

Welcome to
St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

December 28, 2025



*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*

Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. Allyssa Boyer

Lector: TBD

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore

Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore

Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore

Organist: Sarah A. Myers

Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Sue Miller

Greeters: Brian Strohecker

Acolyte:

Kids' Place: Don Dupes, Paula Boyer, Becky Thompson

Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel

Flower Delivery:

Counting Team:

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

*Visit the church website, under the 'Sign Up' menu heading, to help as a Sunday volunteer or Worship Participant.
We're grateful for your generosity.*

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

December 31, 2023

The livestream starts with the Announcements. If you'd prefer not to be on camera, kindly choose a seat in the back three pews of the Sanctuary. Leave prayer requests in the bowl in the Common area or give them to the Lead Greeter.

**Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.*

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "In Bethlehem He Was Born"

Donald Lee Moore

CALL TO WORSHIP (Responsive)

One: Praise God, all who dwell on this earth. Praise God in the heights and depths of life.

All: We will recount the deeds of God. Surely God has shown us goodness and mercy.

One: Praise God, sun and moon and stars. Praise God, fire and hail, snow and frost.

All: Young and old, all people together, let us praise and honor our Creator.

One: Let God's name be praised and exalted. God's glory is above heaven and earth.

All: By God's steadfast love, we are drawn to worship. Our gracious Savior leads us in new ways.

*CAROLS No. 135 "O Come, All You Faithful" (vs. 1&3)

No. 126 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory (vs. 1&2)

No. 139 "The First Nowell" (verses 1&2)

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

We come before You in awe, O God, freshly aware of Your glory and Your love embodied in the midst of this world. Here amid dirt and straw, amid noise of cattle and labor of birth, we perceive Your work. We dare to believe that it is You, God, coming to be among us in Jesus, and so we praise You with songs of joy. Glory be to You, O God, now and forever. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

God loves this world of flesh and blood, stone and tree, sheep and oxen, star and field. God loves the world so much that God comes to us in Jesus. Yet we are careless with God's creation. Let us confess our sin.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

How amazing is Your love, great God! You are not distant from us in some faraway heaven; you have come close to us in a child born of simple parents and cradled in a bed of straw. We confess we abuse this created world. When we stand by while the earth is despoiled and its destruction threatened, God, forgive. When we inflict physical or emotional pain on those with whom we share our lives, God, forgive. When we abuse or neglect our own bodies, God forgive.

By Your great love, God, draw us into new ways of living. Teach us to cherish and nurture life in this fragile world, in the way of Jesus the Christ, whose birth we celebrate today.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive)

One: Hear the good news: In compassion, God forgives us, enabling us to turn from the ways of violence and death; God shows us how to cherish life. In the name of Jesus,

All: Our sins are forgiven. Rejoice and sing!

If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

- CAROLS No. 143 "On Christmas Night All Christians Sing" (vs. 1&2)
No. 133 "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (vs. 1&4)
No. 129 "Good Christians Friends, Rejoice" (vs. 1&2)

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 148

THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: Thanks be to God!

THE GOSPEL READING

Luke 2:22-40

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)

Thru Christ our ear-nest prayers are said with words we scarce can frame; Our
work of Christ-mas now be-gun, We serve now in Christ's name.

Please also place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate. Thank you.

- CAROLS No. 131 "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" (Vs 1&4)
No. 134 "Silent Night, Holy Night" (all three verses)
No. 132 "Joy to the World" (all three verses)

THE OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY

***From all who dwell beneath the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise!
Let the Redeemer's name be sung.
Through every land, by every tongue! Amen.***

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

Loving God: We Give You Thanks for Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Receive the gifts we offer in union with Christ's gift for us. Clothe us with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, that we may be Christ for others. In his name we pray. Amen.

*CAROLS No. 144 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" (vs. 1&2)
No. 125 "Angels We Have Heard on High" (verses 1&3)
No. 154 "Go Tell It on the Mountain" (all three verses)

*THE BIDDING TO MISSION

*THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER

One: Lead us, O God.

**All: Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.**

*THE BENEDICTION

* THE THREE-FOLD AMEN

The livestream ends after the Postlude. You're welcome to converse in the Narthex after the Three-fold Amen.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE "Christmas Carol Medley"

Robert J. Hughes

References:

The Call to Worship is from "Taught by Love" by Lavon Bayler, United Church Press: Cleveland, OH, 1998.

The Prayer of Invocation, Call to Confession, Prayer of Confession, and Words of Assurance are adapted from "Book of Worship: United Church of Christ," United Church of Christ Office for Church Life and Leadership: New York, NY, 1986.

The Prayer of Dedication is adapted from "Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year C." Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY, 2012.

The World Peace Prayer is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, and is also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine nuns.

ST. PAUL'S ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL DINNER!



SUNDAY, JANUARY 11TH (PLEASE SIGN UP BY JAN. 4TH)
FOLLOWING THE 10:30 SERVICE & ANNUAL MEETING



- Join us in Fellowship Hall for our Annual Congregational Dinner of Pork & Sauerkraut.
- We will be honoring our members with 50 or more years.
- To help cover the cost of the meal, there will be a charge of \$9.00 for ages 13 & up, \$5.00 for ages 5 – 12, ages 4 and under are free.
- Sign-up sheets are available in the Common. Sign-up sheets are available for dessert donations and helpers. We are looking for dishwasher apprentices! On the job training available! All sign up sheets will be online also.

STAR WORDS

Star words are a prayer practice connected to the celebration of Epiphany, when a star in the sky guided the magi to baby Jesus. On Sunday, January 4, worshipers will receive a small paper star with a word printed on it. Participants are invited to trust the word they receive as offering guidance for their life in the coming year. Place your star word where you will see it regularly throughout the year and consider God's movement in your life through, around, and in connection with your star word. Just as the magi followed a star long ago, we too can be guided by our star word for the coming year.

CHILD SPONSORSHIP

Your gifts through Global Ministries Child Sponsorship make a difference! Collaborating with partners, your gifts to Child Sponsorship provide food, basic health care, clothing and in some cases housing, school fees, uniforms, books and training. The cost to sponsor a child in 2026 is \$35.00 per child per month. Head to our church website to sign up. Checks can be made out to St. Paul's UCC.