FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS ~ DECEMBER 31, 2023

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."

Office ····· 668 - 3537
Fellowship Hall/Basement ····· 668 - 3446
Pastor's Home ····· 668 - 0881
Email ····· office@stpauls.me
Website ····· www.stpauls.me
Facebook ····· www.facebook.com/stpaulscolecamp
YouTube ····· www.youtube.com/stpaulscolecamp

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 "Once in Royal David's City" #269

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 "God promised a king" Isaiah 9:2 - 7

2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a
land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. 3 You 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. 4 For 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. 5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in
blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 6 For 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. 7 His 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.**

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

2 But 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. 3 Therefore 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. 4 And 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; 5 and 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

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

[26]In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, [27]to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. [28]And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." [29]But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. [30]The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. [31]And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. [32]He 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. [33]He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." [34]Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" [35]The 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. [38]Then 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 birth of Jesus" Luke 2:1 - 16

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. [2]This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. [3]All went to their own towns to be registered. [4]Joseph 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. [5]He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. [6]While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. [7]And 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. [8]In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. [9]Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. [10]But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: [11]to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. [12]This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." [13]And 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!" [15]When 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." [16]So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Children's Sermon Video

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!

Fifth Reading: "Jesus receives his name" Luke 2:21 - 35

[21]After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. [22]When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord [23](as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), [24]and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." [25]Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. [26]It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. [27]Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents

brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, [28]Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, [29]"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; [30]for my eyes have seen your salvation,[31]which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, [32]a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." [33]And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. [34]Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed [35]so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed — and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Song "O Lord, Now Let Your Servant" #313

Sixth Reading "The magi follow the star" Matthew 2:1 - 11

[1]In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, [2]asking, "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." [3]When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; [4]and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. [5]They 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.'" [7]Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. [8]Then 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." [9]When 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. [10]When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. [11]On 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

please stand in body or spirit
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.**

please be seated
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 slaughter of the holy innocents" Matthew 2:13 - 18

13 Now after [the wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a
dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and
remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy
him." 14 Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to
Egypt, 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had
been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."
16 When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and
he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old
or under, according to the time that he had learned from the wise men. 17 Then was
fulfilled what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah: 18 "A voice was heard
in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused
to be consoled, because they are no more."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God**

Song "Away in a Manger" #277

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.
2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and
without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was
life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the

darkness did not overcome it. [6]There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. [7]He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. [8]He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. [9]The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. [10]He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. [11]He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. [12]But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, [13]who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. [14]And 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 "Angels We Have Heard on High" #289

Dismissal
Go in peace. Christ has come.
Thanks be to God!

From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2023 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #36573.

"THE GIFTS OF THE SEASON"

Welcome: We gather to praise the One who has been "our help in ages past" and is "our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home." Welcome to all who have come to rejoice before the loving Creator of us all. It is the most fitting way possible to begin the New Year.

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

In Our Prayers: "Unspoken prayer concerns", Aureta Craighead, Dewey Jobe, Jon Beckman, Judy Smith, Paul Kelly, Gene Beckman, Renee Weller, Teresa Viebrock, Gordon Ives, and Kyle Luetjen.

Lennon Frenzel (great-granddaughter of Milton & Jeannette), Joe Campbell (brother of Aureta Craighead), Cliff Eckhoff, Averi Kroenke, Maggie Roark, Carmilla Swaim and husband (friends of Debbie Eckhoff), Donna Allen (mother of Adrienn Dieckman), Ken Jenson (friend of Connie Gerken), Cora Lee Fuchs (mother of Greg Bredehoeft and grandmother of Angela Alcorn), Jamie Simon, Dena Sikoutris, Joseph Fuelling (nephew of Paul Fuelling), Bill Talbot (friend of Connie Gerken), Annie Bright, Kiley Simon (friend of Jenna Nash), 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), Bill Hampton, Alex Stevens (friend of Tina Ives) and Adam Gumbel (son of Jim & Kim Gumbel).

Nursing Home: Vern Dean Bohling: *Ambrose.* Marie Viebrock & Florence VonHolten: *GSCC.* Kathy Hallauer: *Loving Arms.*

Military: Please keep all those who have served our country past and present in your prayers, especially: ENS David M. Gardner (son of Pam Balke), Private Bradyn Hood (grandson of Connie Gerken), MSgt. Jason Ostberg (son-in law of Suzanne Lutjen) Lt. Col. Ron Poe and Cpt. Joseph Strathman

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

Thank You: The Congregation Council wishes to thank you for all your financial support during 2023, particularly knowing the economic conditions and inflationary pressures that we have all faced throughout the year. As of November 30, our home purpose fund has a deficit of about $7,100. Regular offerings for the year have been much less than anticipated and budgeted, however we have been fortunate that we have managed to keep expenses much lower than budgeted. 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.

Envelopes: The 2024 offering envelopes are available in the link. If there isn't a box for you and you would like 2024 offering envelopes, please contact Russ Oelrichs or the church office to request a box.

Secret Sister Reminder: It's December - time to make the Secret Sister Reveal anytime throughout the month! It is also time to "sign up" for a Secret Sister for 2024. The Secret Sister Sign-Up sheets can be found on each of the ushers' stand. You will also find a Secret Sister Interest Inventory sheet there. The inventory is very helpful for your secret sister to learn more about you. Sign up and enjoy the fun throughout the year!!

Out of Office: Pastor Stephen will be out of the office during the time between Christmas and the New Year.

LBPS: Little Blessing Preschool will be in session on Tuesday, **January 2nd** and Wednesday, **January 3rd** from 8:00am until 11:15pm in the church basement.

Health Care: The Benton County Health Department will be here on Thursday, **January 4th** from 8:00am until 10:00am to help you with your health care needs.

First Communion: The two sacraments (Baptism and Holy Communion) are foundational to our worship life as Lutheran Christians. Traditionally at St. Paul's we offer First Communion instruction to youth who are in the fourth grade, but we also want this to be a decision made by the families whether the youth are older or younger. For those youth who wish to take their First Communion this year, they and their families are invited to join Pastor Stephen for a time of instruction following worship on Sunday, **January 7th**. We will gather that day for lunch, conversation, learning, and bread baking. Then they will receive their First Communion in worship on Sunday, **January 21st**. Please speak with Pastor Stephen if you have any questions or plan on attending.

Human Trafficking: Connie McCray, Director of Hope5one (Warsaw, MO), will be presenting a program at the Women of the ELCA Quarterly meeting on Wednesday, **January 10, 2024** at 7:00 p.m. The program is designed to *educate* on what human trafficking is and an *awareness* of the signs of trafficking. **All members of St. Paul's** are invited to attend to learn more on the topic and how we, at St. Paul's, can respond and address the Human Trafficking issue found both in large cities and even in small communities. More information to follow.

Audit: Please turn books to be audited into Ellen Harms by Sunday, **January 14th.**

Annual Meeting: It is time to regroup and find out where we have been in 2022 and where we want to be 2023. Come and spend time with us on Sunday, **January 21st.** 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 7th.

~ * ~ IN OUR COMMUNITY ~ * ~

Christmas Cantata: A Christmas Cantata is sponsored by the Cole Camp Regional Ministry, will be held on Sunday afternoon, **January 7th** at Trinity Lutheran Church. It will be an afternoon of Christmas music, beginning with pre-service music at 3:45 p.m., followed by the Cole Camp Community Choir performing the Cantata, "God With Us!", under the direction of Alicia "Sam" Cole. We wish you a worshipful Christmas season as you celebrate the coming of Christ and meditate on the wonderful gift that God has given us!

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, December 31:	10:00am	Worship Service Lessons & Carols
Tuesday, January 2:	8:00am	LBPS
Wednesday, January 3:	8:00am	LBPS
Thursday, January 4:	8:00am	BCHD
Saturday, January 6:	5:30pm	Casual Worship
Sunday, January 7:	8:45am	Confirmation Class
	9:00am	SS / Adult Class
	10:00am	Worship Service
		Holy Communion at the Altar
	AW	First Communion Class

~ * ~ Coming Events ~ * ~

January 7 ····· First Communion Class
January 21 ····· First Communion
January 21 ····· Annual Meeting

Welcome to St. Paul's Lutheran Church

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

First Sunday of Christmas ~ December 31, 2023

Assisting Minister ..... Tom Oelrichs
Communion Assistants ..... No Communion
Reader ..... Luke Goosen, Lynn Schear,
..... Norma Schlesselman & Bill Viebrock
Children's Sermon ..... None
Acolytes ..... Tristan Fox & Jace Tinney
Flowers ..... Mary Haluptzok

Epiphany of our Lord ~ January 7, 2024

Assisting Minister ..... Darin Oelrichs
Communion Assistants ..... At the Altar
Reader ..... Adrienn Dieckman
Children's Sermon ..... Pastor Stephen Zeller
Acolytes ..... Lexi Goyette & Khloe Viebrock
Flowers ..... Susan Goosen

A
FESTIVAL
of
LESSONS
&
CAROLS