St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
December 24, 2019

CHRISTMAS EVE

Vicar Sergio Rodriguez
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Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

In winter’s deepest night, we welcome the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illuminate the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus’ birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.

CONFESSION and FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,
Love from the beginning,
Word made flesh,
Breath of heaven.

Amen.

Let us confess our sinfulness before God and one another, trusting in God’s endless mercy and love.

Merciful God,

we confess that we are not perfect.
We have said and done things we regret.
We have tried to earn your redeeming grace,
while denying it to others.
We have resisted your call
to be your voice in the world.

Forgive us, loving God.

Give us your righteousness,
the strength to put aside our failures,
and the courage to try again. Amen.

Dear people of God, hear the good news:
Christ the Savior is born!
You are loved and forgiven
in the name of Jesus, who has come among us.
You are freed from proving that you deserve to be loved,
because God’s love is given to you
as the most precious gift of all.
Rejoice in this love and share it with the world.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN  (ELW p. 283)  O Come, All Ye Faithful
GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Oremos. Dios Todopoderoso, hiciste brillar esta noche santa con el brillo de la Luz verdadera. Concédenos que aquí en la tierra caminemos a la luz de la presencia de Jesús y en el último día despiertemos al brillo de su gloria; a través de tu Hijo Jesucristo nuestro Señor, que vive y reina contigo y con el Espíritu Santo, un solo Dios, ahora y para siempre. Amén.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Rejoice, people of God! The light has come into the world. God, our Life and Light, thank you for coming to us as you touch all heaven and earth with your splendor. In every corner of the world, shine with your peace. In every corner of our hearts, shine with your grace.

let us rejoice, for the Son of God, Emmanuel, comes to be with us. Amen.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah’s king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God’s passion for the people: The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!

2The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.
3You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
4For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

6 For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Word of God, word of life.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 96

R: Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad.

1 Sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.

2 Sing to the Lord, bless the name of the Lord;
proclaim God’s salvation from day to day.

3 Declare God’s glory among the nations
and God’s wonders among all peoples.

4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods. R

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but you, O Lord, have made the heavens.

6 Majesty and magnificence are in your presence;
power and splendor are in your sanctuary.

7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples,
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due the holy name;
bring offerings and enter the courts of the Lord. R

9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
tremble before the Lord, all the earth.

10 Tell it out among the nations: “The Lord is king!
The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the
peoples with equity.”

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O Lord,
for you come to judge the earth.

13 You will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with your truth. R
SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

The appearance of God’s grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior’s final appearance.

11 The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, 12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. 14 He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands

WELCOME THE GOSPEL (ELW p. 289 ) Angels We Have Heard on High Stanzas 1 and 2

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO: Luke 2:1-20


In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” To us is born a Savior.

Jesus Christ our Lord.
When 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.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. To us is born a Savior. 

**Jesus Christ our Lord.**

When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. To us is born a Savior. 

**Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. To us is born a Savior. 

**Jesus Christ our Lord.**

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**CELEBRATE THE GOSPEL**

*(ELW p. 289)*

**Angels We Have Heard on High**

Stanza 3

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**SERMON**

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**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*(ELW p. 279)*

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

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**NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen
PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Keeping awake as we watch for Christ, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need. The assembly shall kneel, as they are able

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as the church gathers on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior’s birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin’s burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy, Direct the leaders of the nations, so that in self-controlled, upright, and godly living, they may work toward peace. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Mighty God of mercy, you come among us as a vulnerable infant. Protect all in need: especially John, Bobby, Patricia, Suzanne, Diane, Shane, Norma, Linda, Jack, Raymond, Steve, Khloe, Elfren, Moma, Jimmy, Alejandra, Carly, Meredene, Jerry, Enedina, Cody, and Norma, as well as those that we name out loud or in our hearts... those without homes or caregivers, those who grieve, all who are hungry, and all who are ill. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, we praise you for gathering us tonight to worship in holy splendor. Direct our worship, fellowship, and service, so that our lives and Christian witness may be pleasing to you. Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Everlasting God, your steadfast love never ends. Thank you for revealing your faithfulness and love to us through the saints of every time and place (especially). Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Into your gracious hands we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your steadfast mercy; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.
OFFERING PRAYER
Let us pray. Generous God, you have given us life, this community, and these gifts of the earth that become the meal of your grace. Move in our hearts, that we might use your gifts to bring hope and blessing wherever we go, through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.
It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.
In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see.
And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

\[\text{Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,} \]
\[\text{heavn and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the high est.} \]
\[\text{Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the high est, hosanna in the high est.} \]
THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets’ hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary’s openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which
he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:
Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look
with hope for his coming.
Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us. Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people. Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.
Come, Holy Spirit.
All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever. Amen

LORD’S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Love has come: God’s love for all people. Come and eat, for Christ invites you.

The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION SONG

DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

Jesus Christ, who is God with us, is present here with us as the host of this meal and in the bread and wine. In this meal, Jesus Christ gives you strength for your journey of faith and dwells with you in your daily life as you go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated. Communion will be by Intinction. After receiving the bread from the Vicar, please receive the wine by dipping the bread into the chalice that is offered by the communion assistant. This meal is for you because God is for you. Taste and See that the Lord is good and his mercy endures forever.

TABLE BLESSING

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Emmanuel, God with us,
you grace us with life and breath
and give us bread for the journey.
Send us out in service to this world that you love,
telling the amazing news of your coming
to be Savior and Lord of all.

Amen
THE PASSING OF THE LIGHT

(ELW p. 281)  Silent Night, Holy Night!

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Grace from God’s own heart,
peace from the ∆ Child in the manger,
and strength from the Spirit of life
be blessings for you today and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG   (ELW p. 267)  Joy to the World

DOXOLOGY      (ELW p. 884)  Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow

DISMISSAL

Christ is born!
Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.
Thanks be to God.

For Prayerful Consideration

Ill, Injured or Otherwise Struggling: John, Bobby Adams, Patricia Coffee, Suzanne Dietzel, Diane Dziuk, Shane Edens, Norma Foreman, Linda Henning, Jack Hockey, Evelyn Hoffman, Raymond Jenkins, Steve Kelly, Frances Kempe, Khloe Martinez, Elfren Moczygemba, Jimmy Moore, Moma Ndeh, Alejandra, Carly Rosenboon, Meredene Shockome, Casey Stagg, Jerry Vajdos, Enedina Vasquez, Cody Zaiontz, and Norma Zamzow

For those in the military: Nick Adams, Anthony Alvarez, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Jon Wayne Schulz, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva
Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul’s by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul’s. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us. **If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance**, please signal an usher.

Announcements

Opportunities to Learn, Worship, Pray, and Serve

**In Celebration of Vicar Rodriguez’ Ministry at St. Paul’s**

Next Sunday, December 29, will be Vicar Rodriguez’ last Sunday with us. We will join with St. Paul’s – Nordheim for worship in Nordheim at 10:30 a.m. A potluck luncheon will follow the worship service.

There WILL NOT be a worship service at St. Paul’s – Karnes City on December 29.

**In Christ Jesus,**

**God made us to do good works.**

**EPHESIANS 2:10 NCV**