



*St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church LCMS
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Joy comes subtly in the *Collect* as the darkness of our hearts is lightened by the gracious visitation of our Lord. Similarly, though joy frames the *Introit* with its antiphon (Phil 4:4), the Introit psalm itself hints at the joy concealed in the Gospel: “The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous” (Ps 146:7–8). The *Gradual* takes its joy from Zechariah’s prophecy, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion” (Zech 9:9). Again I say, rejoice!

The Lord’s Supper is a very special privilege God gives to His people.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord’s body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because the Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive this sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an elder. If you are not partaking of the Lord’s Supper but would like to receive a blessing, please come up to the communion rail when sent by an elder, kneel, and cross your arms over your chest. The Pastor will then know that you desire a blessing.

OUR OFFERINGS TO THE LORD FROM HIS BLESSINGS TO US.

Offerings remind us of the blessings God has given us and are an opportunity to thank Him for what He has done in our lives. Please place your offerings in our Offering Box located in the narthex of the church.

In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”

We welcome children and all the joy and little chatter that comes with them. If for any reason you want to take your little one out, there is a Nursery (Cry Room) available for use, located just outside the sanctuary.

The third Sunday in Advent is called Gaudete Sunday. In Latin, “Gaudete” means “Rejoice!” and is taken from Phil. 4:4. On this Sunday we light the pink candle to signify rejoicing – “Rejoice! The Lord is near.” This pink candle reminds us of the joy we have as Christians in looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Immanuel. It also brings to mind that while we celebrate Advent in preparation and repentance, we also take time to rejoice for our King is coming to redeem us from our sins. “*Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name.*” (Psalm 33:20-21)

Opening Hymn 345 "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding"
(Luke 1:76-79; Is. 60:1-3, 19-20; Eph. 5:8-14; Is. 25:7-9)

✠ CONFESSIO AND ABSOLUTIO ✠

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *(Matthew 28:19b)*
- C Amen.**
- P** Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. *(Hebrews 10:22)*
- P** Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C who made heaven and earth. *(Psalm 124:8)*
- P** I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,
C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin. *(Psalm 32:5)*
- P** O almighty God, merciful Father,
C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.
- P** Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. *(John 20:19-23)*
- C Amen.**

Adult Choir "An Angel Came to Galilee" *by Pastor Greg Fiechtner*

1. An angel came to Galilee, a revelation to proclaim.
Though Mary's heart with fear was filled,
she heard the will of God explained:
"Peace be to you, oh favored one!
For God chose you to bear His Son.
The Lord is with you, favored one!
For God chose you to bear His Son.

2. An angel came to Galilee, to gentle Joseph in a dream.
 "Fear not! Take Mary as your wife,
 confusing though as it may seem.
 For she shall bear the Son of God.
 Immanuel will be His name.
 For she shall bear the Son of God.
 Immanuel will be His name."

3. To Bethlehem the couple went,
 thus heeding mighty Rome's decree.
 While there God's promise was fulfilled
 that all the world His peace may see.
 "Glory to God in highest heav'n,"
 the great angelic host proclaimed.
 "Glory to God in highest heav'n,"
 the great angelic host proclaimed.

4. Not angels but God's Holy Word
 tells why the wondrous Gift was giv'n.
 We heirs see God as one of us
 and through Christ's blood are now forgiv'n.
 "Glory to God in highest heav'n,"
 let us with all the angels say,
 for God in Christ was manifest,
 was born for us on Christmas Day!

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

Introit

Psalm 146:5-8; antiphon: Philippians 4:4

- P** Rejoice in the Lord always;
 - C** **again I will say, Rejoice.**
 - P** Blessèd is he whose help is the God of Jacob,
 - C** **whose hope is in the LORD his God,**
 - P** who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them,
 - C** **who keeps faith forever;**
 - P** who executes justice for the oppressed,
 - C** **who gives food to the hungry.**
 - P** The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.
 - C** **The LORD lifts up those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous.**
- All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be**

forever. Amen.

P Rejoice in the Lord always;

C again I will say, Rejoice.

Kyrie ∞ *Lord, Have Mercy (Mark 10:47)*

LSB 186



C Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

(2 Timothy 4:22)



C And with thy spir - it.

P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

The Old Testament Lesson

Zephaniah 3:14-20

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you;
He has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall never again fear evil.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

"Fear not, O Zion;
let not your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst,
a Mighty One who will save;

He will rejoice over you with gladness;
 He will quiet you by His love;
 He will exult over you with loud singing.
¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival,
 so that you will no longer suffer reproach.
¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal
 with all your oppressors.
 And I will save the lame
 and gather the outcast,
 and I will change their shame into praise
 and renown in all the earth.
²⁰At that time I will bring you in,
 at the time when I gather you together;
 for I will make you renowned and praised
 among all the peoples of the earth,
 when I restore your fortunes
 before your eyes," says the LORD.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Zechariah 9:9a; Psalm 118:26

P Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

C **Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.**

P Behold, your King is coming to you;

C **righteous and having salvation.**

P Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

C **From the house of the Lord we bless you.**

The Epistle Lesson

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Alleluia

LSB 190



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel Lesson

Luke 7:18–28

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the seventh chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are You the One who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are you the One who is to come, or shall we look for another?'" ²¹In that hour He healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind He bestowed sight. ²²And He answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by Me."

²⁴When John's messengers had gone, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
who will prepare Your way before You.'

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

Hymn 737 "Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing"
(Ps. 28:7; Ps. 27:1-6; Micah 7:18-19; Ps. 73:25-26)

Sermon Text *Philippians 4:4-7*

Sermon "Rejoice in the Lord Always!"

1. Zephaniah locates this joy in the Lord's promises _____
_____ But when will this be?
2. John the Baptist leads us to Jesus. Is Jesus the one who will bring these _____ ?
3. Jesus is indeed the Coming One! Where He is, there the promises are fulfilled and _____ .

Hymn 515 "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"
(Matt. 25:1-6; Rev. 5:11-14; Mal. 4:2; Matt. 13:35-37)

Prayers

Lord's Prayer *(Matthew 6:9-13)* *LSB 179*

P Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **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.**

Solo "Out of This World" *sung by Kali Rose, with Ellia & Kila Foster*

P The Lord be with you. *(2 Timothy 4:22)*



G And with thy spir - it.

Benedicamus *Let Us Bless (Psalm 103:1)* **LSB 202**

P Bless we the Lord.



G Thanks be to God.

Benediction *(Numbers 6:24-26)* **LSB 202**

P The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and ✠ give you peace.



G A-men, a-men, a - men.

Closing Hymn 556 "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice" *vs. 1-6 (Psalm 98:1-3; 2 Tim. 1:9-10; Gal. 4:4-5; Romans 3:28)*

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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The altar flowers are given in memory of Desi Jones by her family.

Thank you to our carolers who sang to the shut-ins last Sunday and the LWML ladies and friends who donated all the treats for the cheer boxes.
All were gladly received by our shut-ins with heartfelt appreciation.

Jan.-March 2025 Portals of Prayer and HopeFull Living devotionals are in the tract rack.

Worship Anew can be viewed on Dish Channel 266 or Direct TV channel 377 on Sundays at 11:30 am.

Calendar of Events

TODAY December 15th, 2024

Sunday School & Bible Classes..... 8:30 am
Worship Service..... 9:30 am
Youth Christmas Eve PracticeAfter Service
Adult Basketball..... 2:30-4:30 pm
Adult Choir Practice6:00 pm

MON:

TUES:

WED:

Day School/Preschool Chapel 11:00 am
Children’s Worship Service7:00 pm

THURS:

Thursday Morning Ladies Bible Study 9:30 am

FRI:

NEXT SUNDAY December 22nd, 2024

Sunday School & Bible Classes..... 8:30 am
Worship Service..... 9:30 am
Youth Christmas Eve PracticeAfter Service

Today is the last day for the ingathering for Grace Food Pantry in Bremen. We will deliver the food donations on December 19. Your items may be placed on the table in front of the church office. They have requested the following items: any kind of baking items such as pie filling, cake or cookie mix, flour, sugar, brown sugar, baking soda, chocolate chips, also French fried onions, sloppy joe mix, canned meat (except salmon), juice, peanut butter, jelly, canned soup, pasta or rice sides. **The Food Pantry also gives birthday boxes** to its clientele! If you would like to make birthday boxes, they include a cake mix, frosting, 12 oz can soda, sprinkles, candles, foil pan and a blank birthday card. **Grace Food Pantry is open** on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month from 11 am to 4 pm. This year they will be open Monday, December 23 since Christmas is the 4th Wednesday. This is a great way to love and minister to our neighbors. **Thank you for your donations!!**

Goody Bags for Christmas – Today is the last day to donate candy for the “goody bags” that the students will receive following the Children's Worship Service on December 18th. There is a box for the candy located in the Narthex next to the Emmaus Room.

Special Concerns:

That we extol the true joy that comes from Christ and is found in His presence, distinguishing it from the false and fading joy that masks our sorrow and loneliness.

For Pastor Rafael & Deaconess Jamielynn Flores and Pastor Micah Wildauer and their work in foreign missions.

That the Lord would bless our offerings that we give today.

For our country and her leaders.

For the Lord's continued grace and protection of our Haitian brothers and sisters and for all persecuted Christians throughout the world.

For those who serve us in their vocation of policemen and firemen.

For strength, comfort, and healing to those dealing with the aftermath of hurricanes Helene and Milton.

" Seminary Adopt A Student" - St. Paul's supports students attending the Ft. Wayne or St. Louis LCMS Seminaries. If you know of anyone attending either of these, please forward the name and contact information to Jim Tinkey of the Board of Stewardship.

YOUTH NEWS

THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the pancake breakfast this past Saturday as we prepare our hearts and minds for the Christ Child's birth on Christmas. It was great to see all who were able to join.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE PRACTICES: For those Youth participating, practices continue as below::

- December 15th after the service
- December 22nd after the service
- *Before the Christmas Eve service (will meet at 5:30 pm)

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2025

"No Sale" Bake Sale (January 19th following the church service) – donations toward the 2025 National Youth Gathering

Youth Ice Skating (January 19th - afternoon) - for Grades 4-HS

Super Bowl Subs (February 9th)

Look for more information about our Youth Group via our "St. Paul's Youth" GroupMe chat or contact Youth Board Director Andy Wildauer with any questions.

The Christmas parties for the residents at the Cardinal Houses will take place on December 20th at 2 pm. The gift will be provided by an action team card from Thrivent. If you have any questions or want to participate, please call Wayne Spicher or Pastor Wonnacott.

Christmas Lunch for the Bremen Police Department will be on December 20th at noon. The food will be provided by an action team card from Thrivent. We need a few desserts, and we are also in need of Christmas cards for our men and women on the force. If you are willing to help, please call Wayne Spicher or Pastor Wonnacott.

You Are Invited to Our Advent and Christmas Services

Children's Christmas Service – Dec. 18th at 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service – Dec. 24th at 7:00 pm

Christmas Day Service – Dec. 25th at 9:30 am

New Years' Eve Service – Dec. 31st at 7:00 pm

Servants for Today's Worship December 15th, 2024

Pastor Neil Wonnacott (574-546-2332 or 574-301-9291)

Organist: Anita Eichinger

Ushers: Larry Winterboer & Curt Nielsen

Acolyte: Brantley Thornton

Elder: Jon Rettinger

Video Streamer: Tyler/Dakota Schmeltz

Servants for Wednesday, December 18th, 2024

Ushers: Paul Wonnacott & Bruce Augustine

Acolyte: Kellan Guse

Elder: Bill Rogers

Servants for Next Sunday's Worship December 22nd, 2024

Pastor Neil Wonnacott (574-546-2332 or 574-301-9291)

Organist: Anita Eichinger

Ushers: Joe Hughes & Tyler Schmeltz

Acolyte: Kayli & Cory Miller

Elder: Terry Miller

Communion Assistant: Dave Burcham

Video Streamer: Paul Wonnacott

SCHOOL CORNER

We are finishing the Second Quarter and preparing for Christmas in the day school! Next week will be a flurry of activity with the **MS Christmas Band Concert (BHS, Dec. 17th, 7:00pm) and the Children's Christmas Service, Dec. 18th, 7:00pm;** plus, the Christmas classroom parties. Christmas Break starts Dec. 23rd and school resumes on January 6th.

All church and school families are invited to attend the Children's Christmas Service, December 18th, 7:00pm. Attendance is required for all students, as this is a student-led service. Students are to be ready in their classrooms at 6:40pm, dressed in church-appropriate clothing. A reception will follow the service. Please help your student prepare their recitations and songs!

Thank you to all who have volunteered in the school this year (so far)! We appreciate all the extra time and care you give to the students, and they enjoy having you! Have a wonderful Christmas Break!

If you are interested in becoming more involved with the students of St. Paul's, we have a variety of opportunities! We like to have volunteers to read with or assist students with classwork during the school day. We also would like more assistance with Extended Care. If you are interested, please contact the school office.

December is your last chance to donate to the SGO and get tax benefits for 2024! We use the SGO both for elementary school scholarships and Pre-K scholarships, and it has been a great benefit to our families. Please continue to give, and receive the tax credit and deduction for your donations! **Now, there is a link to donate to the LSGO on the church's website under the School drop-down menu.**

You can also find several (easy) ways to donate at www.lutheranSGO.org/Donate. Donations can be given through a check, IRA, stocks, Donor Advised Funds, PayPal, credit card, and **NOW electronic giving!** Benefits to you are a 50% state tax credit for your donation and eligibility for a tax deduction. These scholarships make a big difference for our families. Please contact Jennifer Harman, in the school office, if you have questions.

We also continue to take donations to St. Paul's tuition assistance fund. Checks for tuition assistance can be made out to the church.