

St. Paul Lutheran Church

New Year's Eve — December 31, 2018



**THERE IS
HOPE IN
THE
DARKNESS
FOR ALL
THINGS
WILL BE
MADE
NEW.**

REVELATION 21:5

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Welcome Guests...


We are honored to have you with us this morning at St. Paul!

- **Guest Book:** Please sign our guest book near doors to the Sanctuary.
- **Restrooms:** If you need them, there are bathrooms just to the sides of the main doors.
- **Children:** We are grateful and glad that they are here! If you feel the need to, you can take them to the parent's room or to the back gathering area. Let us know if there are other ways we can help you focus on the Word.
- **Changing Table:** If needed these are in the parent's room and downstairs restrooms.
- **Communion:** guests, please talk with our pastor before coming up for communion.

This church is part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. wels.net



2018 is almost over. What will you take away from this year? Have the good things of 2018 outweighed the bad? As we end this year, let us start think of the bad, the negatives, the frustrations. Then we can clear our minds and focus on God who works through our weaknesses for our eternal good.

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Hymn

Now Rest Beneath Night's Shadow *please join in the refrain after each stanza*

*Now rest beneath night's shadow
The woodland, field, and meadow;
The world in slumber lies.
But you, my heart, awaken,
With prayer and song be taken;
Let praise to your Creator rise.*

—refrain—

*Lord Jesus, since you love me,
Oh, spread your wings above me
And shield me from alarm.
Though Satan would assail me,
Your mercy will not fail me;
I rest in your protecting arm.*

—refrain—

*My loved ones, rest securely,
For God this night will surely
From peril guard your heads.
Sweet slumbers may he send you
And bid his hosts attend you
And through the night watch o'er your beds.*

—refrain—

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp). The melody is simple and hymn-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The lyrics are: "You hold me. You hold me. There's no-where I can go where you won't hold me. You hold me. You'll ne- ver let me go. For the dark is not dark to you — and the night finds its light in you. —"

Invocation

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Psalm 90 *a prayer of Moses, the man of God.*

M: Lord, you have been our dwelling place

C: **throughout all generations.**

M: Before the mountains were born,
before you gave birth to the earth and the world,

C: **from eternity to eternity you are God.**

M: For a thousand years in your sight are like a day,
like yesterday that has gone by,

C: **or like a watch in the night.**

M: You have laid out our guilty deeds in front of you.

C: **Our hidden sins are revealed in the light of your face.**

M: For all our days pass away under your fury.

C: **We finish our years like a sigh.**

M: Teach us to number our days in such a way,

C: **that we bring a heart of wisdom.**

M: Turn, O Lord! How long!

Change your mind toward your servants.

C: **Satisfy us in the morning with your mercy,
so that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.**

M: Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us,
for as many years as we have seen trouble.

C: **Let your deeds be seen by your servants
and your majesty by their children.**

M: May the kindness of the Lord our God rest upon us.

Establish the work of our hands for us.

C: **Yes, establish the work of our hands.**

Prayer

M: Eternal Father before whom all generations rise and fall, teach us to think earnestly on the brevity of our lives and on the immensity of your goodness. Help us to enter the new year trusting in the name of your Son and walking in the way of his peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**


New Year, New *You*

What defines you? What defined your 2018? Was there a choice or a change that has affected how you define yourself? Are you labeled for something you don't want to be labeled as? Are you overwhelmed by new responsibilities? Are you discouraged by the growing challenges before you? Have you been abandoned by others, especially those who were closest to you? Do you feel lost in the changing landscape of your life and experiences? Do you feel worthless?

You are not alone. In the pages of Scripture, we find countless people who feel, hurt, and struggle just as we do. We also have the privilege of finding, in their stories, how their faith in God helped them to leave behind their old self and take hold of a new identity. They were defined by their faith.

As we close out 2018 tonight, let us surround ourselves with a cloud of witnesses that testify to the power of God to heal the past and pave a new future. Then spurred on by their example, may we also look to be defined by our faith in this new year.

2018



Reading *Hebrews 11*

Faith is being sure about what we hope for, being convinced about things we do not see. ²For by this faith the ancients were commended in Scripture.

³By faith we know that the universe was created by God's word, so that what is seen did not come from visible things.

⁴By faith Abel offered a better sacrifice to God than Cain did. By faith he was commended in Scripture as righteous; God testified favorably about his gifts. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

⁵By faith Enoch was taken up, so that he would not experience death, and he was not found because God took him away. In fact, before he was taken away, he was commended in Scripture as one who "pleased God." ⁶And without faith it is impossible to please God. Indeed, it is necessary for the one who approaches God to believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

⁷By faith Noah, when he was warned about things that had not been seen before, built an ark, in reverent fear, in order to save his family. By it he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that is by faith.

⁸By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go to a place that he was going to receive as an inheritance, and he left without knowing where he was going.

⁹By faith he lived as a stranger in the Promised Land, as if it did not belong to him, dwelling in tents along with Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

¹¹By faith Abraham also received the ability to conceive children, even though Sarah herself was barren and he was past the normal age, because he considered him faithful who



made the promise. ¹² And so from one man, and he as good as dead, descendants were born as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand along the seashore.

¹³ One by one, all of these died in faith, without having received the things that were promised, but they saw and welcomed them from a distance. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ Indeed, people who say things like that make it clear that they are looking for a land of their own. ¹⁵ And if they were remembering the land they had come from, they would have had an opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better land—a heavenly one. For that reason, God is not ashamed to be called their God, because he prepared a city for them.

¹⁷ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered Isaac. This man, who received the promises, was ready to offer his only son, ¹⁸ about whom it was said, “Through Isaac your offspring will be traced.” ¹⁹ He reasoned that God also had the ability to raise him from the dead, and in a figurative sense, Abraham did receive him back from the dead.


²⁰ By faith Isaac also blessed Jacob and Esau about things that were going to happen.

²¹ By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons and worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

²² By faith Joseph, as he neared the end of his life, mentioned the Exodus of the sons of Israel and gave instructions about his bones.

²³ By faith Moses was hidden by his parents for three months after he was born, because they saw he was a special child, and they were not afraid of the king’s order.

²⁴ By faith Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter when he grew up. ²⁵ He chose to be mistreated with God’s people rather than enjoy sin for a little while. ²⁶ He considered disgrace for the sake of Christ as greater wealth than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.



²⁷ By faith he left Egypt without fearing the king's wrath, because he persevered as one who sees him who is invisible.

²⁸ By faith he celebrated the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not strike them down.


²⁹ By faith they passed through the Red Sea, as if going through on dry ground. When the Egyptians tried it, they were drowned.

³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell after the people marched around them for seven days.

³¹ By faith Rahab the prostitute did not perish with the unbelievers, because she welcomed the spies in peace.

³² And what more should I say? There would not be enough time for me to continue to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel, and the prophets. ³³ By faith they conquered kingdoms, carried out justice, obtained things that were promised, shut the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the power of fire, escaped the edges of the sword, were made powerful after being weak, became mighty in battle, and caused foreign armies to flee. ³⁵ Women received back their dead by resurrection. And others who were tortured did not accept their release, so that they may take part in a better resurrection. ³⁶ Still others experienced mocking and lashes, in addition to chains and imprisonment. ³⁷ They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were tempted; they were killed with the sword; they went around in sheepskins and goatskins, needy, afflicted, and mistreated. ³⁸ The world was not worthy of them as they wandered in deserts and mountains and caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹ All of these were commended in Scripture by faith, yet they did not receive what was promised, ⁴⁰ because God had planned something better for us, namely, that they would not reach the goal apart from us.



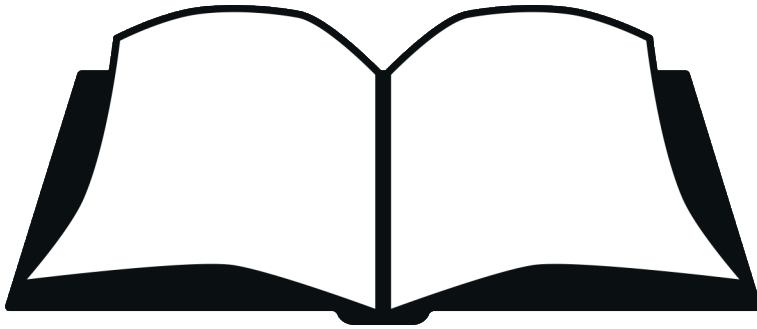
Reading *Hebrews 12*

¹²Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us get rid of every burden and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and let us run with patient endurance the race that is laid out for us. ²Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who is the author of our faith and the one who brings it to its goal. In view of the joy set before him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of God's throne. ³Carefully consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinful people, so that you do not grow weary and lose heart.



redefined by faith

*Crazy Noah
Lonely Abraham
Worthless Moses
Labeled Rahab
Overwhelmed Gideon
Abandoned David
Discouraged Elijah*



Hymn 397

Just As I Am, Without One Plea

Confession and Absolution

Please Stand

M: Since we desire, as those heroes of faith, to no longer be defined by sin, fear, and the foolish attempt to make it through this life on our own, we too put our faith in the one true God who has promised to redeem all who come to him. We abandon our old identity so that God may heal us from our weaknesses, our scars and our guilt and remake us in the image of his Son. We in faith look to be strengthened by his words of forgiveness and his own flesh and blood in our Lord's Supper.

In this desire, let us confess our sins, hear the words of absolution and take them to heart, and partake in the body and blood of our Lord. Then by His power and His command, we will be begin this new year restored, renewed and remade.

C: **Almighty God, merciful Father,**
I confess to you that I have not loved you with all my heart.
In what I have done and left undone,
I have pursued my ways instead of your ways.
I have not loved my brothers and sisters as myself.
For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.
I am truly sorry for my sins.
I repent of them.
I beg for your mercy, O Lord.

Silence for meditation.

M: Forgive us for the sake of Jesus Christ who suffered and died for us.

C: **Cleanse me from my sins.**
Release me from my guilt.
Grant me your Holy Spirit to amend my sinful life.

Hymn *based on the Song of Moses* My Strength, My Song, My Salvation

**I sing unto the Lord for he
has triumphed gloriously
the horse the rider he has thrown
into the blood red sea**

**My strength, my song, my salvation,
this is my God "the Lord"
I will exalt him, praise him till
his name be all adored.**

**Our enemies went down unto
the depths just like a stone.
But you, O God, have raised us up
unto thy mountain throne.**

**They tremble (all the nations do).
They melt before his fame.
But we with one voice shout aloud,
"Our Lord will ever reign."**

**Has not the Christ so rescued us,
and saved us from the flood,
of judgement from the hand of God,
with hands that flowed with blood?**

**Great and amazing are your deeds.
Let all the nations see.
O Lord Almighty, just and true,
to you we bend the knee.**

M: The almighty God has been merciful to us and has sent his Son to die for all. For his sake, God forgives our sins and calls us from darkness to his marvelous light. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.



Hymn

Heaven Song

You wrote a letter and You signed your name
I read every word of it page by page
You said that You'd be coming,
coming for me soon
Oh my God I'll be ready for You

I want to run on greener pastures
I want to dance on higher hills
I want to drink from sweeter waters
In the misty morning chill
And my soul is getting restless
For the place where I belong
I can't wait to join the angels and sing
my heaven song

I hear Your voice and I catch my breath
'Well done my child, enter in and rest'
Tears of joy roll down my cheek
It's beautiful beyond my wildest dreams

I want to run on greener pastures
I want to dance on higher hills
I want to drink from sweeter waters
In the misty morning chill
And my soul is getting restless
For the place where I belong
I can't wait to join the angels and sing
my heaven song

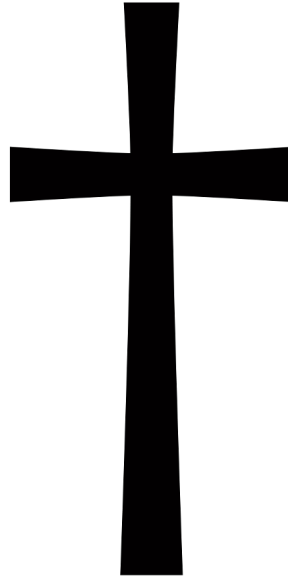
I want to run on greener pastures
I want to dance on higher hills
I want to drink from sweeter waters
In the misty morning chill
And my soul is getting restless
For the place where I belong
I can't wait to join the angels and sing
my heaven song

No, I can't wait to join the angels
and sing my heaven song.



Lord's Prayer

**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.**



Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

C: ⁵³ Jesus said to them,

**"I tell you the truth,
unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood,
you have no life in you.**

**⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,
and I will raise him up at the last day.**

⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

**⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me, and I in him.**

**⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father,
so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.**

⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven.

**Your forefathers ate manna and died,
but he who feeds on this bread will live forever."**

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

C: Amen.



Our Practice of Close Communion

Based on the words of Scripture, we believe that partaking in the Sacrament of Holy Communion is one of the highest forms of fellowship we have this side of heaven—both with our Risen Savior and with our fellow believers. By partaking in the sacrament, we confess that we believe what this congregation teaches and confesses. Because we don't want to put anyone in the uncomfortable position of having to state their full agreement with us before we've had an opportunity to explain it to them, we respectfully ask that only those who are communicant members of this congregation or another WELS or ELS congregation come forward to receive the Sacrament. If you would like further explanation of our practice, Pastor Buelow would be more than willing to explain after the worship service.

Hymn 309

Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord

Hymn 769

Lord of All Hopefulness

Hymn 70

Help Us, O Lord, for Now We Enter

Thanksgiving

M: Thank you, Lord, for giving up your perfect life so that we can remake our broken lives at your expense. Because of you we truly can start over through forgiveness and begin a new year washed and renewed by your righteousness. Thank you for strengthening our faith through your Word and this sacrament. In the lightness that comes from having our sins forgiven, may we run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Keep our eyes fixed on you, the author and perfecter of our faith so that we do not quickly return to our same sins, fears, and failures. Give us resolve to live a new life, defined by you. In Your name we pray,

C: Amen.

Benediction *Aaronic Blessing*

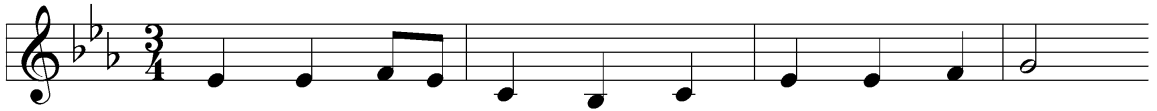
M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.



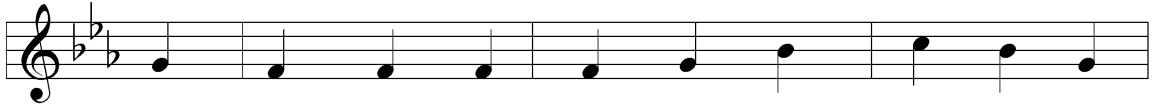
C: A - men. A - men. A - men.

Hymn 321

Savior Again to Thy Dear Name



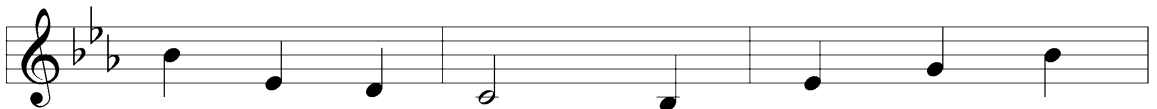
1 Lord of all hope - ful - ness, Lord of all joy,
 2 Lord of all eag - er - ness, Lord of all faith,
 3 Lord of all kind - li - ness, Lord of all grace,
 4 Lord of all gen - tle - ness, Lord of all calm,



Whose trust, ev - er child - like, no cares could de -
 Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the
 Your hands swift to wel - come, your arms to em -
 Whose voice is con - tent - ment, whose pres - ence is



stroy, Be there at our wak - ing and
 lathe, Be there at our la - bors and
 brace, Be there at our hom - ing and
 balm, Be there at our sleep - ing and



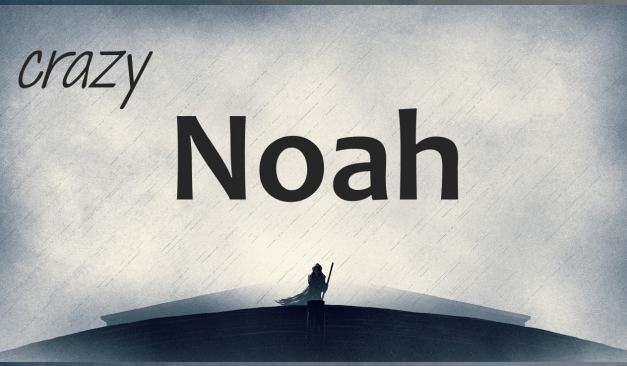
give us, we pray, Your bliss in our
 give us, we pray, Your strength in our
 give us, we pray, Your love in our
 give us, we pray, Your peace in our



hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.
 hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.
 hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.
 hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

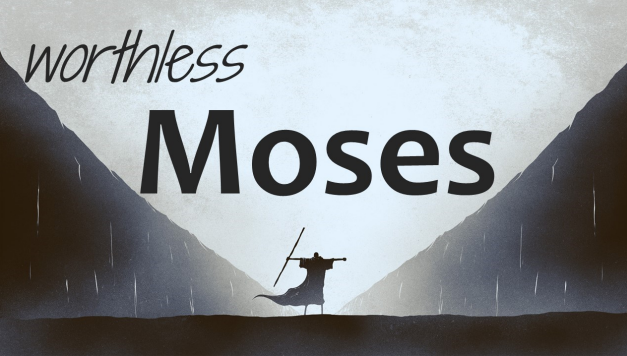
crazy

Noah



worthless

Moses



overwhelmed

Gideon



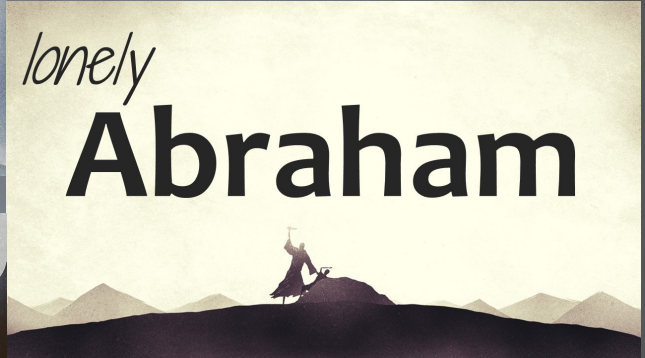
discouraged

Elijah



lonely

Abraham



labeled

Rahab



abandoned

David

