

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS ~ DECEMBER 29, 2024



Lessons and Carols

**St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 250 * 205 West Jefferson Street
Cole Camp, MO 65325**

“Being Transformed By God’s Grace To Love And Serve.”

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If it is uncomfortable for you to stand where indicated, please feel free to remain seated. The congregation responds where it is bold print.



Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

please stand in body or spirit

Call To Worship

“First Coming”

by Madeleine L’Engle

God did not wait till the world was ready, till the nations were at peace.
God came when the heavens were unsteady, and prisoners cried out for release.

God did not wait for the perfect time. God came when the need was deep and great.

God dined with sinners in all their grime, turned water into wine. God did not wait till hearts were pure.

In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.

To a world like ours of anguished shame God came, and God’s light would not go out.

God came to a world which did not mesh, to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.

In the mystery of the Word made Flesh the Maker of the stars was born.

We cannot wait till the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful voice,

for to share our grief, to touch our pain, God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Gathering Song

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

#270

Christmas Dialog

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness, on them light has shined.

We have beheld Christ’s glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Opening Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray..... **Almighty God, you have filled us with the new light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let the light of our faith shine in all we do; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

please be seated

First Reading

“Light is created”

Genesis 1:1 - 5, 14 - 18

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day. ¹⁴And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, ¹⁵and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. ¹⁶God made the two great lights — the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night — and the stars. ¹⁷God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, ¹⁸to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song

“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”

#282 vs. 1 & 4

Second Reading

“God promises a king”

Isaiah 9:2 - 7

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song "Once in Royal David's City" #269 vs. 1 - 3

Third Reading: "The annunciation to Mary" Luke 1:26 - 35, 38

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song "In the Bleak Midwinter" #294 vs. 1 & 2

Fourth Reading: "The king will come from Bethlehem" Micah 5:2 - 5a

²But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ⁵and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song "O Little Town of Bethlehem" 279 vs. 1 & 3

Fifth Reading: "The birth of Jesus" Luke 2:1 - 20

In 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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Song "Angels We Have Heard on High" #289

Sixth Reading "The Birth of Jesus the Messiah" Matthew 1:18 - 25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." ²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Video Message "Why Christmas Trees Aren't Perfect"

Song "O Christmas Tree" SSP #7 vs. 1, 4 & 5

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how green thy branches ever!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how green thy branches ever!
Thou still art green when summer wanes, and wintry winds sweep o'er the plains.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how green thy branches ever!

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, what golden lights adorn thee!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, what golden lights adorn thee!
Like stars they shine in beauty bright, to fill each heart with pure delight.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, what golden lights adorn thee!

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how loving hands have decked thee!
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how loving hands have decked thee!
Thus God's own love will make of me, for paradise a shining tree.
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree, how loving hands have decked thee!

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Sharing The Peace

The Peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.....Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Seventh Reading

“The magi follows the star”

Matthew 2:1 - 11

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he

sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Song

"The First Noel"

#300 vs. 1 & 3

Eighth Reading:

"The mystery of the incarnation" John 1:1 - 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Song

"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

#288

please stand in body or spirit

Blessing For The New Year

Let us pray... O God, you have been our help in ages past, our hope for years to come. As we welcome this new year, bless us with peace. Fill our days with the light of Christ and lead us on the path of life until we see you in our heavenly home. You live and reign forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Hear, O Lord, the prayer you taught us to pray.....**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

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.

Blessed are you, Prince of peace. You rule the earth with truth and justice.
Send your gift of peace to all nations of the world.

Blessed are you, Son of Mary. You share our humanity.
Have mercy on the sick, the dying, and all who suffer this day.

Blessed are you, Son of God. You dwell among us as the Word made flesh.
Reveal yourself to us in word and sacrament that we may bear your light to all the world. Amen.

Sending Song

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

#290

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ has come.

Thanks be to God!

"THE HOPE OF CHRIST"



Welcome: Welcome to worship this winter morning! As brothers and sisters in Christ, we gather to praise his name, hear his Word and be strengthened to share his love with others.

We invite everyone to enjoy coffee, snacks and fellowship before worship in the Gathering Space. Please join us!

In Our Prayers: "Unspoken prayer concerns", Jill Logan, Ron Eickhoff, Gordon Ives, Norene Ives, Jon Beckman, Scott Cash, Judie VonHolten, Greg Ives, Dewey Jobe, Judy Smith, Renee Weller and Kyle Luetjen.



Fred Beeman, Kylee Scheel (family of Teresa Viebrock), David Mobely (brother-in-law of Randy Healan), Stacy Morrison (friend of Teresa Viebrock), Joyce Jones (sister of Connie Gerken), Kaleb Mundy, Junior Garr, Kris Barnes (friend of Julie Cronin), Donna Allen (mother of Adrienn Dieckman), Jamie Simon, Joe Campbell, Don Brooks, Vernitta Brooks, Dustin Woods, Liz Smart, Art Heimsoth, Cliff Eickhoff, Carmilla Swaim and husband (friends of Debbie Eickhoff), Joseph Fuelling (nephew of Paul Fuelling), Karen Haase (sister-in-law of Gene Beckman), Jackie Ross (sister of Randy Healan), Ronnie Logan (brother of Gale Logan), Marvin Logan (brother of Gale Logan), Marlin Lackas (brother-in-law of Paul Fuelling), and Adam Gumbel (son of Jim & Kim Gumbel).



Nursing Home: Vern Dean Bohling: *Ambrose*. Marie Viebrock & Florence VonHolten: *GSCC*.

Military: Please keep all those who have served our country past and present in your prayers, especially: Rank E3 Jensen Hamilton (grandson of Dennis Hamilton), Private Bradyn Hood (grandson of Connie Gerken), MSgt. Jason Ostberg (son-in law of Suzanne Lutjen) Lt. Col. Ron Poe, SSG Nick Smith and Major Joseph Strathman.



With Sympathy: We also pray for those families who have lost loved ones; family and friends of Larry Stelling and Don Gibbs.



Prayers: If you would like your name added or removed from the prayer list, please contact the church office at 668-3537.

Out of Office: Pastor Stephen will be on vacation from Thursday, December 26th through Wednesday, **January 1st**.



Health Care: The Benton County Health Department will be here on Thursday, **January 2nd** from 8:00am until 10:00am to assist you with your health care needs.

Meeting: The Council will meet on Tuesday, **January 7th** at 7:00pm.



Church Council Meeting



WELCA: The Women of the ELCA will have their quarterly meeting on Wednesday, **January 8th** at 7:00pm.

Annual Meeting: It is time to regroup and find out where we have been in 2024 and where we want to be 2025. Come and spend time with us on Sunday, **January 19th**. We will begin with Sunday School Class at 9:00am. Then worship will begin at 10:00am. After worship we will enjoy a soup and chili lunch together, stretch our legs and then gather at 12:15pm in the sanctuary for the annual meeting.



Do you have reports that you would like to include in the Annual Report? Please submit them to the church office by Sunday, January 5th.



Audit: Those with check books or receipts or money market/banking statements, to please have items in to the auditing committee as soon as you are able after the new year. The audit committee will meet around the second week in January.

Envelopes: The 2025 offering envelopes are available in the link. If there isn't a box for you and you would like 2025 offering envelopes, please contact Russell Oelrichs, or the church office to request a box.



Secret Sisters: Thank you to those who participated in the Secret Sisters for 2024! Secret Sisters may reveal your identity throughout the month of December. The sign-up for **Secret Sisters for 2025** can be found at either Usher's Stand. Please sign-up by the end of December.

Staffing Update: After serving as church secretary for many, many years here at St. Paul's, Shirley recently announced her intention to retire from the position. First, let us all offer our thanks to Shirley for all that she has done for St. Paul's. We are truly grateful and are working on plans to celebrate her time. Secondly, we are now beginning the search for someone to fill that position. The office is currently staffed for 18 hours each week across four days. If you or anyone you know might be interested in applying for the secretary position please speak with Pastor Stephen or Jake Jackson.



Thank You: The Congregation Council wishes to thank you for all your financial support during 2024, particularly knowing the economic conditions and inflationary pressures that we have all faced throughout the year. As of the end of November our home purpose fund is running a deficit, and there are still some major end of year bills to be paid (hello insurance!) Additionally, our crisis fund is nearly empty (Pastor Stephen uses this for member or community member's emergency needs) and our benevolence giving to the Central States Synod is quite behind (this is our partnership with Lutheran churches in Missouri and Kansas). As we approach the end of the year, we encourage you to continue your regular offerings and prayerfully consider any additional gift. Thank you for your continued support of our mission together.

Little Blessings Angel Tree: There is an additional Angel Tree in the Gathering Space which is designated for the Little Blessings Day Care. The angels on the tree contain gift ideas for the day care, including non-perishable food items, needs for infant and toddler care, or a monetary donations. These gifts can be bagged and placed under the tree through Christmas Day. Monetary donations can be placed in the offering plates, designated for the Little Blessings Day Care. **Thank you** for your generosity for our day care kiddos!



Outdoor Christmas Photo Scene: There's nothing more iconic than family photos at Christmas. Not to mention all the must-stop places in the area for photos: the Magic Tree in Sedalia, the lights at Drake Harbor, etc. This year, as a gift to the community, St. Paul's is planning to offer our own Outdoor Christmas Photo Scene for anyone to come and use as a background for their pictures. It will be set up around Thanksgiving, behind the church building, and be available through Christmas. It can be used anytime during the day or evening and will remain up until the start of the new year. Any and everyone is welcome to come take their pictures here. Help us spread the word, this is our gift to you!

Souper Bowl: The "Souper Bowl" challenge is on! This year every congregation is invited to bring any kind of food staples: soup and crackers, instant potatoes, canned meat, mac 'n cheese, canned vegetables or fruit, peanut butter, jelly, breakfast items, baking items, etc. Just about any and everything will be useful. Items can be brought to the church all through January and early February. Let's see if we can return the trophy to St. Paul's!



~ * ~ IN OUR COMMUNITY ~ * ~



Concert: Everyone is invited to the "Join the Angels" Concert presented by the Cole Camp Community Choir on Sunday afternoon, **January 5th**, beginning at 4:00p.m. The concert, a collection of inspirational vocal Christmas songs by a variety of composers, will be performed at Trinity Lutheran Church, located at 104 East Butterfield Trail in Cole Camp. There will be a free-will door offering to benefit the Cole Camp Regional Ministry's music fund and other worthwhile projects.



THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, December 29:	10:00am	Worship Service Lessons & Carols
Thursday, January 2:	8:00am	BCHD
Saturday, January 4:	5:30pm	Casual Worship
Sunday, January 5:	8:45am	Confirmation Class
	9:00am	SS / Adult Class
	10:00am	Worship Service Holy Communion at the Altar



~ * ~ Coming Events ~ * ~

January 8WELCA Quarterly Meeting
January 19Annual Meeting

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Ministers The Whole Congregation
Presiding Minister Pastor Stephen Zeller
Organist Lois Viebrock
Pianist Jeannette VonHolten
AV Technicians Russ Oelrichs & Todd Rusk
Altar Guild Kathy Oelrichs & Sharel Wienberg
Ushers Justin Tinney, Head Usher
..... Victoria Fox, John Oelrichs, Braden Poe & Ryan Schlesselman



First Sunday of Christmas ~ December 29, 2024

Worship Leader Darin Oelrichs
Communion Assistants No Communion
Readers Melisa Balke, Paul Fuelling,
..... Rhonda Schlesselman & Sandy Schlesselman
Children's Sermon No Children's Sermon
Acolytes Grady Elliott & Tristan Fox
Flowers Mary Haluptzok



Epiphany of our Lord ~ January 5, 2024

Assisting Minister Anne Goosen
Communion Assistants At the Altar
Readers Brian Randall
Children's Sermon Jennifer Rehmer
Acolytes Lexi Goyette & Charlotte Zeller
Flowers Susan Goosen