

Saturday & Sunday, January 11 & 12, 2025
The 1st Sunday after Epiphany



**St. Paul's
Lutheran Church**

**1100 Georgia Ave.
Norfolk, Nebraska**

Office & Website:
(402)371-1233 www.stpls.com

Times to Formally Gather around the Gospel:

Saturday:	6:30 PM	Worship Service
Sunday:	9:00 AM	Worship Service
	10:15 AM	Bible Class
Monday:	6:30 PM	Sisters-In-Faith
Wednesday:	10:00 AM	Bible Class
Thursday:	6:30 PM	Donnerstag Group

The Sunday service is broadcast live every week on KNEN, 94.7 FM, and livestreamed via our website – stpls.com. These Sunday service video recordings are also archived on Youtube. Sunday service is also broadcast weekly on Wednesday mornings (9:00 AM) on Sparklight Cable public access channel #12.

IT'S GREAT TO JOIN WITH YOU AS WE WORSHIP OUR LORD!

In our service we'll be doing three things: praising God for all His blessings through our words and songs, confessing our sins and being reminded of His forgiveness and grace, and then also using His Gospel to grow and be strengthened in faith.

We have a two-fold purpose here at St. Paul's, to strengthen faith of Christians who already belong to this congregation through Word and sacraments, and also to reach out with the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those around us who may not know what Jesus has accomplished for all mankind - forgiveness of their sins through faith!

PRIVATE PRAYER: Father, You know the multitude of sins I have committed in my life and even this past week. Help me hate my sin more and grow in grace as I contemplate what Christ has done to forgive me and free me from sin's death grip. Open the eyes of my heart to see the glorious hope we have in Christ, Your love for all of the saints, and Your power at work in us who believe (Ephesians 1:18-21). Cause my heart to burn within me as we worship You in word and song, and as we grow in and apply the Gospel.

The light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ shines for ALL to see and believe!

OPENING DIALOGUE

*P: We begin our worship in the name of our Triune God -
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

**C: We worship our Triune God because He has
accomplished everything for our salvation!**

P: O Lord, use my heart, my mind, and my mouth;

C: so that I may give You the praise and glory You deserve.

ALL SING: #234, vs 1 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

The musical score is written on five staves in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: I Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre - a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear Now to his tem - ple draw near, Join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!

*P: Be with us this evening/morning as we've gathered in Your
holy name.*

C: O Lord, come to us and bless us through Your Word.

*P: Dear friends in Christ, may the Lord, and all His blessings, be
with you!*

C: Pastor, may He also be with you!

P: Through the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are all children of God through faith.

C: For all of us who were baptized into Christ have clothed ourselves with Christ. Galatians chapter three, verses twenty-six and twenty-seven.

ALL SING: #234, vs 5 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the Amen Sound from his people again;
Gladly forever adore him!

P: Jesus teaches us in the Gospel of John - "I am the light of the world.

C: Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

P: Again, Jesus says, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds

C: And praise your Father in heaven." Matthew chapter five, verse sixteen.

P: The Apostle Peter writes - "In your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

C: But do this with gentleness and respect." First Peter chapter 3, verse 15.

P: The Apostle Paul writes - "As we have opportunity, let us do good to all people,

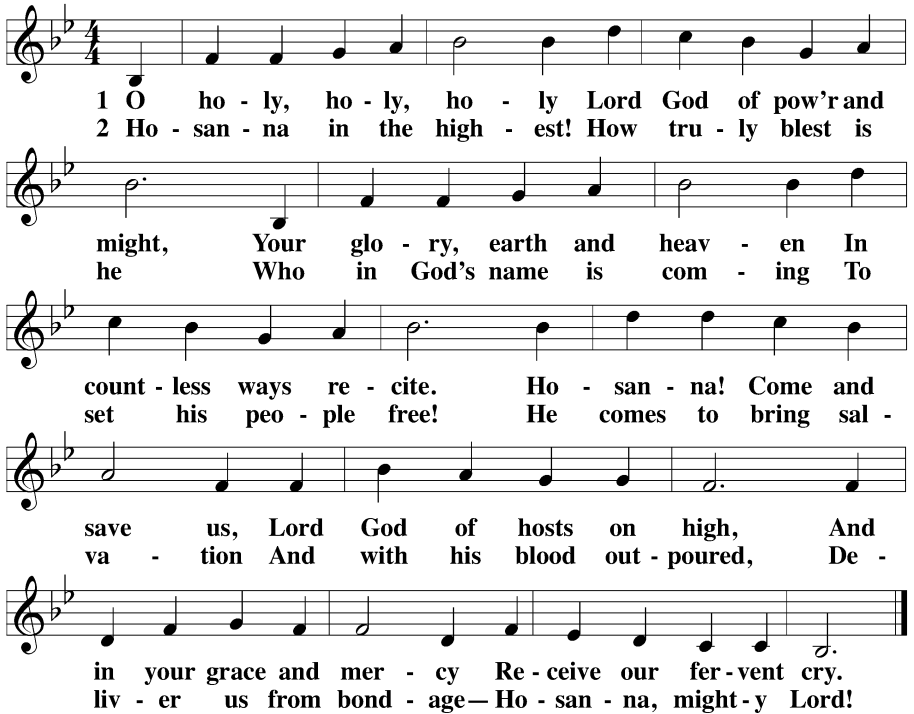
C: especially to those who belong to the family of believers." Galatians chapter six, verse ten.

P: Again, Paul commands us - "Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,

C: Giving thanks to God the Father through him." Colossians chapter three, verse seventeen. Let us worship the Lord our God!



ALL SING: *Melody of CW #19*



1 O ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of pow'r and
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How tru - ly blest is
might, he Your glo - ry, earth and heav - en In
Who in God's name is com - ing To
count - less ways re - cite. Ho - san - na! Come and
set his peo - ple free! He comes to bring sal -
save us, Lord God of hosts on high, And
va - tion And with his blood out - poured, De -
in your grace and mer - cy Re - ceive our fer - vent cry.
liv - er us from bond - age— Ho - san - na, might - y Lord!

WE CONFESS OUR SINS

P: Let us now unburden our hearts troubled by sin, and go before God's throne of grace and confess our sins together.

ALL: Merciful Father, we confess that not only are we born with a sinful nature, but we have neglected to do what You command and have persisted in doing what is evil in Your sight. We know that the acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. We know that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. *Galatians 5:19-21*

For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, forgive us, and by the power of the Gospel Your Holy Spirit uses in our hearts, help us live godly and holy lives to the glory of Your name.

P: Dear friends, the peace of God's grace soothes our troubled hearts, for God has laid all of our sins on Jesus. John 14:1

He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53:5

Therefore, as a called servant of Christ, and by His authority, I declare to you the complete forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord!

ALL SING: #239, vss 1&2 "Glory Be to God the Father"

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
God the Son, Glo - ry be to God the Spir - it,
spot and stain; Glo - ry be to him who bought us,
Great Je - ho - vah, Three in One! Glo - ry,
Made us kings with him to reign! Glo - ry,
glo - ry While e - ter - nal a - ges run!
glo - ry To the Lamb that once was slain!

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

The First Scripture Lesson Isaiah 60:1-7

Isaiah reveals that the gospel church will be filled with light and will be very large, consisting of people from all nations.

“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

*P: praise him with the clash of cymbals,**

C: praise him with resounding cymbals.

REFRAIN

*P: Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.**

C: Praise the LORD.

**ALL: Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

REFRAIN

The Second Scripture Lesson Matthew 2:1-12

The magi visit baby Jesus, fulfilling OT prophecies that Gentiles would come to Jesus and proclaim Him as Savior of the world.

¹ After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “*But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.*”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the

star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

WE RESPOND TO HEARING HIS WORD *ALL SING!*

C: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

These words are writ - ten that we may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

The musical notation consists of four staves of music in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is simple and repetitive, suitable for a children's song. The lyrics are written below the notes.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (Sunday)

Please use your good judgment as far as age of child goes. And if your child is more comfortable with Mom or Dad along...come on up!!

WE CONFESS OUR CHRISTIAN FAITH

I believe the Bible teaches us that there is one God, yet that one God is also three distinct persons who all work together for the salvation of my soul.

I believe in God the Father almighty, who made the universe and all it contains, and sustains it with His mighty power. He gave me my life so that I may learn about my Savior Jesus and be saved for eternity.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His one and only Son, who reconciled lost mankind to the Father through His perfect life, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection.

I believe in God the Holy Spirit, who gathers and strengthens sinners into God's forgiven family which we call the Church. He creates and strengthens saving faith in a person's heart through the faithful use of the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

Even though I do not understand how three persons are still one God, through faith I believe this gracious truth, and I thank and praise this gracious triune God!

HYMN #90 "The People that in Darkness Sat"

THE SERMON MEDITATION Ephesians 3:1-12

THIS COLD-CASE IS CRACKED

¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

MEDITATION RESPONSE

#272 "Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God"

Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a
right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me.
Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -
hold me with your free Spir - it. A - men.

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God". It consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence at the end.

OUR THANK-OFFERING

Our financial offerings are one way we give back to God in response for ALL He has done for us! As members of St. Paul's, we now gather our thank-offerings which are used to fund the operations of this congregation, our Christian high school – Nebraska Evangelical Lutheran High School, and the work of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. We don't expect or ask our visitors and guests to give toward this offering since it is our pleasure just to have you with us! But if you would like to, please feel free! It is our joy and privilege as Christians to generously give to the work of our Lord!



Proverbs 3:9,10 ⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; ¹⁰then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

PRAYERS & LORD'S PRAYER

P: Almighty God, You displayed the power of Your Word on the first day as You began the work of Creation. Use the same power of that same Word to work in my heart today as I've heard Your Word.

C: Continue to send Your Holy Spirit who strengthens me as I grow in faith through the powerful Gospel I receive in Word and sacrament.

P: Faithful Lord, I feel the pressure to conform to the attitudes and behavior of the sinful world around me. Give me the wisdom to recognize the difference between Your Truth and sinful error.

C: Strengthen my commitment to be Your faithful servant in all that I say and do as I let the light of my faith shine for all to see. Strengthen me to speak Your Truth in patience and love, and keep my faith strong as I live to glorify You.

P: Almighty God, I praise You for Your preservation of the world You created. Continue to open Your hand to supply me and my loved ones with the necessities of life. Protect us from all harm to body and soul.

C: Deliver and spare us from evil, and use the evils that do come for our good. Above, all, preserve us in the one true faith so that we remain faithful to You even to the point of death.

P: Heavenly Father, Your holy name is constantly being slandered by those who despise Your Word. Silence those who present lies as truths. Strengthen my connection to Your Word as I faithfully hear and learn it.

C: Use me as Your witness who faithfully shares the truth of Your Word to others. Lead all who proclaim Your Word to teach it correctly.

P: God of love, all across the globe there are Christian teachers who share wisdom and knowledge with students, who spend many hours preparing, instructing, and correcting.

C: Bless their work everywhere as they explain the countless wonders of Your creation. Cause students to benefit from this instruction and to marvel at all Your works of creation and salvation.

P: Dearest Savior, very often I think of the eternal home in heaven where so many Christian friends and family members are already at perfect rest with You!

ALL: Thank You for the perfect happiness they are enjoying, and cheer my spirit as I remember Your promises that I will see them again when You call me home! We ask for these things in Jesus' name who has also taught us to pray...*Our Father, who art in heaven...*

THE BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN #78, vss 1&2 "O Light of Gentile Nations"



Serving this Week

Worship Leader: Pastor Hirsch **Organist:** Alicia Moyer

Elder: John Kouba **Usher:** Eric Nunnenkamp/Joe Myers

Radio Broadcasters: Joel & Kathy Wiedeman

Video Tech: Darol Dusseau

Power Point: Athena Bretschneider - 1/11 Reece Kruse - 1/12

Serving Next Week January 18th & 19th

Worship Leader: Pastor Hirsch and guest, Pastor Steve Schmeling

Organist: Shannon Spreeman

Elder: Dave Nelson **Usher:** Curt Dinkel

Radio Broadcasters: Joel & Kathy Wiedeman

Video Tech: Chad Moyer

Power Point: Abi Bretschneider - 1/18 Flor Koinzan - 1/19

Worshipping the Lord

Last Week's Attendance: New Year's Eve: 61

Saturday, 1/4 – 71 Sunday, 1/5 – 77 **Total: 209**

Sunday Bible Class – 15 Wednesday Bible Class – 16

Sisters in Faith – NA Donnerstag – NA

St. Paul's General Fund – Jan. 4th/5th

Yearly Needed: \$479,710.00	YTD Need: \$245,619.62
YTD Offerings: \$244,555.68	YTD Need vs Offerings: -\$1,063.94
Last Week Received: \$16,500.02	Weekly Need: \$9,937.81
Difference: \$6,562.21	

Building Project Update 1/9/25



Project Cost: \$4.2 million

Pledges Made & Gifts Received:
\$1,945,576 (\$25,882 in last week)

*Amount borrowed from CEF loan
so far...\$957,998*

4.32% interest-only payments on debt incurred until February, 2026.

Please be aware that if a donation was made toward the Building Fund, the process may take a week or two before it shows up in these numbers.

SOME ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1) The **Annual Congregational/Voters' Meeting** will be held on Tuesday, January 28, 6:30 PM, in the church basement. Election of Council positions will take place then, as well as extending a new call to a principal. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend to hear and share information, but when it comes time for a final decision/vote, we'll ask our voting members to take up this responsibility.
- 2) We are looking at designing a **new website** for our church and school. The cost to have this done professionally + the first year of support is right around \$3600. An anonymous donor has volunteered a matching grant of \$1800 to make this possible. If this is something you'd like to support as well, please speak to Mr. Markgraf. This website redesign will do A LOT to help us in our recruitment and marketing efforts.

- 3) Our ministry uses a lot of **Thrivent Action Teams** to support the various events and activities we put on. We'd like to compile a list of the individuals/families who have Thrivent Action Teams that might be used. If you have a Thrivent account, please leave your name on the sign-up sheet on the communication center. This will help us when looking for funding for various events! You can even leave a specific event or activity you'd like to support with your Action Team.
- 4) Are you dealing with the loss of a loved one? On Saturday, January 25, 10:00 AM, we'll hold the initial meeting of a **grief support group**. We will meet at the church. For more information please contact Pastor Lindke or Pam Handke.
- 5) Next weekend, January 18/19, **Pastor Steve Schmeling** will be here to preach and use after-church time to share some financial information that can positively affect both personal and congregational situations. If you'd like some individual time to discuss your personal situation with Pastor Schmeling, please sign-up on the sheet at the Communication Center. The following is Pastor Schmeling's blurb.

Pillars of Smart Christian Giving Jan 18-19, 2025

God's grace in Jesus turns giving from a reluctant obligation to a joyful privilege. Come learn about the many ministry opportunities across our synod. Let's talk about the Scriptural principles of giving, and also various strategies for giving to bless your family and your church.

WELS Christian Giving Counselor, Rev. Steve Schmeling

- 6) We're looking for volunteers for the **Food Pantry**. We're scheduled to help from Thursday, January 16th through Friday, January 31. There's a signup sheet at the communication center.

The pantry hours are Monday-Friday from 9:30-11:30 AM and they are looking for 3 volunteers each day. Questions?? Call 402-371-0585.

Upcoming Events This Week:

Sunday, 1/12	<u>Worship Service</u> , 9:00 AM <u>Bible Study w/ coffee & donuts</u> , 10:15 AM <u>EPIC Bible Study</u> , 2:00-3:00 PM
Monday, 1/13	<u>Sisters in Faith</u> , 6:30 PM
Wednesday, 1/15	<u>Chapel</u> , 8:15 AM <u>Bible Class Lindke</u> , 10:00 AM <u>P.S. Catechism</u> , 2:15 PM <u>Adult Choir</u> , 7:00 PM
Thursday, 1/16	<u>Donnerstag</u> , 6:30 PM
Saturday, 1/18	<u>Worship Service w/ HC</u> , 6:30 PM
Sunday, 1/19	<u>Worship Service w/ HC</u> , 9:00 AM <u>Sunday School w/ Mrs. Nelson</u> , 10:00 AM <u>Pastor Steve Schmeling Info</u> , 10:15 AM

Church Cleaning Teams

Weeks of January 5th & 12th Team #6

Kelly Kenny, Kelly Meysenburg, Dan & Karen Pufahl,
Barb Reeves, Veryl Winter, Ron Johnson

Weeks of January 19th & 26th Team #1

Pam Handke, Chad & Alicia Moyer, Bill & Sue Ulrich

St. Paul's Contact Information

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Principal Aaron Markgraf
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920-248-2223

Kathy Wiedeman, Secretary
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School Office 402-371-1233

Website: www.stpls.com
WELS: www.wels.net

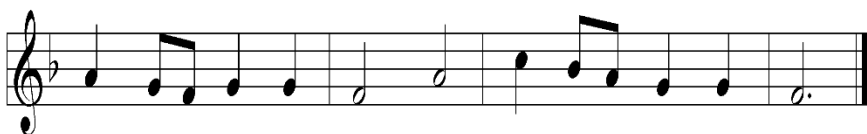
The People that in Darkness Sat



1 The peo - ple that in dark - ness sat A glo - rious
 2 To us a child of hope is born, To us a
 3 His name shall be the Prince of Peace, The Ev - er -
 4 His right - eous gov - ern - ment and pow'r Shall o - ver
 5 Lord Je - sus, reign in us, we pray, And make us



light have seen; The light has shone on them who long In
 son is giv'n, And on his shoul - ders ev - er rests All
 last - ing Lord, The Won - der - ful, the Coun - sel - or, The
 all ex - tend; On judg - ment and on jus - tice based, His
 yours a - lone, For you are with the Fa - ther and The

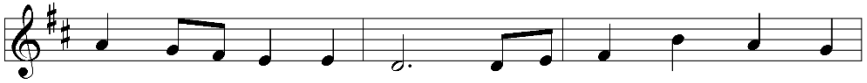


shades of death have been, In shades of death have been.
 pow'r in earth and heav'n, All pow'r in earth and heav'n.
 God by all a - dored, The God by all a - dored.
 reign shall have no end, His reign shall have no end.
 Spir - it ev - er one, The Spir - it ev - er one.

O Light of Gentile Nations



1 O Light of Gen - tile na - tions, O
 2 Dear Lord, your ser - vants meet you In
 3 Lord, when life's trou - bles touch us, You
 4 Let us, O Lord, be faith - ful Like



Sav - ior from a - bove, Drawn by your Spir - it's
 ev - 'ry ho - ly place Where your true Word has
 seem to hide your face, And through our tears we
 Sim - eon to the end So that his prayer ex -



lead - ing, We come with joy and love In -
 prom - ised That we should see your face. To -
 of - ten Can scarce - ly sense your grace. Then
 ul - tant May from our hearts as - cend: "O



to your ho - ly tem - ple And wait with
 day you still al - low us Who gath - er
 be our joy and bright - ness, Our cheer in
 Lord, now let your ser - vant De - part in



rev - 'rent mind As Sim - eon once had
 round you here In arms of faith to
 pain and loss, Our sun in dark - est
 peace, I pray, Since I have seen my



wait - ed His God and Lord to find.
 hold you As did that a - ged secr.
 ter - ror, The glo - ry round our cross.
 Sav - ior And here be - held his day."