9Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

**10Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

11Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

**12Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O Lord, for you come to judge the earth.**

13You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

L: Holy Wisdom, Holy Word

**A: Thanks be to God**

### Second Reading – Titus 2:11-14

L: A reading from Titus

11The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, 12training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, 13while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. 14He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

**A: Thanks be to God.**

### HYMN: A Hallelujah Christmas Song (words on screen)

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

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION - (Spoken Responsively)

L: Alleluia, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

**A: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Alleluia!**

### Gospel - Luke 2:1-20

L: The Holy Gospel according to Luke

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

1In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3All went to their own towns to be registered. 4Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. 8In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 14"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" 15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the

child lying in the manger. 17When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

## Sermon

Pastor Wayne Shelksohn

## HYMN OF THE DAY - "I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve (ELW 271)

## 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 "Hear us, O God"

and the congregation will respond "Your mercy is great"

## 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 Choir Anthem "Still, Still, Still"

*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: God of abundance,

receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the