Mission Statement

St. Paul United Methodist Church exists to honor God by making more disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Church Ministry Staff

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St. Paul

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

December 7, 2025 8:30 a.m.

Prelude In the Bleak Midwinter/Away in the Manger arr Perkins

Welcome and Announcements:

Advent Wreath Lighting: David & Teresa Crider the calf and the lion will feed together, and little child shall lead them

All: Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God's creation.

*Opening Prayer:

Leader: Together let us pray.

Unison: Together let us pray: Loving God, be to us as a bulldozer of the spirit. Clear your road in us; clear a path through the detritus of possessions and obsessions. Thrust aside our divided aims and devious games. Topple the ramparts of pride and the doubts that deride. Make a highway on which Christ may come and take possession of the whole territory of our being. To the glory of your name, we pray. Amen.

*Hymn of Praise: I Want To Walk as a Child of the Light Page 206 I want to walk as a child of the light. I want to follow Jesus. God set the stars to give light to the world. The star of my life is Jesus.

Refrain

In him there is no darkness at all, The night and the day are both alike. The Lamb is the light of the city of God. Shine in my heart, Lord Jesus.

I want to see the brightness of God. I want to look at Jesus. Clear Sun of Righteousness, shine on my path, and show me the way to the Father. (Refrain)

I'm looking for the coming of Christ. I want to be with Jesus. When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus. (Refrain)

First Lesson: Isaiah 53: 1-5

Leader: The Word of God for the people of God!

People: Thanks be to God!

*Second Lesson: Luke 1: 5-25

Leader: The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

People: Thanks be to God!

*Hymn: Away in a Manger Page 217 Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head. The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes; I love thee Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me, I pray; bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer (in unison):

"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." Amen.

Sermon: "Our Dear Christ Enters In: Home Hurts"
Pastor Mindi Gochnaur

The Affirmation of our Stewardship

Offertory Gentle Mary Laid Her Child arr Hayes

* Congregational Response

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* Prayer of Dedication (in unison): Persistent God of new paths, we have been called to prepare the way – not with platitudes, but with changed hearts and lives. In this season of turning and anticipation, we offer these gifts as signs that we long to live by your story. Use them and use us to bear fruit worthy of nearness of your kingdom and the urgency of your call. In the wilderness of fear and want, may this offering clear a path for hope to be seen, known, and shared. In the name of the one who is coming and is already among us – Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

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*Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear Page 218
It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old, from angels
bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold: "Peace on the earth,
good will to men, from heaven's all gracious King." The world in solemn
stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled, and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world; above its sad and lowly plains, they bend on hovering wing, and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low, who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow, look now! for glad and

golden hours come swiftly on the wing. O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old, when with the ever circling years shall come the time foretold when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling, and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

*The Sending Forth and Benediction

Postlude: Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella arr Schaumburg

The altar flowers are in loving memory of Timothy O'Sullivan by Jim & Linda Bruckart.

Serving in Worship Today

Greeter Dave & Judy Bowers
Worship Leader Chris Buhrman
Head Usher Dave Bowers

During the service, the nursery is staffed and available for your children on the main floor

Sharing room (A9).

Welcome Families with young children! St. Paul UMC values our children. We strive to teach each child who visits with us more about God and Jesus.

When you enter the Sanctuary or FLC for church, you will see a white rack in the back of the room. On this rack are "Fruits of the Spirit" cloth bags. Inside each bag is an activity book based on Biblical stories. There is also a small notebook, a pen, and a pack of crayons. Please feel free to borrow one of these Children's Activity bags for the duration of the church service.

When the service ends, we kindly ask you to return all of the materials to the cloth bag and hang the bag back on the white rack before you leave to go home. That way, the bags are there for all children to enjoy. Thank you

^{*}Those who are able please stand.