

# The Voice

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

January 2026



Psalm 97 sings a resplendent ode to God's dominion, its verses a tapestry woven with divine glory, calling hearts to a faith rooted in Scripture's eternal truth. "The Lord reigns," it proclaims, "let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad" (v. 1a). Creation quakes in reverent awe as God's majesty unfurls, His throne wreathed in tempestuous clouds, cloaked in midnight's veil. Tongues of fire leap and lightning's jagged bolts (vv. 2–4) blaze His righteous judgment, scorching sin's dominion, yet tempered by mercy's tender embrace—a herald of salvation through faith in Christ alone.

"Worship him, all you gods" (v. 7b), the psalm intones, a clarion rebuke to idols, those frail phantoms shattered by God's might. This echoes *sola scriptura*, beckoning souls to bow solely to Christ, forsaking the gilded lures of human tradition and effort. False gods fall like autumn leaves, underscoring salvation's source in grace, not works. Verses 10–12 bid the righteous spurn evil's shadow, their souls cradled in God's radiant shield, aglow with promised redemption.

"Light is sown for the righteous" (v. 11a), a poetic vision of Christ, the Morning Star, whose life, death, and resurrection rend the gloom of despair. This Gospel flame kindles hope, scattering night's dominion. Psalm 97 weaves a call to rest in God's unyielding grace, trusting His cosmic scepter, while hearts, aflame with gratitude, shine forth in holiness, anchored in Christ's redeeming love.

*Prayer – Lord God, You reign in majesty and righteousness. Your Word reveals Your glory and leads us to Christ, the Light of the world. Cast down our idols and draw us to worship You alone. Help us to trust in Your promises, and rest in the grace of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.*

Your Servant in Christ,  
Rev. Brian K. Thieme  
Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church Columbia, Mo.  
Missouri District



The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad! Clouds and thick darkness are all around him; righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne. Fire goes before him and burns up his adversaries all around. His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees and trembles. The mountains melt like wax before the LORD, before the Lord of all the earth. The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory. All worshipers of images are put to shame, who make their boast in worthless idols; worship him, all you gods! Zion hears and is glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O LORD. For you, O LORD, are most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods. O you who love the LORD, hate evil! He preserves the lives of his saints; he delivers them from the hand of the wicked. Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name! Psalm 97

## Serving This Month

### January 4<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Gary Stolle  
Reader: Kirsten Englund  
Organist: Doris Foley  
Acolyte: April Causey  
Elder: God's Faithful Servant

### January 11<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Wayne Persich  
Lay Reader: Aaron Kirchhoff  
Organist: Doris Foley  
Acolyte: April Causey  
Elder: God's Faithful Servant

### January 18<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Wayne Persich  
Lay Reader: Dan Martin  
Organist: Doris Foley  
Acolyte: April Causey  
Elder: God's Faithful Servant

### January 25<sup>th</sup>

Pastor Gary Stolle  
Lay Reader: Sherrelynn Martin  
Organist: Doris Foley  
Acolyte: April Causey  
Elder: God's Faithful Servant

### **Altar Guild for January 2026**

Hillary Brown & Kris Rosenberg

**January Birthdays:** 3-Eric Bahl, Mike Nesheim; 5-Bev Garr; 16-Ariana Gumm; 19-Layla Ford;  
20-Joyce Sherer; 22-Jordan Oetting

**January Wedding Anniversaries:** 31-[Chris] & Amy Ford

If anyone has been missed let the office know.

The Lord bless you, and keep you; The Lord make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace. Numbers 6:24-26



The **Lutheran Urban Mission Agency Auxiliary** will meet on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, at King of Kings Lutheran Church, 1701 NE 96<sup>th</sup> Street, Kansas City, MO. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. with the opening service at 9:30 a.m. The speakers will be Nancy Neill and Carolyn Falls from Swaddling Clothes, a mission of Holy Cross Lutheran Church. The Mission of the Month collection is monetary gifts for VBS and youth activities. BYO sack lunch. Breakfast nibbles, drinks, and dessert will be provided. Please RSVP by January 18 to Chris McElroy, 816-820-2556, [cmcelroycrni@gmail.com](mailto:cmcelroycrni@gmail.com). All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend and all donations for the Mission of the Month collection are appreciated. Thank you!

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.  
James 1:5

# **Begin with God: He Gives His Word**



## **Mustard Seed** **DAILY DEVOTIONS**

### **Begin with God ... He Gives His Word**

#### **In the Word**

Why did God give us His Word?

*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path (Psalm 119:105).*

#### **Of the Word**

When driving to a new place we can easily become lost and confused because we are in unfamiliar territory. God knew we would need a road map for our life and He gave it to us in His inspired Word, the Bible.

*But these [words] are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name (John 20:31).*

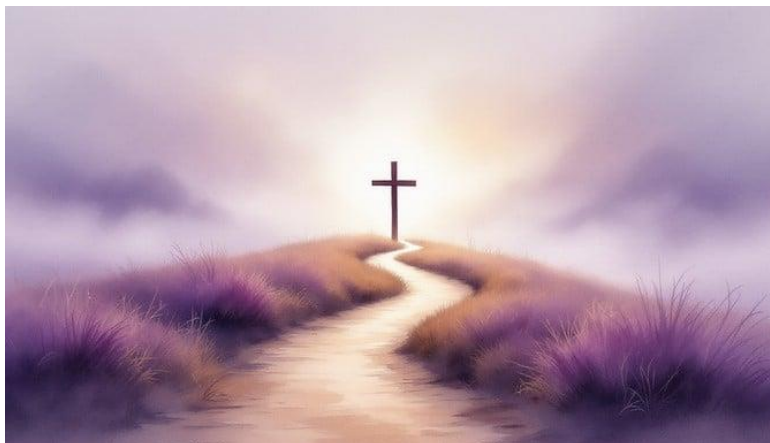
The Bible is truly the greatest “self-help” book ever written. God’s Word tells us the Good News of Jesus and it teaches us how to love and forgive. It gives directions for living confidently, for relating to those around us, and for solving life’s problems. Best of all, God’s Word is constant and true.

*The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever (Isaiah 40:8).*

#### **Walking with my Lord**

Lord, I am grateful for the Bible. Through it You assure me of Your faithfulness, guidance, and forgiveness. Help me to study Your Word daily for direction in my life. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Mustard Seed: Begin with God. Authors: Marcia Gomulka, Deaconess Betty Knapp, Myrna Lou Meyer. 9/28 ©2007, revised 2024 Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, 801 Seminary Place Ste. L010, St. Louis, MO 63105. [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), Copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.





**St. Paul's Lutheran Church LCMS**

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**Web Address:** <https://stpaulsindependence.org/>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>Worship Service:</b> Sunday 9AM <b>Adult Bible Class:</b> Sunday 10:15 AM				1 Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3
4 Worship Service	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Worship Service w/communion	12	13 Prayer Shawl 12:30pm	14	15	16	17
18 Worship Service	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Worship Service w/communion	26	27 Prayer Shawl 12:30pm	28	29 Council Meeting 7pm	30	31



Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the  
 God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long.  
 Psalm 25:5