

December 13, 2021

Dear St. Paul Church Family and Friends,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus who is born among us as Immanuel: God With Us!

Yesterday in worship we lit the Love candle—a reminder that, as Christians, we experience God’s love through the Risen Christ. This coming Sunday, December 19, we will light the Joy candle.

Included in this mailer is a listing of our homebound and nursing home folk. We encourage you to send Christmas cards and/or notes to these people to share some of Jesus’ love.

Whether you worship with us in the sanctuary or via livestream or via this packet, we are delighted you are part of the St. Paul Family.

Christmas Eve is coming quickly. These are the offerings for worship at St. Paul that night:

5:00-7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Open House. We will have pre-recorded music (from our own musicians) and readings. Pastor Becky will provide Quiet Communion. The Open House format allows you to attend for any length of time that works for you and your family.

11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight/Communion Worship. We will worship both in the sanctuary and via Facebook Live at 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve. All are welcome.

We end with a reminder about Covid19 transmissions. Incidences of positive cases are going up in our congregation and community. **If you have been in contact with someone who either tests positive for Covid19 or have been in contact with someone who soon after you’ve been with them tests positive, you need to quarantine yourself from St. Paul Church, its building, and its staff.** It is our goal to keep one another (and our neighbors) as healthy as possible. What’s more, if essential staff become infected, we will be forced to shut down worship, weekly mailers, and all programs for two weeks. We thank you for your attention and care. We know it is difficult to stay home. Isolation is hard. And yet, it is our Christian calling to care for one another in the best way possible.

We thank you for your faithfulness. We thank you for your generosity. We thank you for your love for God and neighbor.

Blessings,

*Roland Dicke Myra Hanenkratt Becky Erb Strang*

Roland Dicke Myra Hanenkratt Rev. Becky Erb Strang  
Council President Council VP Senior Pastor

### Financial Information as of December 13, 2021

#### Operating Fund

Beg. Balance \$0.00  
Giving Income \$5,656.20 (weekly)  
Endowment Transfers \$24,472.00(ytd)  
Income \$294,264.67 (ytd)  
Expenses \$285,177.96 (ytd)  
Balance \$9,086.71(ytd)

#### Building Maint & Property Care

Beg. Balance \$73,644.37  
Income \$46,780.50(ytd)  
Endowment Income \$4,276.50(ytd)  
Expenses \$87,700.33(ytd)  
Balance \$37,001.04(ytd)

#### Local Aid

Beg. Balance \$6,250.20  
Income \$25,996.15 (ytd)  
Expenses \$15,689.74(ytd)  
Balance \$16,556.61 (ytd)  
BP Beg Balance \$7,881.15

Bless Pantry Inc. \$30,250.88(ytd)

Bless Pantry Ex. \$19,592.50(ytd)

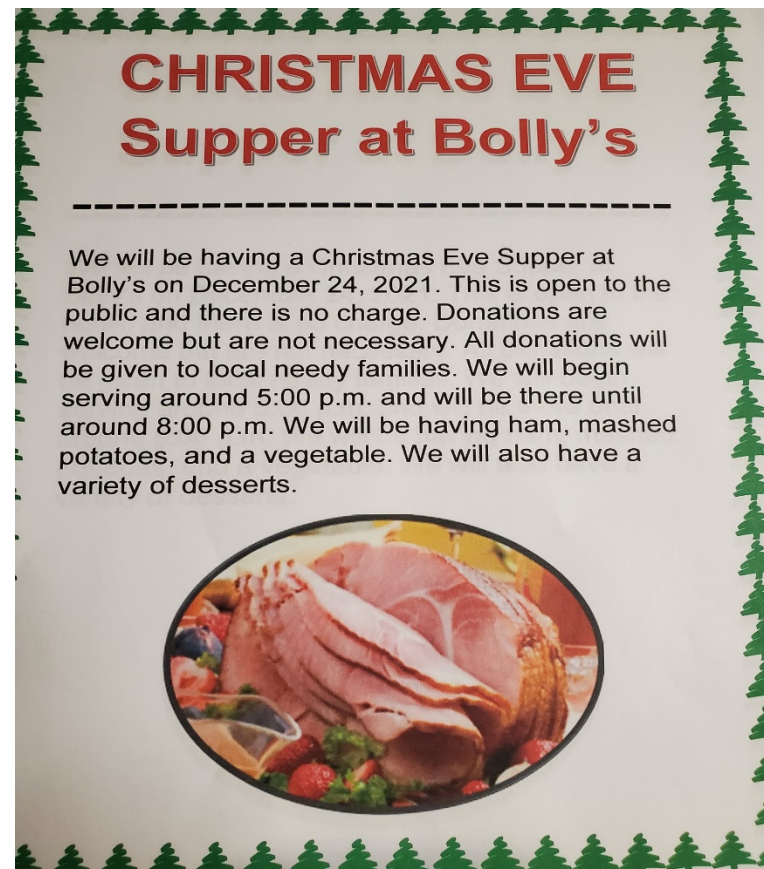
BP Balance \$18,539.53

#### Our Church Wider Mission

Pledge \$25,000.00  
Income \$429.00(weekly)  
Income \$24,677.50 (ytd)

#### Project of the Year


Income \$20.00(weekly)  
Balance \$4,679.00(ytd)



**CHRISTMAS EVE  
Supper at Bolly's**

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We will be having a Christmas Eve Supper at Bolly's on December 24, 2021. This is open to the public and there is no charge. Donations are welcome but are not necessary. All donations will be given to local needy families. We will begin serving around 5:00 p.m. and will be there until around 8:00 p.m. We will be having ham, mashed potatoes, and a vegetable. We will also have a variety of desserts.





December 19, 2021

Use this resource at home to guide your household's daily devotions.



**Pray:** Light a candle and open your devotion time with a prayer.

**God of light, you walked the earth when you created it. You walked it again when Word became flesh. Remind us that you walk with us still. Amen.**



**Read:** Read the key verse from Sunday's reading.

***<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (Genesis 1:1)***



**Reflect:** Reflect on the scripture summary.

**God walked the earth when God created it. God would walk the earth again, when God's Word would become flesh.**



**Connect:** Connect in conversation with others in your household.

**What was a high point of your day? What was a low point?**

**God created with a word, and then God's Word became flesh. What is the most amazing thing you have ever created? What is the most important word or words you have ever spoken?**

**For the littles: Do you like to fingerprint? What can you paint?**



**Bless:** Close your devotion with a blessing.

**May God bless you with a single word. Amen.**



**Do:** By acting on what we learn, we make God's word come alive. Do the following activity this week.

**Create something new. Bake, paint, write, carve, plant, quilt. Celebrate God's word in your creation.**



**Go Deeper:** Go to [clergystuff.com/daily-devotions](http://clergystuff.com/daily-devotions) for devotions on the daily readings.

Sunday, John 1:1-18, Word Made Flesh

Monday, Matthew 2:1-12, Wise Men

Tuesday, Luke 2:21-32, Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

Wednesday, Luke 2:33-40, Jesus Is Presented in the Temple

Thursday, Luke 2:41-52, The Boy Jesus in the Temple

Friday, Luke 2:1-20, Birth of Jesus

Saturday, Luke 1:26-38, Birth of Jesus Foretold



## **St. Paul United Church of Christ**

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Visit our website at <https://stpaulnb.org>

Like and follow our page St. Paul United Church of Christ – New Bremen, Ohio on Facebook

Rev. Becky Strang-Senior Pastor

Roland Dicke-Council President

### **Welcome to St. Paul UCC, we are glad you are here!!**

Whether you are worshipping online or in person, this is the house of the Lord, and all are welcome to enter and praise our loving Creator.

May God's love fill you with kindness, mercy and joy.

**December 19, 2021**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent: Joy**

### **Worship Leaders**

Ministers

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

Julia Mullins

Elise Oldiges

Cheyenne Olt

Becky Quellhorst

Tim Olt

Jim Strang

Scott Dammeyer/Wesley Olson/Jett Olson

The Congregation

Senior Pastor

Liturgist

Liturgist

Accompanist

Organist

Chancel Choir Director

Music Director

Advent Candle

PRELUDE

LIGHTING OF CANDLES: You are invited to light a candle or candles at home in preparation for worship.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## WELCOME SONG

### No Matter

$\text{♩} = 120$

No mat-ter who, no mat-ter what no mat-ter where you are on the  
jour-ney of life; you're wel-come, wel-come in this place. No mat-ter  
who, no mat-ter what, no mat-ter where you are on the  
jour-ney of life: ac-cept-ed, wel-comed by God's grace. grace.

To verses | Last time, Fine

## CALL TO WORSHIP

(adapted from Ann Weems' poem *The Child Is Born Again*)

Leader: Each year the Child is born again.

**People: Each year some new heart finally hears, finally sees, finally knows love.**

Leader: And in heaven, there is great rejoicing!

**People: There is a festival of stars!**

Leader: There is a celebration among the angels!

**People: For in the finding of one lost sheep, the heart of the Shepherd is glad, and Christmas has happened once more.**

Leader: The Child is born anew and one more knee is bowed!

**People: Let us worship the Child born among us!**

## CHRISTMAS CAROL

*O Little Town of Bethlehem*

## O Little Town of Bethlehem

180

F Fdim7 F  $\frac{F\#dim7}{Bb}$   $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$   $\frac{F}{C}$  C7 F

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is given!  
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

F  $\frac{F}{Eb}$  D D7 Gsus Gm  $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$   $\frac{F}{C}$   $\frac{Am}{C}$  C7 F

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.  
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love,  
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.  
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

F  $\frac{Edim}{G}$  G#dim7 A N.C.  $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$  A

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

F Fdim7 F Bb+  $\frac{Gm}{Bb}$   $\frac{F}{C}$   $\frac{G7}{D}$   $\frac{Am}{C}$  C7 F

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.  
 where meek souls will re - ceive him still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el.

## ADVENT LITANY

Leader: In the beginning...

**People: In the beginning, there was God.**

Leader: In the beginning, only God.

**People: And God was the Word.**

Leader: And from the beginning came everything.

**People: God spoke—a Word—and the universe was made.**

Leader: And the Word was with God.

**People: And the Word was God.**

Leader: And later, long after it all began,

**People: The Word became flesh.**

Leader: God walked among God's creation.

**People: Just as God brought light from darkness at the dawn of time,**

Leader: So, God became light, and lit the darkness that was growing in the world.

**People: The darkness of pain. The darkness of sorrow.**

Leader: The light was beautiful and brilliant.

**People: And the darkness could not overcome it.**

Leader: But the darkness tried.

**People: And the darkness tries still.**

Leader: More pain. More sorrow.

**People: But still that light that is God's, is God,**

Leader: That beautiful, brilliant light,

**People: Will never go out.**

Leader: We were children, wandering in the dark at night,

**People: Trying to find our way home.**

Leader: Now we are children of the light,

**People: And we see the way home.**

Leader: Our home is with God.

**People: Our home is in God.**

Leader: And while we make our way,

**People: The light never leaves us.**

Leader: Light. God's light. As it was in the beginning.

**People: Is now, and ever shall be,**

Leader: God's Word without end.

**All: Amen!**

**SUNG RESPONSE**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

The image shows a musical score for the song 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style with many chords. The lyrics are written below the treble staff: 'Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!'. There are some decorative flourishes in the music, such as circles around certain notes.

**ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: JOY**

Reader One: Just as the first believers longed for a joy to end the trials of sadness, we too long for a joy to stir our hearts. But soon, a savior shall be given...

*Reader Two (light candle one): A savior to bring hope...*

Reader One (light candle two): A savior to deliver peace...

*Reader Two (light candle three): A savior filled with love overflowing...*

Reader One (light candle four): One who is light shining in the darkness, and the darkness did not—and cannot—overcome it. With this light, the flame of joy, may we all gaze upon him in wonder. No one has seen God, but may we catch a glimpse of joy at the Babe in the manger.

**SUNG RESPONSE**

*When God Is a Child*

verse 3



# When God Is a Child

*Refrain*  
 C  $\frac{G7}{C}$  C Em7 Am G

When God is a child there's joy in our song. The last shall be first and the

*a tempo*

C Am7 D7 G  $\frac{C}{E}$  Am Dm7 G7

weak shall be strong, and none shall be a -

1-3 C 4 C Am E

fraid. 1 Hope is a star that  
 2 Peace is a rib - bon that  
 3 Joy is a song that  
 4 Love is a flame that

1-3 4

WORDS: Brian Wren (1936- )  
 MUSIC: John Carter (1930- )  
 Words © 1989 Hope Publishing Company  
 Music © 1998 Hope Publishing Company

GATES  
 Irregular

Am  $\frac{G7}{B}$  C C#dim7  $\frac{G}{D}$  Em Am D7 G *to Refrain*

shines in the night, lead - ing us on till the morn - ing is bright. When  
 cir - cles the earth, giv - ing a prom - ise of safe - ty and worth. When  
 wel - comes the dawn, tell - ing the world that the Sav - ior is born. When  
 burns in our heart, Je - sus has come and will nev - er de - part. When

*rit.*

## PASTORAL JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE

**Joys:** Our Joy as we travel to Bethlehem.

**Concerns:** We are continuing to pray for Carol Mohrman, John Tostrick, Julia Paul, Susan (Topp) Wicker, Greg Maurer, Bart Maurer, Jan Dammeyer, Scott Kuenning, Shannon Shupp, and Dee Schroer.

Please remember the family of Don Howell in your prayers. Don Passed away Tuesday, December 7, 2021. Service to celebrate his life was held Saturday, December 11, 2021.

## PASTORAL PRAYER. SILENT PRAYER. THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Leader: Let us pray. Holy and Loving God, today we lift up to you in prayer this beloved Body of Christ, this community, our nation and the world. SILENCE

Leader: The season of waiting is nearly over, O God. Focus our eyes on you, that we might not miss the One who comes to show us the way of light. Count us now among those who neither recognize nor accept our Lord because we are too distracted by non-essential things, or because we are convinced of our own way. Creator God:

**People: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: You spoke a Word, and all was created. Your Word sustained your chosen people over centuries of hardship and joy. And your Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Reawaken us to the true power and blessing of this Word to transform the world. Creator God,

**People: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: It can be difficult, O God, to pause from all our preparations and rest in your presence. Renew our spirits and prepare our hearts to receive the gift of your son. Creator God,

**People: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: The darkness has not overcome your light, O God of Joy. Shine into the lives of those who struggle to see it, clouded by worries, challenges or crises. Heal them with a word and put your grateful praise on their lips. Creator God,

**People: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: With John and all who proclaimed your promised Messiah, we join the chorus of praise. Tune our voices to glorify you always with your heavenly choir. Creator God,

**People: Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We give thanks that you hear us, O God. Receive our prayers and all those for whom we pray into your compassionate embrace, for the sake of Jesus. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER. (sung to the tune of *Away in a Manger*)

**Creator in heaven, all praise to your name!**

**Your kingdom among us, your will done the same.**

**By mortals and angels, come, Lord, reign alone!**

**O hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.**

**The bread that we yearn for, provide it each day**

**As we forgive others, our sins take away.**

**In times of temptation, to lead us be near.**

**From evil deliver your children most dear.**

**For yours is the kingdom; o'er all things you reign;**

**And yours is the glory, all things you maintain**

**To you be the glory, resounding again**

**From all of creation, forever! Amen!**

CHANCEL CHOIR ANTHEM

ADVENT OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: John 1:1-18 (NRSV)

A Dramatic Reading of the Text. Readers: Two Narrators

**Narrator One:** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

**Narrator Two:** *There was a man from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed*

in his name, he gave the power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

**Narrator One:** John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'"

**Narrator Two:** From his fullness we have received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God, the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

RESPONSE

Grace, Flow From Above

verse 4

Piano/Organ

♩ = 100

# Grace, Flow From Above

November 28 through December 19, 2021

Word and Music by  
J. L. Salt(er)

Grace, flow from a - bove. Show your ho - ly love.

Save us from the fire that burns, O Lord, whom we a - dore.

Bring life to our bones. Make us all your own.

introduction

Let us drink your grace and truth so we may thirst no more.

11/28 "My plans for you are not to cause you pain.  
12/5 Your ho - ly words could make the dead bones live!  
12/12 We seek you, Lord. Speak words to teach your ways.  
12/19 In - to the dark, there came a ho - ly light!

I'll hear your call. I'll bring you home a - gain!  
 Your spir - it comes and Lord, new life you give.  
 Help us to walk with you for all our days.  
 Word be - came flesh in glo - ry and in might!

Grace, flow from a - bove. Show your ho - ly love.

## SERMON

Rev. Becky Erb Strang

This story comes from author and theologian Ronald Rolheiser:

It happens in nearly every family, but this time the parents were astounded at the wisdom of their daughter. Paul and Judy, a young couple with a four year old and a two year old, were fast asleep when Darla, their four year old, decided to climb in bed with them. Judy woke up, realized what was happening and was determined to break her daughter of this habit.

“What’s the matter, Darla?”

“There are monsters in my room. I want to sleep here.”

“No, that’s not a good idea,” Judy said.

She took Darla back to her room, put on the nightlight and tried to reassure her with these words, “You need not be afraid. God is in this room with you.”

The child replied, “I know that God is here, but I need someone in this room who has some skin.”

Don’t we all?

Right there, in a sleepy child’s words we have the most basic reason for Christmas, the reason for the Incarnation. God has taken on flesh, because, like that four year old, we all need someone who has some skin.

We are human beings, not spirits without bodies. We eat the glorious food of the season. We sleep well on these long winter nights. We hug

our loved ones. We dance with joy. We smell the crisp winter wind. We hear the sound of the church bells. We are part of God's wondrous creation.

And really, it should be no surprise that God, who from the very beginning of time, who sought to be part of our lives, finally came to us in human form. Our Old Testament is full of stories of God's people worshipping God, then turning away: again and again and again. Prophets came and went. Judges came and went. Yet, God's people still could not grasp the incredible love God has for all of creation.

So, God came as a person. Not a grown up person. Not as a king wearing a golden crown. At Christmastime, we celebrate that God comes to us first and foremost as a tiny, vulnerable infant. God became one of us, took on flesh, became Incarnate. Or, to quote the Gospel of John, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us...full of grace and truth."

Why? Because God loves us beyond our reasoning, beyond our imagining, beyond anything words or songs or poetry can describe.

And the good news for Christians is that Christmas is only the beginning. Jesus was born for us. He taught and healed and reached out to people at the margins of life. He died for us; he rose and gave us his life, he gave us his Holy Spirit. And then the greatest part of the Christmas miracle: He remains with us forever.

Yet, we find ourselves asking: How is it that Jesus is with us forever—incarnate in our world?

The answer? Through us. My dearest friends: We are the Body of Christ. In the Apostle Paul's letters, we never hear that we replace Christ's Body or that we represent Christ's Body. Paul tells us that we are the Body of Christ. God is still here, in the flesh. He continues to dwell among us.

There is a beautiful poem attributed to St. Theresa of Avila. You have heard it, I'm sure:

*Christ has no body now, but yours.*

*No hands, but yours,*

*No feet, but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion must look out on the world.*

*Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good.*

*Yours are the hands with which he is to bless us now.*

*We, the Body of Christ, proclaim the Word that Jesus spoke. We, the Body of Christ, render his presence real in our world. We, the Body of Christ, unite humankind to the Love of God.*

Indeed, we are the Body of Christ. It is our sacred and holy task during Advent and into Christmas to find real, tangible ways to share Jesus' love, Jesus' peace, Jesus' hope AND Jesus' joy.

If there was ever a time the world needs joy, it is now. We, who have seen so much suffering, so much division, so much hatred, need to live into the "as if" of the kingdom of heaven—offering joy and peace in the midst of trauma.

At times, Christians take the word JOY to stand for

JESUS

OTHERS

YOURSELF

At Christmastime, we know that is true. Joy comes from service to Jesus/service to others. Joy, true joy, will never be found when we serve only ourselves, think only of ourselves, putting ourselves and our needs first. Yes: self-care is part of joy, but it cannot be the whole picture.

The joy we know at Christmas comes from God coming to us as a tiny infant—placed in a manger and visited by a bunch of scruffy shepherds. At Christmas, God turns joy upside down that we might choose joy by loving others.

Perhaps that is our task this coming week: to find ways to reach out to neighbors and strangers alike. Scatter some joy. Deliver some hope. Reach out to those who are often forgotten at holidays. At Advent, at Christmas, we are challenged to CHOOSE joy even when it is difficult: that we might increase joy all around us.

Friends: because of Jesus, God has skin and flesh and bones. Together, we are the Body of Christ—sent out to scatter joy in a world that so desperately needs that good news. Amen.

# WE RESPOND WITH OUR GIFTS

OFFERING INVITATION: Let us give as we are able: joyfully and generously!

## OFFERING CAROL

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

What can I off - er poor as I am?  
If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
yet what can I off - er: all of my heart.

Chord symbols: F, E/A, F, Dsus, Dm, Gm/Bb, Dm7/A, Gm7, C7, F, Bb/D, F, Bb/D, F7/C, Bb, Dm, E/A, Am, Gm/Bb, Bbmaj7, C, F, E/A, F, Dsus, Dm, Gm7/Bb, C7, F.

WORDS: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)  
MUSIC: Gustav T. Holst (1874-1934)

CRANHAM  
Irregular

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION (in unison)

**John testified to the light, reminding us that you, O God, walked among us. We strive to bring light into the world through our offerings. Receive our gifts so that all may know that you walk among us still. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

## ADVENT CAROL

*It Came upon a Midnight Clear*



## It Came upon the Midnight Clear 191

B $\flat$  B $\flat$ +  $\frac{E\mathbb{b}}{B\mathbb{b}}$  B $\flat$   $\frac{F9}{A}$  B $\flat$  E $\flat$   $\frac{E\mathbb{b}}{G}$   $\frac{C7}{G}$  C7 F

1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
 2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un-furled,  
 3 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,

N.C. B $\flat$  B $\flat$ +  $\frac{E\mathbb{b}}{B\mathbb{b}}$  B $\flat$   $\frac{F9}{A}$  B $\flat$   $\frac{B\mathbb{b}}{D}$  E $\flat$  F7 B $\flat$

from an-gels bend-ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
 and still their heaven-ly mu-sic floats o'er all the wea-ry world;  
 when, with the ev-er-cir-cling years, shall come the time fore-told,

N.C. D  $\frac{D}{C}$   $\frac{Gm}{B\mathbb{b}}$  D Gm  $\frac{Gm}{B\mathbb{b}}$   $\frac{F}{C}$  C7 F

"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, from heaven's all gra-cious King":  
 a-bove its sad and low-ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,  
 when peace shall o-ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,

F7 B $\flat$  B $\flat$ +  $\frac{E\mathbb{b}}{B\mathbb{b}}$  B $\flat$   $\frac{F9}{A}$  B $\flat$   $\frac{B\mathbb{b}}{D}$  E $\flat$  F7 B $\flat$

the world in sol-emn still-ness lay to hear the an-gels sing.  
 and ev-er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an-gels sing.  
 and all the world give back the song which now the an-gels sing.

BENEDICTION: May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of Jesus' birth fill you with joy, sending you out to share his love with others. Amen.

## ADVENT RESPONSE

CHRISTMAS

### 188 Angels We Have Heard on High

*Refrain*

F Dm Gm7 C Fmaj7 Bb  $\frac{C}{E}$  C

Glo - - - - - ri - a

$\frac{F}{A}$  C F Bb  $\frac{E}{C}$  C F Dm Gm7 C

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - - - - -

Fmaj7 Bb  $\frac{C}{E}$  C  $\frac{F}{A}$  C F Bb  $\frac{E}{C}$  C7 F

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

WORDS and MUSIC: French carol, 18th c.

GLORIA  
7.7.7.7.Ref.

## PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you!

**People: And also with you!**

## POSTLUDE

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Altar Flowers** are given in loving memory of Loved Ones by Dan Nedderman Family.

**Attendance**-Daily Devotions-44, December 5-Sunday Worship Online-283, In Person-85, Sunday School-In Person-20, Teachers-5, Splash, Jr/Sr High Youth Group & Confirmation-22, Leaders-5.

**Office/Building Closed**-So our staff can enjoy their Christmas and New Year's holidays, we will be closing the office/building Monday, December 27 and Friday, December 31.

**Sundays in December-Worship** will be in person and via Facebook Live at 10:15am. **Sunday School** will be in person at 9:00am.

**Daily Devotions**-Please join us, Monday-Thursday at 11:30am, online via Facebook Live. These will air on our Facebook page: St. Paul United Church of Christ-New Bremen, OH.

**Open Table**  
*Free Community Meal*

When: December 20, 2021

Who: Everyone

Where: St. Paul Assembly Room

Serving: 4:00pm-6:00pm

Menu: Ham, Cheesy Potatoes, Green Beans,  
Side Salad, Dinner Roll, Yummy Desserts

Carry-outs Available, Free Chair Massages

Prepared and Served by: The Women's Group of Holy Redeemer

**Blue Christmas Service**-The Advent and Christmas seasons are often very difficult for folk who are mourning the loss of loved ones. To acknowledge these losses and our grief, St. Paul UCC, St. Peter's Church and Gilberg & Hartwig Funeral Home are hosting a Blue Christmas Worship Service on Tuesday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Peter's Church. The Blue Christmas service will include scripture readings, music, a message and the opportunity for you to light candles in memory of loved ones. Each year, this service has provided comfort and hope for people in our community and beyond. All are welcome.

**Christmas Eve at St. Paul Church-Christmas Eve Open House 5:00-7:00 p.m.** Open House will include Christmas music, Christmas scriptures and quiet communion. You are invited to come and stay for as long as you'd like or as short as you need. All are welcome.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service. 11:00 p.m.** Christmas carols, scripture, message, lighting of candles, dedication of the Light, Sacrament of Holy Communion. All are welcome.

**2022 Altar Flower Chart** has been posted in the Narthex. Please sign up for the date(s) you would like. You may also call the church office Monday-Friday to sign up. Thank you. Price is \$30.00.

**2022 Council Postitions-2022** will be here before we know it and we still need to fill the **Jr. Deacon** council position. Please prayerfully consider serving. Questions or willing to serve, please contact Roland Dicke or Myra Hanenkratt. Thank you!

**Blessing Pantry**-is accessible during these hours - **Tuesdays 5:30pm-7:30pm, Wednesdays and Thursdays 1:00pm-3:00pm.** The Pantry will be closed Mondays and Fridays. **All Donations Welcome – Blessing Pantry Needs- Diapers (size 2, 3, 4, 5) Baby Wipes, Toothpaste, Manicure Items, Bandages,** Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, and Napkins. **Thank you!** There is a container outside the East and North Educational Building doors for donations.

**Bulletin Availability-weekly bulletins** are available for download on our website **stpaulnb.org**. Just click the yellow **BULLETINS** box in the upper right hand corner.

**January/February Upper Rooms**-are available at the East entrance to the education building and on the round tables in the sanctuary. Or please call the church office if you would like one and we will gladly mail one to you.

**Mailbox**-There is a mailbox outside of the East Educational Building door for any correspondence you may have for the church and would like to drop off. Please lift the flap and drop through the slot on the top. Thank you!

## E-Giving @ St. Paul

**Online** – Make a donation on our website: [stpaulnb.org](http://stpaulnb.org)

**Text** – Make a donation to our Number: 833-308-0048

**How To Give by Text (Example - my amount for the example is \$25 (minimum amount is \$5.00))**

- For general fund giving: Send 25 space gl (hit send)
- For building & property fund giving: Send 25 space bp (hit send)
  - For Blessing Pantry: Send 25 space pantry (hit send)
- For project of the year giving: Send 25 space poy (hit send)

### Once a text amount is sent:

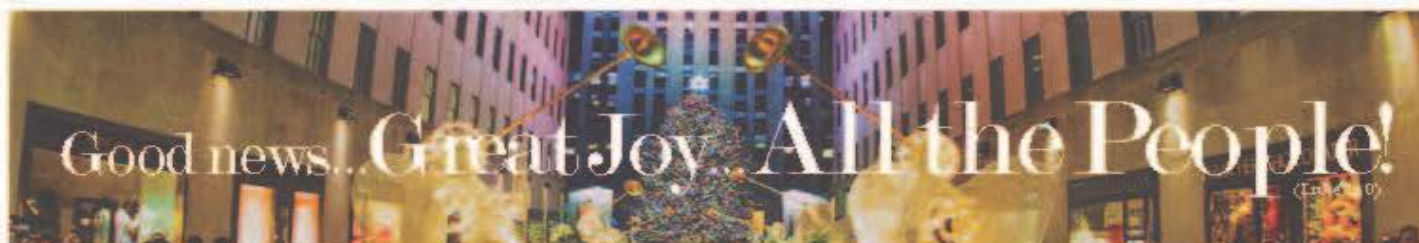
**Registration Link-** Sent via text the first time a donation is made.  
Thank you! Please visit (link) to register.

**Donation Confirm-** Sent via text each time a donation is made.

### Calendar-Week of December 19, 2021

Sunday	9:00am	Chancel Choir Rehearsal
	9:00am	Sunday School in person
	10:15am	Worship in person & via Facebook Live
Monday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	2:00pm-4:00pm	Coffee Shop-New Bremen
	4:00pm-6:00pm	Open Table-Free Community Meal
Tuesday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	5:30pm-7:30pm	Blessing Pantry Open
	7:00pm	Blue Christmas Service-St Peter's
Wednesday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	1:00pm-3:00pm	Blessing Pantry Open
Thursday	11:30am	Devotions via Facebook Live
	1:00pm-3:00pm	Blessing Pantry Open
Friday	Afternoon	Office Closed
	5:00pm-7:00pm	Open House w/Holy Communion
	11:00pm	Candlelight Service w/Holy Communion
Saturday	All Day	Building Closed

**Wednesday night youth/confirmation** are off until Wednesday, January 5, 2022. Hours-**Splash** 5:30pm-6:30pm, **youth dinner** 6:30pm, **Jr/Sr high youth group** 7:00pm-8:00pm, **confirmation** 7:00pm-8:30pm.



## **“A Wonderful Connection to the Church I Love”**

**S**ince March of last year, our lives have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and many have experienced great loss. These months have also had a profound impact on United Church of Christ clergy and congregations – physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially.

We have labored through this difficult time together, and because of gifts to the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross, our active and retired pastors who have been affected the most have known they are not alone.

Last year, donations to the Christmas Fund helped pay the rent for low-income retired ministers and bridged the gap for one active minister's family when her husband lost his restaurant due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Christmas Fund gifts took care of the unexpected expense of a major car repair, helped a retired minister attend his brother's funeral, and assisted in paying for daunting medical expenses, prescriptions, and groceries.

When money is tight and stress is high, your gift to the Christmas Fund brings relief and hope to the clergy and church employees who have dedicated their lives to serving our churches and each of us. You help the people who have helped us. You make a huge difference and bring great joy!

In the words of an emergency grant recipient . . .

*“Your letter has brought great joy and relief. The grant is enough to allow me a little breathing room at the end of each month. Thank you for that gift. But equally important to me personally is this grant symbolizes a wonderful connection to the church I love. I have been blessed in so many ways.”*

### **In 2020, gifts to the Christmas Fund enabled:**

- **Monthly pension supplementation for 276 retired clergy and lay employees (\$1,180,187)**
- **Health benefits supplementation for 89 retired clergy and lay employees (\$274,008)**
- **Emergency grants for 96 individuals and families (\$214,649)**
- **Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to 504 retired clergy and lay employees (\$252,000)**

## **The Christmas Fund**

For the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund