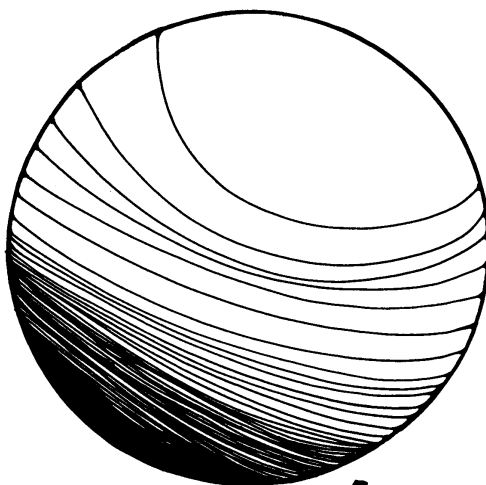




St. Paul
Ann Arbor

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



*He chose us
in Christ
before the
foundations
of the world*

E P H E S I A N S 1 : 4

Welcome to Worship

January 4, 2026
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.

Second Sunday after Christmas

Sunday, January 4, 2026 (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

HYMN

"Within the Father's House"



LSB# 410

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!**

WE TURN TO GOD, MINDFUL OF OUR SINFULNESS

Confession of Sins

P: Today we are given a glimpse into the greatest and highest wisdom: that a person is not and cannot be saved by his own works or actions, but solely by faith in the gift of Jesus Christ. Let us begin by recalling that which makes any hope of salvation impossible: our sin and our inability to free ourselves from sin's grasp. Yet we are encouraged to confess our sins to God in the certain confidence that He has first chosen and loved us, and gives us forgiveness for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Merciful Father, we are poor sinners and plead guilty before You of all sins: sins of thought, word, and deed, of evil done and of good not done. We have lived as if You did not matter and as if we mattered most of all. We have not always honored Your name. Our worship and prayers have failed. We have not loved You with our whole heart nor have we loved our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive us all our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ and grant us Your Holy Spirit to amend our sinful lives that we would live in the joy of our salvation. Amen.**

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

GOD TURNS TO US, EAGER TO FORGIVE

Absolution
(with Ephesians 1:3a)

P: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

C: **that we are chosen for salvation, to the praise of His glory!**

P: The apostle Paul praises God for choosing us for salvation— not determined because of our worthiness, nor by the good results of His choice. God chose us purely out of love and grace, without regard for any goodness in us. Yet He had a purpose in mind for us: He chose us that we might bear fruit. The good that may be seen in us is the result of being chosen by God, forgiven for the sake of Jesus Christ, and sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, in His place 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!**

REJOICING AT CHRISTMAS

(LSB# 391)

Re - joice, re - joice this hap - py morn, A Sav - ior un -
to us is born, The Christ, the Lord of glo - ry!
His low - ly birth in Beth - le - hem The an - gels from
on high pro - claim And sing re - demp - tion's sto - ry!
My soul, ex - tol God's great fa - vor; Bless Him ev - er
For sal - va - tion; Give Him praise and ad - o - ra - tion!

P: O God, our Maker and Redeemer, You chose us before the foundation of this world, and wonderfully created us— and in the incarnation of Your Son even more wondrously restored our human nature that we would be holy and blameless before You. Grant that we may ever be alive in Him who made Himself to be like us; through Jesus Christ, 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 ✠ 1 Kings 3:4–15

⁴ [King Solomon] went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. ⁵ At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, “Ask what I shall give you.” ⁶ And Solomon said, “You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. ⁷ And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. ⁹ Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?”

¹⁰ It pleased the LORD that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ And God said to him, “Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. ¹³ I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. ¹⁴ And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.”

¹⁵ And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants. (ESV)

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE ✠ Ephesians 1:1–14

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: ² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Christ, things in heaven and things on earth in him.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (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*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the

words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

⁴⁰ The child [Jesus] grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him. ⁴¹ Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴² And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³ And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴ but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵ and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶ After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸ And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." ⁴⁹ And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰ And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. ⁵¹ And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. (ESV)

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

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.

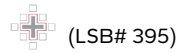
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church;

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.

HYMN

"O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright"
Stanzas 1 & 4



MESSAGE

"Forever Redeemed"
Rev. Dr. Ted Hopkins

Ephesians 1:1–14

RESPONSE

(Tune: LSB# 395)

**God has blessed us in ev'ry way—
His heav'nly blessings fill each day,
That holy He would keep us.
In Christ we were chosen before
Creation of the world and more,
That blameless He would see us.
His Son has won
Our redemption,
Death's exemption,
Love's endeavor.
By His blood we live forever!**

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

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

G 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: "The Gifts Christ Freely Gives"
"All My Heart Again Rejoices"
"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"

LSB# 602

LSB# 360

LSB# 393

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

Ephesians 1:7,13,14 (ESV)

- P: "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace;
C: In him you also, when you heard the word of truth—the gospel of your salvation ... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance."

WE RECEIVE THE BLESSING OF GOD

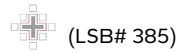
Benediction
Numbers 6:24–26

- 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

"From East to West"



1 From east to west, from shore to shore Let ev - 'ry
2 Be - hold, the world's cre - a - tor wears The form and
△ 5 All glo - ry for this bless - ed morn To God the

heart a - wake and sing The ho - ly child whom
fash - ion of a slave; Our ver - y flesh our
Fa - ther ev - er be; All praise to You, O

Mar - y bore, The Christ, the ev - er - last - ing king.
mak - er shares, His fall - en crea - tures all to save.
Vir - gin - born, And Ho - ly Ghost e - ter - nal - ly.

POSTLUDE



Our Worship Servants

Liturgist: Rev. Aaron Roggow
Preacher: Rev. Dr. Ted Hopkins
Music: Andy Contreras
Family Worship Team: Fred & Laurie Metzger
Hospitality: Julie Novak
Lay Reader/Elder: Michael Woon

Printed liturgy and hymns from Lutheran Service Book, created by Lutheran Service Builder ©2006 Concordia Publishing House.

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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



News & Upcoming Events

For more news & events visit our webpage at: www.stpaulannarbor.org



Get Started with Church Center!

SPAA is now using Church Center, a new system through Planning Center that will help us stay better connected as a St. Paul family! From online giving and keeping your information up to date to accessing our church directory, upcoming events, sermons and more - Church Center makes it easier than ever to stay informed and connected at St. Paul Ann Arbor! We ask that you cancel your online giving with Amplify (formerly Kindred) and now give online electronically using Church Center. **We will have instructions on this transition process and staff assistance available after all worship services January 10/11 and January 17/18. Simply scan the QR code now to get started!** For further set up instructions see Friday's eNews.

2026 Offering Envelopes – Please pick up by Feb 1!

If you currently use envelopes and wish to continue, your envelopes are available for pickup at your regular worship site. If your offering envelopes are not picked up by February 1st, we will assume you do not need them, and they will not be reordered for you in the future. **This will help us reduce envelope costs moving forward.**



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.



2nd Annual Chili Cook-off & Trivia – Friday, January 23rd

Get ready for a night of flavor, fun, and friendly competition—all to support our youth! Join us on Friday, January 23rd, 6:00–9:00 PM in the Gathering Place @ St. Paul School (495 Earhart Rd). Come taste and vote on amazing homemade chilis from SPAA families, then test your brainpower in our lively trivia showdown! Prizes await the top chili chefs AND trivia champs! Tickets: \$20 each Includes: chili, chips, 1 drink, dessert, and 2 chili-voting tickets! Cash or check only—pay at the event. Childcare available from 7–9 PM, provided by our youth (free-will donations appreciated). Scan the QR code to sign up!

Vision Planning Workshop on January 31st – Save the Date!

As the Vision Team is exploring how God has used and is using St. Paul for his ministry in the Ann Arbor area, the team wants your input on how God is leading us into the future! Please save the date for January 31 (9am-noon, Gathering Place, School Campus) to be part of the future vision process. The SPAA Vision Planning Team wants you to be a part of a vision planning workshop to hear your voice and get your input! More details to come.