



ST. PAUL'S
PRESBYTERIAN

For The Glory of God & The Joy of All Peoples

ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

On the Lord's Day Morning
Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 24, 2023, at 10:30



To all who are weary and seek rest; to all who mourn and long for comfort; to all who struggle and desire hope; to all who sin and need a Savior; to all who are strangers and yearn for fellowship; to all who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and to whoever will come—this church opens wide her doors and offers welcome in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

*The sounding of the bells calls
us to quiet our hearts before
worship.*

Welcome

Introit

Light the Advent Candles

Words & Music by Mark Clark

Arr. by Brad Nix

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Call to Worship

From Luke 1 and 2

Minister: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited
and redeemed his people

People: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace
among those with whom he is pleased!

Minister: Come, let us worship the Lord.

*Worship begins when God,
through the pastor ministering
in his name, summons us to the
praise of his glory.*

† congregation standing

✠ congregation kneeling

ENTERING GOD'S PRESENCE

† Hymn of Proclamation

Hymn A • Trinity Hymnal #195

Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come

ANTIOCH

† Prayer of Adoration

Unison: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

† Psalter Reading

Psalm 74

Pew Bible, page 486

Minister: The Word of the Lord!

People: Thanks be to God!

✠ Prayer of Confession

Unison: Our Father in heaven, from whom comes every good and perfect gift, we humbly confess our sin before you. You spared nothing for the sake of our salvation. You so loved the world that you gave your one and only Son. You have poured out your Spirit upon us. You have welcomed us into your Kingdom and adopted us as loved children. But we have been ungrateful, stingy, selfish, and hard-hearted in the face of such immense love and generosity. Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life, come and renew our hearts, set our souls on fire, and fill us with your presence and joy. We humbly ask this in the name of our dear Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please take a moment to silently confess your sin.

For centuries, the singing of hymns has been a way of grounding God's people in sound doctrine. We sing our theology. Hymns give us words for expressing our praise and thanks to God. Setting these words to music helps to get the truth into our hearts

Confession follows adoration: it was a deeper awareness of God's majesty and glory that made Isaiah so keenly aware of his unworthiness to stand in God's presence (Isaiah 6). In the presence of a holy God, we are moved to confess the truth about our sinful hearts.

The gospel message includes an announcement of forgiveness: your sins are forgiven by God's grace in Jesus Christ.

✠ Assurance of Pardon

From John 1:9-13

Minister: The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Unison: Thanks be to God!

✠ Prayers of the People

Litany for Christmas

Minister: For the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, the Word made flesh, let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.

Minister: For the Son of God who became a man so that men and women like us might become sons and daughters of God, let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and Amen!

Minister: For a great High Priest who is able to sympathize with us in our weakness, one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin, let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: Blessed be the Lord forever! Amen and Amen.

Minister: For the gospel of grace that assures us that Christ's incarnation, birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and promised return, is for us and for our salvation, let us give thanks to the Lord.

Unison: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the Lord!

✠ Pastoral Prayer



RENEWING OUR FAITH

† Hymn of Proclamation

Hymn B • Trinity Hymnal #203

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

† Affirmation of Faith

The Nicene Creed

Unison: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Unison: Thanks be to God!

The Nicene Creed originated at the Council of Nicaea (AD 325) and was expanded at the First Council of Constantinople (381). It was designed to address heresies that denied the biblical confession of the Trinity and the deity of Christ.

Children are welcome for our entire service. Following the Gloria, a specifically designed time for children aged four through first grade is also provided. Those interested can meet at the back of the Fellowship Hall.

We remember with gratitude the generosity of God in giving us his written Word: “Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens” (Psalm 119:89). Thanks be to God!

† Gloria

Glory Be to God in Heaven

Beethoven

Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.
Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
We exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.
Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.
Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav’n above;
On the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God’s right hand.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

† Gospel Lesson

Luke 1:57-80

Pew Bible, page 856

Minister: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!
Unison: Thanks be to the Lord!

Prayer for Illumination

Proclamation of God’s Word

Rev. Dan Thompson

ADVENT ACCORDING TO LUKE:
Zechariah’s Benedictus

RESPONDING IN THANKS

† Hymn of Response

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

Hymn C • Trinity Hymnal #227

SUSSEX CAROL

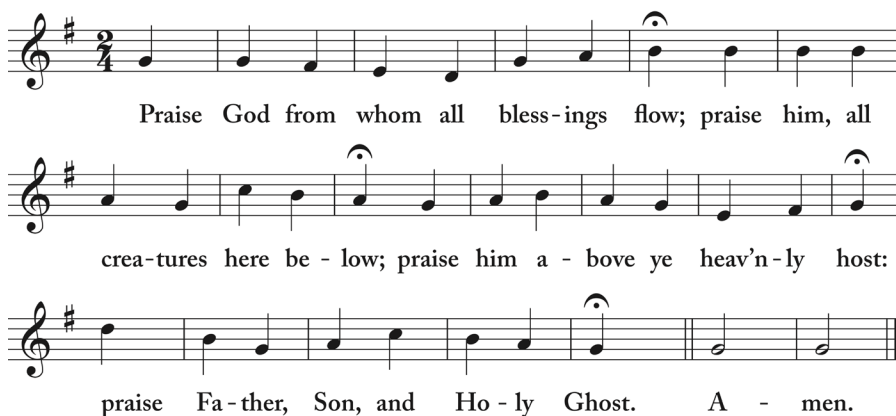
Giving to God & Instrumental Offertory

How Great Our Joy!

JUNGST

† Doxology #731

OLD HUNDREDTH



Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all
crea-tures here be - low; praise him a - bove ye heav'n - ly host:
praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offering willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own we have given you” (1 Chronicles 29:14).

To give online, visit
www.stpaulsorlando.com/give.

† Prayer of Dedication

† Benediction

Having been welcomed into God's presence, assured of his love, and reminded of his gospel promises, we are sent out into the world to be his representatives and ambassadors to a lost and needy world.

† Sending Forth Hymn

Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendor

Hymn D • Trinity Hymnal #230 (Verses 2 & 3)

QUELLE EST CETTE ODEUR AGREABLE

Minister: Go in peace to love and serve the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

People: Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Good Christian Men, Rejoice
IN DULCI JUBILO

Welcome visitors! If you are visiting St. Paul's today, we are so glad you have joined us for worship! We would love to get to know you. Email staff@stpaulsorlando.com to let us know your name, contact information, how you heard about St. Paul's, and any questions you may have. Please feel free to introduce yourself to our pastors or ushers.

Please take a moment to greet those around you.

Joy to the World! The Lord is Come

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Ps. 98:4



1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions



King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 ploy; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 ground; he comes to make his bles - sings flow
 prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness



and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
 and heav'n and na - ture sing,



and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

A great company of the heavenly host [was] praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:13, 14



1. Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord!
 3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th'an - gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased as man with men to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
 born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

REFRAIN

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King."

On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, I bring you news of great joy that will be for all the people." Luke 2:10

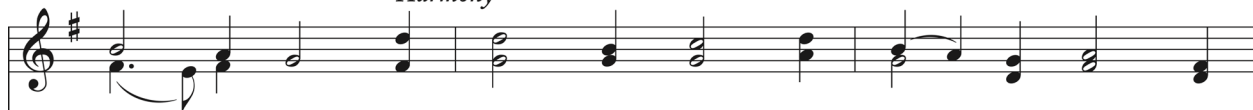
Unison



1. On Christ - mas night all Christ - ians sing, to hear the news the
 2. Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Re - deem - er
 3. When sin de - parts be - fore Your grace, then life and health come
 4. All out of dark - ness we have light which made the an - gels



Harmony



an - gels bring; on Christ - mas night all Christ - ians sing, to
 made us glad; then why should men on earth be sad, since
 in its place; when sin de - parts be - fore Your grace, then
 sing this night; all out of dark - ness we have light, which



Unison



hear the news the an - gels bring: news of great
 our Re - deem - er made us glad, when from our
 life and health come in its place; an - gels and
 made the an - gels sing this night: "Glo - ry to



Harmony



joy, news of great mirth, news of our mer - ci - ful King's birth.
 sin he set us free, all for to gain our lib - er - ty.
 men with joy may sing, all for to see the new - born King.
 God and peace to men, now and for - ev - er - more. A - men."

Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendor

*Our Lord Jesus Christ...was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you
through his poverty might become rich. 2 Cor. 8:9*

2. Thou who art God be - yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be -
3. Thou who art love be - yond all tell - ing, Sav - ior and King, we

cam - est man; stoop - ing so low, but sin - ners rais - ing,
wor - ship thee. Em - man - u - el, with - in us dwell - ing,

heav'n - ward by thine e - ter - nal plan. Thou who art God be -
make us what thou wouldst have us be. Thou who art love be -

yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be - cam - est man.
yond all tell - ing, Sa - vior and King, we wor - ship thee.

QUELLE EST CETTE ODEUR AGREABLE 9.8.9.8.9.8.

French carol melody

Arr. by Charles H. Kitson, 1930

ADVENT ACCORDING TO LUKE:

Zechariah's Benedictus

Luke 1:57-80 | Rev. Dan Thompson

The Big Idea: That God would remember his covenant promises and bring on the earth the salvation promised so long ago was overwhelming for faithful believers who had known centuries of longing. What was in Zechariah's heart spilled over in Spirit-filled praise.

i. Zechariah blessed God for the visitation that brings salvation.

ii. Zechariah celebrated his son's birth in light of the role John would play in God's saving work.

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

Use this plan for your daily Bible reading.

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| • Sunday, December 24 | Revelation 18:1-3 • John 18:15-40 • Psalm 143 |
| • Monday, December 25 | Revelation 18:4-20 • John 19:1-16 • Psalm 144 |
| • Tuesday, December 26 | Revelation 18:21-19:10 • John 19:17-27 • Psalm 145 |
| • Wednesday, December 27 | Revelation 19:11-21 • John 19:28-37 • Psalm 146 |
| • Thursday, December 28 | Revelation 20:1-10 • John 19:38-20:10 • Psalm 147 |
| • Friday, December 29 | Revelation 20:11-21:27 • John 20:11-18 • Psalm 148 |
| • Saturday, December 30 | Revelation 22:1-5 • John 20:19-31 • Psalm 149 |
| • Sunday, December 31 | Revelation 22:6-21 • John 21 • Psalm 150 |

WEEKLY SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these questions to reflect more deeply on this week's sermon.

1. In the prophesy that follows the naming of his son, what did Zechariah believe God was doing with the arrival of John? How do his words to John (v. 76-79) show us what was moving him to praise?
2. What is the prophetic significance of referring to the arrival of Jesus as God visiting us (vv. 1:68 and 1:78)? How was the coming of Jesus a divine "visitation"?
3. The metaphors of darkness and light are common in Scripture. How is the arrival of Jesus a sunrise or a light shining into darkness? How do you see that light shining in our dark world today?
4. There are always reasons for praise. If you were to burst into praise, as Zechariah did, and began your praise by saying, "God is worthy of praise because he has...", what reasons would you give for praising God?
5. What does it mean to say Jesus has come "to guide our feet into the way of peace"?

MONTHLY SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

ABOUT WORSHIP

In his encounter with the woman of Samaria, Jesus explained that “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). The reason Jesus says true worshipers must worship in this way is because God himself “is spirit.” Here we discover the simple yet profound principle that true worship is a response to God as he has personally revealed himself. Thus, conformity to God’s character is the key to true worship. “Great is the LORD,” as the psalmist puts it, “and greatly to be praised” (Psalm 48:1)! In worship, we seek to reflect this divine reality, declaring with our lips and demonstrating with our lives that God is supremely precious and therefore worthy of all glory and honor and praise.

THE SHAPE OF WORSHIP



Entering God’s Presence—We gather in response to God’s call to worship, joyfully offering praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. With reverence and awe, we confess our sins and receive God’s forgiveness, which is declared in Jesus’ name.



Renewing Our Faith—Worship continues with a focus on God’s Word. Our faith is renewed as we publicly confess the truth of God, join our hearts and voices in prayers and hymns of praise to God, and hear the good news of God powerfully proclaimed.



Responding in Thanks—As hearing becomes doing, we respond to the proclamation of God’s Word. Songs of praise continue to be raised and the gifts and offerings of God’s people are collected. On Communion Sundays we are invited to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. With God’s blessing upon us, we are sent into the world to love and serve the risen Lord Jesus Christ!

Why Do We Worship in This Way?

Question: What are the colored hangings on the pulpit, and why do they change?

Answer: These hangings are called “paraments” and they change as we celebrate special occasions, especially the five great “evangelical feasts” of the church year: Christmas, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost. These liturgical colors have an instructive purpose, helping us to mark time, and pointing us to key events in the life of Christ and the great work of redemption that he has accomplished.

WELCOME VISITORS!

We are delighted you have joined us for worship. Our hope is that you find our worship service glorifying to God and personally refreshing.

We would love to connect with you. Please stop by our New Visitor Table in the Narthex after the service so that we may greet you in person and provide you a *Welcome Bag*. To connect with us, please use the QR code below to fill out a *Connect Card*.

*Use your phone's camera to quickly access the following resources
or navigate to the URL below each QR code.*



CONNECT CARD
stpaulsorlando.com/connect



CHURCH APP
stpaulsorlando.com/app



GIVE ONLINE
stpaulsorlando.com/give

Our Vision

To see the invisible kingdom of heaven made visible,
for the glory of God and the joy of all peoples.

Our Mission

To grow in grace and give away our lives
in the following seven major ministry areas:

Worship that exalts God in Christ and promotes unity in the Spirit

Discipleship that is rooted in the Scriptures and centered in the gospel

Community that is characterized by discipleship and care for one another

Local Missions that promotes the common good and evangelizes the lost

Global Missions that participates in church planting and spreading the gospel
to the ends of the earth

Children's Ministry that partners with parents to build children up in the
faith through loving care and Reformed biblical teaching

Youth Ministry that promotes maturity, joy, and identity in Christ

ST. PAUL'S

PRESBYTERIAN

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