



# St. Paul Lutheran Church

The Fourth Sunday of Advent — December 18, 2022





## ST. PAUL CLINTONVILLE

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Clintonville, WI 54929  
[www.stpaulclintonville.com](http://www.stpaulclintonville.com)

**Pastor Caleb Rothfuss**  
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### Welcome Guests...

We are honored to have you with us here at St. Paul in Clintonville!

- **Guest Book:** Please sign our guest book near the doors to the worship area.
- **Restrooms:** If you need them, there are bathrooms just to the sides of the main entrance 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 so that we can talk about what we believe about it first.

*This church is part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. [wels.net](http://wels.net)*



**WELS**  
Christ's Love, Our Calling.

## COME, LORD JESUS! - AS IMMANUEL

*This time of year it is so easy to get caught up in the beautiful trappings of Christmas and forget why this birth had to take place.*

*Mankind fell into sin. Sin brings an awful burden. Hatred and oppression. Suffering and pain. Guilt and shame. The devastation of death. These are all natural consequences of sin. And what can we do about any of it?*

*Nothing of substance. We can numb ourselves to pain, but we cannot avoid it. We can fill our life with distractions in an attempt to forget about our guilt. But our conscience is always nagging. And death...no one avoids that.*

*Man can do nothing to shake off the burden of sin. Therefore, the Church prays that God would come in power to remove that burden for us. Since the Garden, there has been only one plan to do that: God would take on flesh and blood. To do what mankind could not do—remove all the burdens of sin—God became man. When you look into the manger, what do you see? A baby? Yes. But, more. That is Immanuel, “God-with-us.” The Son of God became Mary’s son, so that he could do for us what we could not do for ourselves.*



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The Bible translation used in today's service is NIV 11.

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—Service Setting Two—

*The full liturgy can be found on page 162 of the hymnal.*

Hymn 302

Prepare the Royal Highway



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a -



near! Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a  
King! Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread  
King! Your King, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its  
bove. His rule is peace and free - dom and



lev - el road ap - pear! Then greet the King of  
gar - ments! Shout and sing! God's prom - ise will not  
trib - ute too should bring. All lands, bow down be -  
jus - tice, truth, and love. So let your praise be



glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
fore him! All na - tions, now a - dore him!  
sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



*Refrain*

Ho-san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's Word!

## **Invocation** *Call to Worship*

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

Group: **Amen**

## **Confession of sins**

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

**Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Almighty and merciful Father,**

**we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our hearts.**

**We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.**

**We have done those things that we should not have done,**

**and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord!**

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,**

**according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

## **Declaration of Grace** *through Christ*

God, our merciful Father, has forgiven all our sins. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer and Savior. Jesus paid the penalty for our guilt by his death on the cross and freed us from death by his resurrection from the grave. We have peace with God now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **Kyrie** *Lord Have Mercy*

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen**



1 Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, glo - ry be to  
 2 Glo - ry be to him who loved us, washed us from each  
 3 Glo - ry to the King of an - gels, glo - ry to the  
 4 Glo - ry, bless - ing, praise e - ter - nal! thus the choir of



God the Son, glo - ry be to God the Spir - it:  
 spot and stain; glo - ry be to him who bought us,  
 Church's King, glo - ry to the King of na - tions;  
 an - gels sings; Hon - or, rich - es, pow'r, do - min - ion!



great Je - ho - vah, Three in One! Glo - ry,  
 made us kings with him to reign! Glo - ry,  
 heav'n and earth, your prais - es bring! Glo - ry,  
 thus its praise cre - a - tion brings. Glo - ry,



glo - ry while e - ter - nal a - ges run!  
 glo - ry to the Lamb that once was slain!  
 glo - ry to the King of glo - ry sing!  
 glo - ry, glo - ry to the King of kings!

## Prayer of the Day

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

## **First Reading** *Isaiah 7:10-14*

*The Lord promised that deliverance would come through the gift of Immanuel.  
And how would we recognize him? He would be born of a virgin.*

<sup>10</sup>Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, <sup>11</sup>“Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

<sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.”

<sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **Psalm 89** *spoken responsively*

I will sing of the LORD's great love forever;  
with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

**I will declare that your love stands firm forever,  
that you have established your faithfulness in heav'n itself.**

The heavens praise your wonders, LORD,  
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

**Who is like you, LORD God Almighty?**

**You, LORD, are mighty, and your faithfulness surrounds you.**

Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you,  
who walk in the light of your presence, LORD.

**They rejoice in your name all day long;  
they celebrate your righteousness.**



**Second Reading** *Romans 1:1-7*

*After thousands of years of God's promises, St. Paul sees them all fulfilled in Christ.  
Jesus is Immanuel, true God and true man.*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— <sup>2</sup>the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures <sup>3</sup>regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup>and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. <sup>5</sup>Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. <sup>6</sup>And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup>To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

**Gospel Acclamation** *Matthew 1:23*

Alleluia.

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,  
and they will call him Immanuel.

Alleluia.

## Gospel Reading *Matthew 1:18-25*

*In faith, Joseph accepted that within the womb of his bride-to-be was Immanuel—the very Son of God, the promised Savior from sin.*

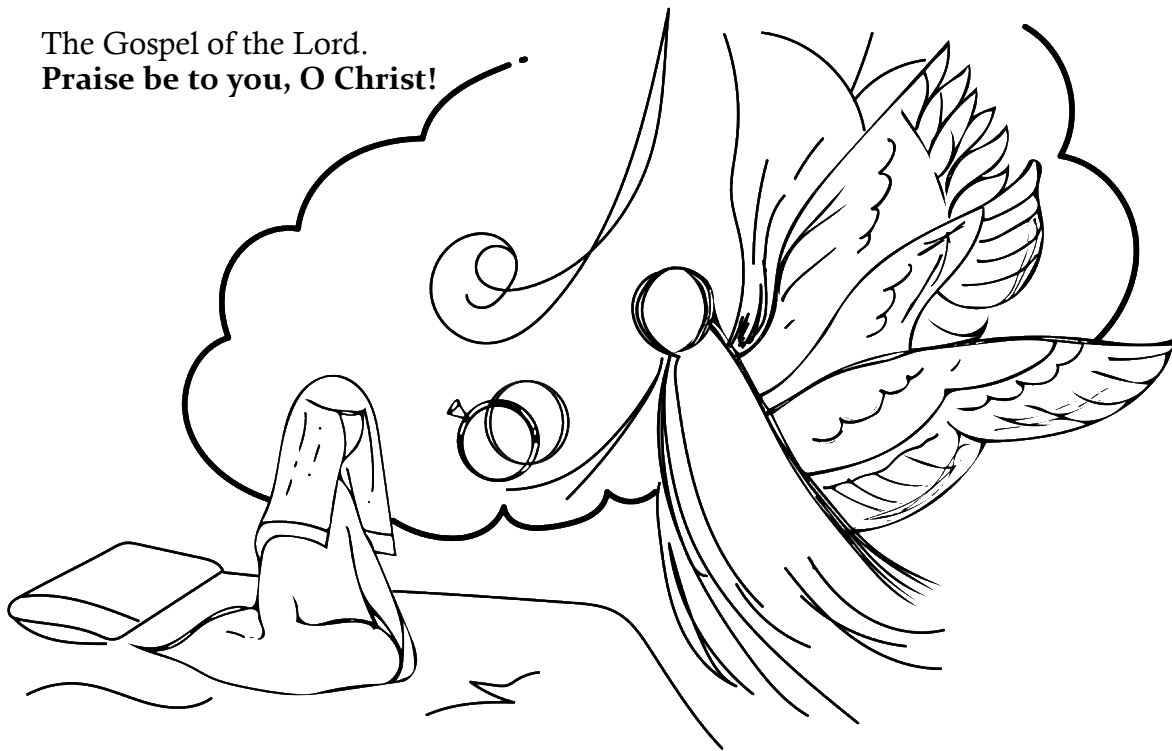
<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

<sup>20</sup>But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

<sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. <sup>25</sup>But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise be to you, O Christ!





## Hymn 496

## Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love



1 Je - sus! Name of won - drous love, name all oth - er names a - bove,  
2 Je - sus! Name de - creed of old, to the maid - en moth - er told,  
3 Je - sus! Name of price - less worth to the fall - en here on earth  
4 Je - sus! Name of mer - cy mild, giv - en to the ho - ly Child  
5 Je - sus! On - ly name that's giv'n un - der all the might - y heav'n  
6 Je - sus! Name of won - drous love, hu - man name of God a - bove;



un - to which must ev - 'ry knee bow in deep hu - mil - i - ty.  
kneel - ing in her low - ly cell, by the an - gel Ga - bri - el.  
for the prom - ise that it gave, "Je - sus shall his peo - ple save."  
when the cup of hu - man woe first he tast - ed here be - low.  
where - by those to sin en - slaved burst their fet - ters and are saved.  
plead - ing on - ly this, we flee help - less, O our God, to thee.

## Sermon *Matthew 1:18-25*

When God Shows Up,

# He Delivers

## **Confession of Faith** *Nicene Creed*

*The Nicene Creed was written around A.D. 325 in defense of the true Christian faith.  
The Nicene Creed can be found on page 162 of the hymnal.*

## **Prayer of the Church** *Advent II*

Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.

**We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise  
and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

**Move us to take to heart the words of John:  
"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."**

You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

**Fill our lives with the message of your peace  
and the music of your grace.**

Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

**Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical and emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death.

[Especially bless... ]

*Pour out your compassion on the grieving and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.*

**Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters  
and to help when we can.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

**Come, Lord Jesus!**

**Amen.**

## Offering

*Our offering is our reaction to God's grace, do not feel obligated to give.*

## The Sacrament *spoken*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

## Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er,  
God of might: heav'n and earth are full of your glo -  
ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless -  
ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -  
na in the high - est. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

## Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give thanks to you, O God, through your dear Son, Jesus Christ, whom you sent to be our Savior, our Redeemer, and the messenger of your grace. Through him you made all things; in him you are well pleased. He is the incarnate Word, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. To fulfill your promises, he stretched out his hands on the cross and released from eternal death all who believe in you.

As we remember Jesus' death and resurrection, we thank you that you have gathered us together to receive your Son's body and blood. Send us your Spirit, unite us as one, and strengthen our faith so that we may praise you in your Son, Jesus Christ. Through him, we glorify and honor you, O God our Father, with the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer *the prayer our Savior taught us*

### Words of Institution

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."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**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 Rothfuss would be more than willing to explain after the worship service.

# Distribution of the Sacrament

Hymn 320

As Angels Joyed with One Accord



1 As an - gels joyed with one ac - cord up - on the  
2 He came, not clothed in maj - es - ty nor pow'r that  
3 This done, he soared to God's right hand, yet or - phaned  
4 In ev - 'ry age— let praise a - bound— he comes; we  
5 He comes in wa - ter to the child and cleans - es  
6 He comes to us in bread and wine to give him -  
7 Lift up your heads! All grief and pain shall van - ish



ad - vent of our Lord, so let us glad - ly  
suits his de - i - ty. In low - ly state he  
not his cho - sen band, for he, not bound in  
hear his voice re - sound. His glo - rious gos - pel  
it, from birth de - filed. This wash - ing seals his  
self and gifts di - vine. O praise him for this  
when he comes a - gain. Where we shall see him



praise the name of him who from the Fa - ther came.  
walked till he in dy - ing set us cap - tives free.  
grace and pow'r, at - tends his own each day and hour.  
does not cease to bring us com - fort, joy, and peace.  
par - d'ning grace and shows the Fa - ther's kind - ly face.  
sac - ra - ment, re - deem - ing love's great tes - ta - ment!  
face to face, there joy a - lone shall have a place.

# Hymn 362

## Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising



1 Come, your hearts and voices raising, Christ the  
 2 Christ, from heav'n to us descending and in  
 3 Ja - cob's Star in all its splen - dor beams with  
 4 From the bond - age that op - pressed us, from sin's  
 5 Oh, the joy be - yond ex - press - ing when by  
 6 Gra - cious Child, in mer - cy hear us, from your



Lord with glad - ness prais - ing; loud - ly sing his  
 love our race be - friend - ing, in our need his  
 com - fort sweet and ten - der, forc - ing Sa - tan  
 fet - ters that pos - sessed us, from the grief that  
 faith we grasp this bless - ing, when, O Christ, we  
 low - ly man - ger cheer us, gent - ly lead us



love a - maz - ing, wor - thy folk of Christ - en - dom.  
 help ex - tend - ing, saved us from the wi - ly foe.  
 to sur - ren - der, break - ing all the pow'rs of hell.  
 sore dis - tressed us, we, the cap - tives, now are free.  
 come ad - dress - ing thanks to you and high - est praise!  
 and be near us till we join th' an - gel - ic choir.

# Response

## Song of Simeon



In peace, Lord, you let your



ser - vant now de - part ac - cord - ing to your word. For my



eyes have seen your sal - va - tion, which you have pre - pared for



ev - 'ry peo - ple, a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the



glo - ry, the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.

## Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,

**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Blessing *the Benediction*

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.

**Amen.**

## Hymn 330

## Peace Came to Earth



1 Peace came to earth at last that cho-sen night when an - gels  
2 And who could be the same for hav - ing held the in - fant  
3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen, in flesh and  
4 How else could I have known you, O my God! How else could



clove the sky with song and light and God em - bod - ied  
in their arms and lat - er felt the wound - ed hands and  
blood you bore our griefs and pain, in bread and wine you  
I have loved you, O my God! How else could I em -



love and sheathed his might— Who could but gasp: Im - man - u - el!  
side, all doubts dis - pelled— Who could but sigh: Im - man - u - el!  
vis - it us a - gain— Who could but see: Im - man - u - el!  
brace you, O my God! Who could but pray: Im - man - u - el!



Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!  
Who could but praise: Im - man - u - el!



## The Angels' Candle

*Also known as the Good News Candle, this week we light the last purple candle to remind us of the message. This is the message that cause angel choirs to sing. This is the message that still brings hope today. This is the message that will still be relevant when the trumpet call comes and the Savior returns with the legions upon legions of angels.*