

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 21, 2025

Bonnie Jacque, Pastor

The Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love

A TIME TO PREPARE OUR HEARTS FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

A TIME OF SHARING

ADVENT HYMN The Candle of Love

Screen

Tune: O Worship the King

The candle of love tells us what we are worth:
God loves us so much, God came to the earth!
An angel brought news of a child who would be
The one who would save us and set us all free.

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LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF LOVE

Screen

One: You know what time it is! It is already the moment to believe God's signs.

ALL: TODAY WE STAND FIRM IN REVOKING EVIL, ITS SCORN OF LIFE, AND ITS APPETITE FOR TEARS. WE HOLD FAST TO GOD'S SIGNS OF ALL THAT IS GOOD AND ETERNAL.

One: The hour is already here, even as we are waiting.

ALL: SOON — YES, VERY SOON — LOVE WILL RESTORE AND HEAL THE WORLD. GOD'S WAYS WILL BE SWEET TO ALL WHO TRAVEL UPON THEM; GOD'S NAME BE LIKE HONEY.

One: The love by which God delivers us already burns within us.

SUNG INTROIT

Star Child

Screen

STAR CHILD, EARTH CHILD, GO BETWEEN OF GOD, LOVE CHILD, CHRIST CHILD, HEAVEN'S LIGHTENING ROD. THIS YEAR, THIS YEAR, LET THE DAY ARRIVE WHEN CHRISTMAS COMES FOR EVERYONE, EVERYONE ALIVE.

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Screen

One: To love is the greatest gift bestowed upon us. It is a surrender to God's holy power.

MANY: GOD LOVES US, DESPITE ALL OUR MISTAKES, SO WE PRAY FOR THE PATIENCE OF HOPE!

One: To be loved by God is the right of every living thing. This love is the sun and the rain, it is the beginning and end of all.

MANY: GOD LOVES US EVEN WHEN WE NEGLECT OUR NEIGHBORS, SO WE PRAY FOR THE STRENGTH TO BRING PEACE.

One: God's love is always a promise and a responsibility, and we are capable of greatness.

MANY: GOD LOVES US IN THE MIDST OF DESTRUCTION AND DESPAIR, SO WE PRAY TO SHARE A VISION OF JOY.

One: Love is a sacred vow God has made to us.

MANY: GOD LOVES US JUST AS WE ARE, AND WE GIVE THANKS AND WHISPER AMEN.

worshipways.com Maria Mankin

***ADVENT PRAYER**

EMMANUEL, WE COME TODAY WITH ARMS WIDE OPEN, READY TO MEET YOUR PRECIOUS SON. YOUR LOVE FOR US IS SO FULL THAT YOU SENT A FRAGILE BABE TO SHARE YOUR HOLY WORD, KNOWING THAT HE WOULD FACE HUMAN PAIN. OPEN US GOD! PREPARE US FOR HIS COMING, THAT WE MAY BE MESSENGERS OF YOUR ABUNDANT LOVE, AND ACT TO EASE THE SUFFERING OF ALL. AMEN.

worshipways.com Maria Mankin

HYMN It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

#131

CALL TO CONFESSION

liturgylink.net Rev. Nathan Williams

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Screen

MAJESTIC GOD, IN THESE LAST DAYS BEFORE THE BIRTH OF JESUS, WE ADMIT THAT WE ASK OFTEN FOR A SIGN. WE PUT YOU TO THE TEST, BEG FOR MIRACLES, FOR MERCY, FOR PROOF OF YOUR HOLY WORD. WE DOUBT, EVEN AS WE RETELL THE OLD STORIES. WE ARE LIKE JOSEPH - SHAMED, QUESTIONING, FEARFUL OF THE TRUTH OF MARY'S DREAM - NOT WANTING TO BE TAKEN AS FOOLS FOR BELIEVING IN SOMETHING THAT SEEMS TOO PRECIOUS TO BE TRUE. WE ARE AS AFRAID AS THE SHEPHERDS IN THEIR FIELDS, SOMETIMES AS COWARDLY AND CRUEL AS HEROD. YOU HAVE GIVEN US THE MOST SACRED GIFT, YET WE OFTEN LACK THE FAITH TO ACCEPT IT. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

worshipways.com Maria Mankin

ADVENT STATEMENT OF FAITH

Screen

WE ARE AN ADVENT PEOPLE, A PEOPLE OF HOPE. FOR US, ADVENT IS A TIME OF WAITING, AND SO WE WAIT. WE WAIT FOR THE COMING OF THE ONE WHO IS THE FULFILLMENT OF GOD'S PROMISE, THE FULFILLMENT OF HOPE, THE DECLARATION THAT WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED.

EVEN SO, WE ARE NOT A NAÏVE PEOPLE. WE KNOW THAT THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE WILL CONTINUE TO BE FILLED WITH PAIN AND SORROW. WE KNOW THAT HATRED AND VIOLENCE WILL CONTINUE TO EXIST. WE KNOW THAT DEATH AND SEPARATION WILL CONTINUE TO BE A PART OF OUR LIVES.

BUT BECAUSE WE ARE AN ADVENT PEOPLE, WE KNOW THAT NONE OF THESE THINGS WILL WIN IN THE END. THE HOLY ONE IS COMING, TO MAKE HOLY ONCE AGAIN ALL THAT WAS, IS, AND EVER WILL BE.

AND IN OUR WAITING AND OUR HOPING, WE WORK AND WORSHIP, PRAY AND PLAY, IN ALL THINGS HOPING THAT PEACE, LOVE AND JOY WILL REIGN IN OUR LIVES AND IN OUR WORLD, NOW AND FOREVER.

liturgylink.net Rev. Rebecca F. Harrison

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Isa. 7:10-16; Ps 80: 1-7, 17-19; Matt 1:18-25

HYMN

Joseph was Troubled

Screen

Tune: Have Thine Own Way, Lord

MEDITATION

The Short Christmas Story - Grief and Joy

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Screen

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 SINS AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN 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. AMEN.

INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

***DOXOLOGY** In The Bleak Midwinter verse 4 **#128 Screen**

WHAT CAN I OFFER, POOR AS I AM?

IF I WERE A SHEPHERD, I WOULD BRING A LAMB

IF I WERE A WISE ONE, I WOULD DO MY PART,

BUT WHAT I CAN I OFFER, ALL MY HEART.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Screen

LOVE AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD, WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THESE GIFTS. WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THE PRIVILEGE OF GENEROSITY. WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THE ABILITY TO SHARE YOUR DIVINE LOVE IN A TANGIBLE FORM WITH OUR SIBLINGS AROUND THE WORLD. HELP US TO REMEMBER, AS WE AWAIT CHRIST'S BIRTH, TO GIVE MORE GENEROUSLY THAN WE RECEIVE, KNOWING WE WILL ALWAYS BE RICH IN YOUR ABUNDANT LOVE. AMEN.

HYMN

Gentle Joseph, Joseph Dear

#105

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Credits: CCLI #48321379,

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Liturgy: As found on the screens.

Photos: Google Images, Pastor Bonnie

*If rising from a seated position is an issue for you, please remain seated. The phrase, "Stand in body or spirit as you are able" is intended to give you permission to do so without embarrassment.

Congregational Response to each prayer request is: **Your prayer is our prayer. Your joy is our joy.**

Reminders - Head to <https://stpaulserin.org> for details

12/24/2025 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Services at 2:30 and 4:30 pm

02/18/2026 - Ash Wednesday

02/22/2026 - Chili Dinner

If you have something to share before a Sunday worship, please call, text or email Pastor Bonnie. She will include it in the bulletin or announce it from the pulpit. This will help us streamline our announcements.

- **Council is working on the 2026 budget. Any committee who wishes to request general budget funds for 2026 projects, should submit your request to a council member or Connie J before 12/31.**
- **If you have not submitted your giving pledge for 2026, you can still do so by sending your pledge to Sharon via email sschlafer9228@gmail.com or placing a pledge card in the collection plate.**
- **All 2025 bills /reimbursements should be submitted to Connie J before 12/31.**
- **Thank you from the Mission Committee - We collected a total of \$545 in gift cards for the Waukesha Christmas Clearing Council.**
\$350 in Target gift cards.
\$120 in Walmart gift cards.
\$75 in Walgreens gift cards.
Thank you to all who donated. These gift cards will be much appreciated by the boys/girls age 12-18 in need

Please remember with your prayers, cards, calls and visits: Diane S., Joyce O’K, Mark G., John and Polly E. Mary and Tom G.

Greeters for This Week:

Greeters for Christmas Eve:

Greeters for Next Week: Jacquie B. and Jack D.

Liturgist for This Week: Curt H.

Liturgist for Next Week: Jill P.

Following worship, you are invited for coffee and conversation in Fellowship Hall.