

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, HANOVER, PA

Rev. E. Robert Burkhart, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jack R. Hoffman, Pastor Emeritus

Steven Ruppright, Director of Music Ministries

Lori Rebling, Director of Handbells

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2022

Prayer of the Day

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 62:6-12

⁶Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,

I have posted sentinels;

all day and all night

they shall never be silent.

You who remind the LORD,

take no rest,

⁷and give him no rest

until he establishes Jerusalem

and makes it renowned throughout the earth.

⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand

and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain

to be food for your enemies,

and foreigners shall not drink the wine

for which you have labored;

⁹but those who garner it shall eat it

and praise the LORD,

and those who gather it shall drink it

in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates,

prepare the way for the people;

build up, build up the highway,

clear it of stones,

lift up an ensign over the peoples.

¹¹The LORD has proclaimed

to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,
“See, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.”

¹²They shall be called, “The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD“;
and you shall be called, “Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.”

Second Reading: Titus 3:4-7

⁴When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Gospel: Luke 2:8-20

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Prayers of Intercession

With wonder and thanksgiving for Christ's coming into the world, we pray for the church, the life of the earth, and the whole human family.

A brief silence.

The church in every land makes a joyful noise to herald your coming, O God. We give thanks for poets, musicians, and hymn writers who give voice to our praise, and for all who lead the church's worship. Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

This day dawns with new hope for all living things, and from ocean depths to mountain peaks the earth rejoices. Inspire in us an urgent zeal to protect the planet and renew its resources (Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

Bring heavenly peace to this world and an end to armed conflict. Raise up leaders in every nation who will honor human rights and establish equal justice for all people. Give courage to all who speak out against oppression and advocate for the powerless. Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

Guard the lives of any in danger, especially those who work to protect others. Lead any who are in desperate circumstances to sanctuary, help, and safety. Grant rest to the weary and soothe those who are troubled Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

Bless all who gather to worship on this holy day. Be present at our tables and celebrations, and watch over those who travel. Sustain charities, outreach ministries, and food pantries that give generously to people in need Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

In Christ we have beheld your glory, full of grace and truth. We give thanks for those in every generation who reflect the light of Christ. May their witness shine forth in our time. Lord, in your mercy...

hear our prayer.

Pondering the mystery of eternal love made flesh in Christ Jesus, we commend all for whom we pray to the mercy of God.

Amen.

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