



St. Paul  
Ann Arbor

Sowing **truth**. Building **faith**. Shining **love**.



## Welcome to Worship

December 21, 2025  
**8:30 AM, Downtown Campus**



St. Paul Lutheran  
Church of Ann Arbor

At St. Paul Ann Arbor, we equip families and  
individuals to know Christ, to discover truth,  
and to create meaningful connections.

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 21, 2025 (8:30 AM)

## One church with two locations:

**Downtown Campus**  
420 W. Liberty St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Worship:  
Saturdays @ 6:30 PM  
Sundays @ 8:30 AM

Discipleship Hour:  
Sundays @ 9:45 AM

**Earhart Campus**  
495 Earhart Rd.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Worship:  
Sundays @ 10:45 AM

Discipleship Hour:  
Sundays @ 9:45 AM



## Welcome to our guests!

We're glad you're here! We ask that you fill out your name and an email or phone number in the black folder at the end of the row so we can connect with you. One of St. Paul's core values is unity so we'd like to help you get connected. On the back page of this worship folder, you'll find groups and events that are for you. May God bless you today!

## If you have children

We welcome and encourage all children (yes, babies too!) to worship the Lord at St. Paul. If your child becomes restless during the service, don't worry! We get it. If you'd like to use it, there is a cry room available at the rear of the church and a nursery located below the main worship entrance. Children's bulletins and activity bags are available at each worship entrance. The hospitality team will be happy to assist you.

## About Holy Communion

St. Paul is a confessional Lutheran congregation sharing the beliefs and practices of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). Following the Word of Jesus, we believe that the Lord's Supper is more than a symbol. Jesus gives His people His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins through the bread and wine. In Holy Communion, Jesus not only gives these gifts, He unites us in a confession of faith. We confess that God has given His gift of salvation in baptism. We confess that we are sinners who need the forgiveness that Jesus offers by His death and resurrection. We confess that God speaks in His inspired Word, the Bible. We confess that God is one God, the Father who created all things, the Son Jesus the Savior, and the Holy Spirit who dwells in His people by faith. Alongside this confession of faith, the Holy Spirit is at work in those who receive the Supper to live according to God's Word and remain true to God, even to death, shining Jesus' love inside and outside of God's church. If you share this confession, we invite you to receive Christ's body and blood with us. If you do not share these beliefs, please talk to a pastor before communing though you are invited to come forward during Communion distribution with arms crossed to receive a blessing and the assurance of God's love in Jesus Christ. We're glad you're at St. Paul!

## Discipleship Hour & Christ Connections

You're invited to gather after the service for coffee, donuts, fellowship and Bible study for adults and children! Sundays at 9:45 AM. Adults meet in Fellowship Hall (lower-level) and children ages 3 through grade 5 meet in the lower-level preschool classrooms.

## PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

## RINGING OF THE BELL / WORDS OF WELCOME

### CALL TO WORSHIP

(taken from Isaiah 66:18,20)

P: The time is coming to gather all nations and tongues,

C: **And they shall come and shall see my glory.**

P: They shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord...

C: **To my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord.**

### HYMN

"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"  
Stanzas 1, 3, 4



LSB# 341

### WE CALL UPON THE NAME OF GOD

*The sign of the cross ✠ may be made in remembrance of your Baptism.*

*Invocation  
Matthew 28:19b*

P: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen!**

### LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

(with Isaiah 7:14; Romans 1:2,3,5; Matthew 1:21)

P: "The Lord himself will give you a sign:

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

C: **and shall call His name Immanuel."**

P: "Concerning the Son of God: He was promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, descended from David according to the flesh,

C: **and through whom we have received grace."**



P: Each Sunday this Advent, we have lit another candle in this wreath, reminding us that Jesus Christ came to conquer the darkness of sin and lead us into the light of His glorious kingdom. In this final week of the Advent season, we come to know the meaning and power of our Savior's name. The angel spoke to Joseph, "She will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus,

C: **for He will save His people from their sins."**

We sing as the candle is lighted:

(LSB# 357)

7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind In one the hearts of  
All man - kind; Bid Thou our sad di - vi - sions cease,  
And be Thy - self our King of Peace. *Refrain* Re - joice! Re - joice!  
Em - man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

## WE TURN TO GOD, MINDFUL OF OUR SINFULNESS

*Confession of Sins*  
(reflecting on Isaiah 66:18–23)

- P: It's getting close to the time when families gather to celebrate Christmas, and friends get together for parties and holiday fun. But it's also a time when the people closest to us can cause us and others pain from their words and actions... and a time when we ourselves can hurt our most cherished relationships. All the tensions of the season can rise to the surface and become weapons to divide us, rather than unite us. Let us come before our heavenly Father and consider our failures to build a home of welcome and peace.
- C: **Heavenly Father, we confess that in our sin, we have fractured our families, and have created stress in our relationships. In our sin, we have inflicted wounds even on ourselves, and carry wounds caused from others. We fall short of selfless living, and cannot justify our actions, nor make ourselves whole. Apart from Jesus Christ, we would face only judgment. Forgive us, Father, for Jesus' sake. Amen.**

*(We observe a moment of quiet reflection as we consider our own sinful condition)*

## GOD TURNS TO US, EAGER TO FORGIVE

*Absolution*

(Isaiah 66:22)

P: The Lord sees your wounds and knows your sins. Jesus will return to establish a Home where justice is done, reconciliation is complete, and no one is left on the outside. In Christ Jesus, you are forgiven, restored, and welcomed into God's family forever—a place of peace, joy, and unity that will never be broken. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you for all of your sins, in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen!**

P: "For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain."

C: **Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!**

## OUR ADVENT RESPONSE

(LSB# 341)



5 Re - deem - er, come and o - pen wide My heart to  
Thee; here, Lord, a - bide! O en - ter with Thy grace di -  
vine; Thy face of mer - cy on me shine. Thy Ho - ly  
Spir - it guide us on Un - til our glo - rious goal is won.  
E - ter - nal praise and fame We of - fer to Thy name.

*~The HYMN OF PRAISE is omitted during Advent as a symbol of our voluntary restraint of praise in this season of preparation. "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!" will return at Christmas~*

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*Collect*

**P:** Eternal God, You promise a new heaven and a new earth where all Your children will be gathered as one. Heal our divisions, reconcile our brokenness, and fill us with the hope of Your everlasting kingdom. Keep us steadfast in faith until the day when we worship before You in perfect unity and joy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**



# **We Hear the Word of God**

**OLD TESTAMENT**..... ✠ Isaiah 66:18–23

<sup>18</sup> "For I know their works and their thoughts, and the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and shall see my glory, <sup>19</sup> and I will set a sign among them. And from them I will send survivors to the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, who draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, to the coastlands far away, that have not heard my fame or seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory among the nations. <sup>20</sup> And they shall bring all your brothers from all the nations as an offering to the Lord, on horses and in chariots and in litters and on mules and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the Lord, just as the Israelites bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. <sup>21</sup> And some of them also I will take for priests and for Levites, says the Lord. <sup>22</sup> For as the new heavens and the new earth that I make shall remain before me, says the Lord, so shall your offspring and your name remain. <sup>23</sup> From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord." (ESV)

**L:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## EPISTLE..... ✠ Romans 1:1–7

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,  
<sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,<sup>3</sup>  
 concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh<sup>4</sup> and was  
 declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his  
 resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,<sup>5</sup> through whom we have received  
 grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name  
 among all the nations,<sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,<sup>7</sup> To all  
 those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace  
 from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## WE RISE TO THE GOSPEL

*Alleluia & Verse*  
 (LSB pg. 156) *John 6:68*



## HOLY GOSPEL..... ✠ Matthew 1:18–25

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been  
 betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from  
 the Holy Spirit.<sup>19</sup> And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to  
 shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.<sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an  
 angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear  
 to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."<sup>21</sup>  
 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from  
 their sins."<sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:<sup>23</sup>  
*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel"*  
 (which means, God with us).<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the  
 Lord commanded him: he took his wife,<sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a  
 son. And he called his name Jesus. (ESV)

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## MESSAGE

"A Home Unbroken"  
*Rev. Aaron Roggow*

Isaiah 66:18-23

## RESPONSE

(Tune: LSB# 347)

**Jesus will return to gather  
 All who love Him as His own.  
 Bringing reconciliation,  
 Healing wounds where hate was sown.  
 In His home of deep accord,  
 Ev'ry fractured heart, restored;  
 Unity and love forgiving,  
 Perfect peace, and joyful living.**

Text: ©2025 Kirchenlied S. Schreiber, b. 1685

## NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth  
 and 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 men 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 sits at the right hand of the Father.  
 And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
 whose kingdom will have no end.  
 And I 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 I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church;  
 I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
 and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.



# We Worship the Lord with Our Offerings

*During the Offering, we invite your participation in our Ritual of Friendship. Please fill in the requested information on the Friendship Pad (which is located at the end of the pew at the center aisle ) and pass it down the pew. Also, as the pad is returned, please take note of who is worshiping with you in order that you might greet them following the service.*

(For electronic and convenient giving options, see the end of this worship folder)

## VOLUNTARY

## The Prayers We Bring to God



P: Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs:

### PRAYERS for THIS DAY

(As prompted) P: Lord, in Your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray:

*The Lord's Prayer*  
*Matthew 6:9-13*

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.**

# A Foretaste of the Great Feast in Heaven



## CHRIST'S WORDS ESTABLISH THE LORD'S SUPPER

*Words of Institution*

*1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

P: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: *Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me.* In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying: *Drink of it, all of you; this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.*

## THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*Pax Domini*

*John 20:19*


P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: **Amen! The peace of Christ be with us all.**

## LAMB OF GOD

*Agnus Dei* (LSB pg. 163)

*John 1:29*

 Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## WE COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE

*Communion Distribution*

Please note before receiving Holy Communion: *Please read the brief statement of our beliefs, "About Holy Communion", found at the beginning of our worship folder. Our pastors would be happy to meet with you to discuss our beliefs further, and help prepare you for Communion.*



**Hymns:** "O Jesus So Sweet, O Jesus So Mild"  
"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"

LSB# 546

LSB# 621

## WORDS OF PEACE AND JOY

*Communicants' Dismissal*

**P:** Now may this Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart in ☩ peace!

**C:** **Amen.**

## WE DEPART WITH THANKS AND PRAISE

*Post-Communion Canticle*

(LSB pg. 164)



**C** Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re - calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

## TAKING IT HOME

Isaiah 66:23 (ESV)

**P:** "From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath,

**C:** **All flesh shall come to worship before me, declares the Lord."**

## WE RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF GOD

*Benediction*  
*Numbers 6:24–26*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with His favor and + give you peace.  
C: **Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### HYMN

"Arise, O Christian People"  
Stanzas 1 & 4

 LSB# 354

### POSTLUDE



## Our Worship Servants

**Liturgist:** Rev. Dr. Ted Hopkins  
**Preacher:** Rev. Aaron Roggow  
**Lay Reader:** Phil Klintworth  
**Director of Music:** Dr. John Boonenberg  
**Family Worship Team:** Phil Klintworth, Greg Marshall  
**Elder:** Zac Lahrman

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### St. Paul Stephen Ministry

Are you feeling overwhelmed, grieving a loss, or navigating a health crisis? SPAA is here for you. Our trained Stephen Ministers offer compassionate, confidential, and Christ-centered care, providing the support you need during challenging times. Contact Cherise Callahan at 734-395-8775 to connect with a Stephen Minister who will offer a listening ear and a caring heart.

# Our Offerings and Gifts

Looking for different options to financially support the ministry of St. Paul through your regular offerings or one-time gifts?



Just text "GIVE" to **734-436-3634**

(This will also allow you to set up a recurring gift if you choose.)

Online: <https://www.kindridgiving.com/app/giving/stpaulaa>



Mail checks to: St. Paul Lutheran Church  
420 W Liberty St  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103



For more giving information, go to: <https://www.stpaulannarbor.org/give/>

2025-2026 SPAA Attendance and Offering						
Month	Attendance	Offering	Budget	Bud. Var.	Prior Year	PY Var.
July	278	\$ 85,561	\$ 103,200	\$ (17,639)	\$ 95,048	\$ (9,487)
August	292	\$ 92,582	\$ 129,100	\$ (36,518)	\$ 87,623	\$ 4,960
September	364	\$ 108,717	\$ 106,200	\$ 2,517	\$ 98,203	\$ 10,514
October	347	\$ 112,763	\$ 106,200	\$ 6,563	\$ 140,243	\$ (27,480)
November	311	\$ 135,822	\$ 132,800	\$ 3,022	\$ 106,819	\$ 29,004
December	-	\$ -	\$ 123,200	\$ -	\$ 157,855	\$ -
January	-	\$ -	\$ 106,200	\$ -	\$ 107,378	\$ -
February	-	\$ -	\$ 107,400	\$ -	\$ 87,936	\$ -
March	-	\$ -	\$ 135,200	\$ -	\$ 118,139	\$ -
April	-	\$ -	\$ 114,900	\$ -	\$ 95,801	\$ -
May	-	\$ -	\$ 132,800	\$ -	\$ 112,259	\$ -
June	-	\$ -	\$ 104,800	\$ -	\$ 122,082	\$ -
YTD	318	\$ 535,445	\$ 1,402,000	\$ (42,055)	\$ 1,329,384	\$ 7,510



## **Schedule of Christmas Services**

**Wednesday, December 24 . . . . . A Light That Leads Us Home**

Christmas Eve Family Service (4:00pm— School)

Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols (6:30pm— Downtown)

Carols by Candlelight (10:00pm— Downtown)

**<sup>†</sup>Thursday, December 25 . . . . . Home at Last**

Christmas Day Worship (10:00am— Downtown)

**<sup>†</sup> Holy Communion offered**



## News & Upcoming Events

For more news & events visit our webpage at: [www.stpaulannarbor.org](http://www.stpaulannarbor.org)



### Coming Home for Christmas (Christmas at St. Paul Ann Arbor)

Join us for our very special Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship services! Grab a postcard at worship entrances or scan the QR code for more info on all our Christmas worship services and times.

### Church Office Closed – December 24 – January 5

The church office will be closed December 24th to January 5th. Please note: the [office@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:office@stpaulannarbor.org) email will be checked periodically, but responses may be delayed. If you have a pastoral emergency, please call 734-665-9117 for instructions. The church staff wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



### Community Groups launching in January – sign up now!

Community Groups are for anyone looking to connect with others around a shared interest. Groups are launching in January and will conclude by Easter. For more information and to sign up scan the QR code. Remember - all groups are open to everyone so please prayerfully consider asking a friend, family member or neighbor to join you!

### 2026 Offering Envelopes Now Available!

If you currently use offering envelopes and wish to continue, your envelopes will be available for pickup starting this weekend. You will find your envelopes at whichever campus you normally worship. **If you would like envelopes OR if you no longer wish to receive envelopes because you want to give electronically, please let us know that** (this will help us reduce envelope costs in the future). Questions about envelopes and electronic giving can be directed to [businessmanager@stpaulannarbor.org](mailto:businessmanager@stpaulannarbor.org).



### Build Your Own Gifts of Joy Journal – Saturday, January 10

Join us as we each build our own Joy Journal for 2026! Commit to rejoicing, praying, and thanking as intentional daily practices by creating a Gifts of Joy Journal. The Gifts of Joy project supports a year-long faith-filled commitment to journeying with Jesus by incorporating three devotional practices. Scan the QR code to learn more and to register! Saturday, January 10 / 9am-12pm / Gathering Place / Earhart Campus.



### St. Paul School Preview Day – Sunday, January 11

Discover what makes St. Paul School a place where children grow in faith, knowledge, and community. Join us for our Preview Day Open House on Sunday, January 11, to meet our teachers, explore K-8 classrooms, and hear from our parent panel on how we partner with families. Whether you're beginning to think about Kindergarten or considering a new school home, we invite you to come and see all that St. Paul has to offer. Know a family that might be interested in St. Paul School? Invite them! Scan the QR code for more info and to RSVP.