

# *The Third Sunday of Advent*

## *Sunday, December 15, 2019*

**St. Paul's Lutheran Church**  
**215 N. Warren St.**  
**Orwigsburg, PA**  
**570-366-2316**  
**[www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org](http://www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org)**

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### **GATHERING**

*As we gather together, let us now refrain from conversation, quiet ourselves, and welcome the Lord Jesus Christ into our midst.*

**PRELUDE**                      “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring”                      J. S. Bach

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

We gather in the name of the Father,  
and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

As we wait and watch for the promised day of salvation,  
let us open our hearts to God.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination*

Almighty God,  
    **search us and know us.**  
**Reveal all that we keep hidden deep inside.**  
**To you we confess our sins, known and unknown.**  
**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us**  
    **in your ways of justice and peace.**  
**Make us reflections of your abiding love**  
    **through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.**  
**Amen.**

Beloved children of God  
the one who judges is righteous and merciful.  
Dwell in the loving arms  
of the one who has made you and all of creation.  
And then go forth boldly  
in the assurance that your sins are forgiven  
in the name of † Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN**      “Comfort, Comfort Now My People”      #256

**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.**

**THE LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE**

Let us pray. Holy are you, God of the brokenhearted and oppressed; you promised to send your chosen one who gives a garland instead of ashes to those who mourn; who brings down the powerful and lifts up the lowly. As we light these candles, open our lips to testify to the true light coming into the world who enlightens everyone. Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like streams in the desert.

**Reveal your truth to us, and fill our mouths with shouts of joy that declare the great things you have done for us. Amen**

**“Christ, Be Our Light”**

*[The third candle is lit.]*

*Refrain*

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the  
dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your  
church gath - ered to - day.

The musical notation consists of three staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain. The second staff continues the melody for the second line. The third staff concludes the melody for the third line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across two notes.

## **RESPONSIVE READING**

For those we love who are far from us; we pray, O Lord,  
**Stir up our wills and come.**

For all who are suffering or grieving; we pray, O Lord,  
**Stir up our wills and come.**

For those who are traveling and those preparing for the arrival of a child; we pray,  
O Lord,  
**Stir up our wills and come.**

For those who are untouched by the joy of this season;  
we pray, O Lord,  
**Stir up our wills and come.**

For those we have hurt or ignored; we pray, O Lord,  
**Stir up our wills and come.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray. Stir up our wills, O Lord, to give witness to the coming of your Son and to prepare his way. Grant us the wisdom to see your purpose today and the openness to hear your will, that we may witness to Christ's coming and so prepare his way; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **WORD**

### **A Reading from Isaiah**

<sup>1</sup>The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup>it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup>Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
<sup>4</sup>Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
“Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you.”  
<sup>5</sup>Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
<sup>6</sup>then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup>the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
<sup>8</sup>A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God’s people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
<sup>9</sup>No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.  
<sup>10</sup>And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

(Isaiah 35:1-10)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 146:5-10

<sup>5</sup>Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God;

<sup>6</sup>**who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;  
who keeps his promise forever;**

<sup>7</sup>who gives justice to those who are oppressed,  
and food to those who hunger.

<sup>8</sup>**The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;  
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;**

<sup>9</sup>the Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger;  
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

<sup>10</sup>**The Lord shall reign forever,  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!**

## A Reading from James

<sup>7</sup>Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup>You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup>Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup>As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. (James 5:7-10)

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## **Gospel Matthew 11:2-11**

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

<sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup>Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

“Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”

#246

**SERMON**

**THE NICENE CREED (In Unison)**

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;  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

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.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He 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.

*A brief silence.*

Holy God, we rejoice that your promises come to us in the person Jesus Christ.  
Grant patience to your church awaiting the fulfillment of your reign of justice and peace. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Life-giving God, we rejoice that you raise flowers in the desert and water in the wilderness. Send rain to parched fields and sun to flooded plains. Nurture all that lies sleeping under frozen ground. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Almighty God, we rejoice in your authority as Prince of peace. Deliver us from those who wield power in oppressive ways and raise up prophets to speak your truth to every nation. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Gracious God, we rejoice that you care for us and dwell in our midst. Bring healing and wholeness to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit (*especially...*). Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Generous God, we rejoice that you create us to praise you. Enrich all who prepare to celebrate Christ's birth with music, dancing, and proclamation, in worship and in the community. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

Eternal God, we rejoice that all who die in Christ are raised to new life. We thank you for the lives of those who have prepared the way for us and have now joined the great cloud of witnesses. Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

You hear the cries of our hearts, O Lord. Fill us with hopeful expectation, that in each day and hour we may love and serve our neighbors, in Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

**PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

# OFFERING

*For 10:30 service ushers: Take the offering plates from the table in the back of the church. Receive the collection along the center aisle, from front to back, then walk behind the last pews and up the side aisles to receive the collection on the outside aisles, again from front to back. Return to the back and wait for the Communion Assistant to come forward with the alms basin.*

**Offertory (8:00)**

“Fling Wide the Door”

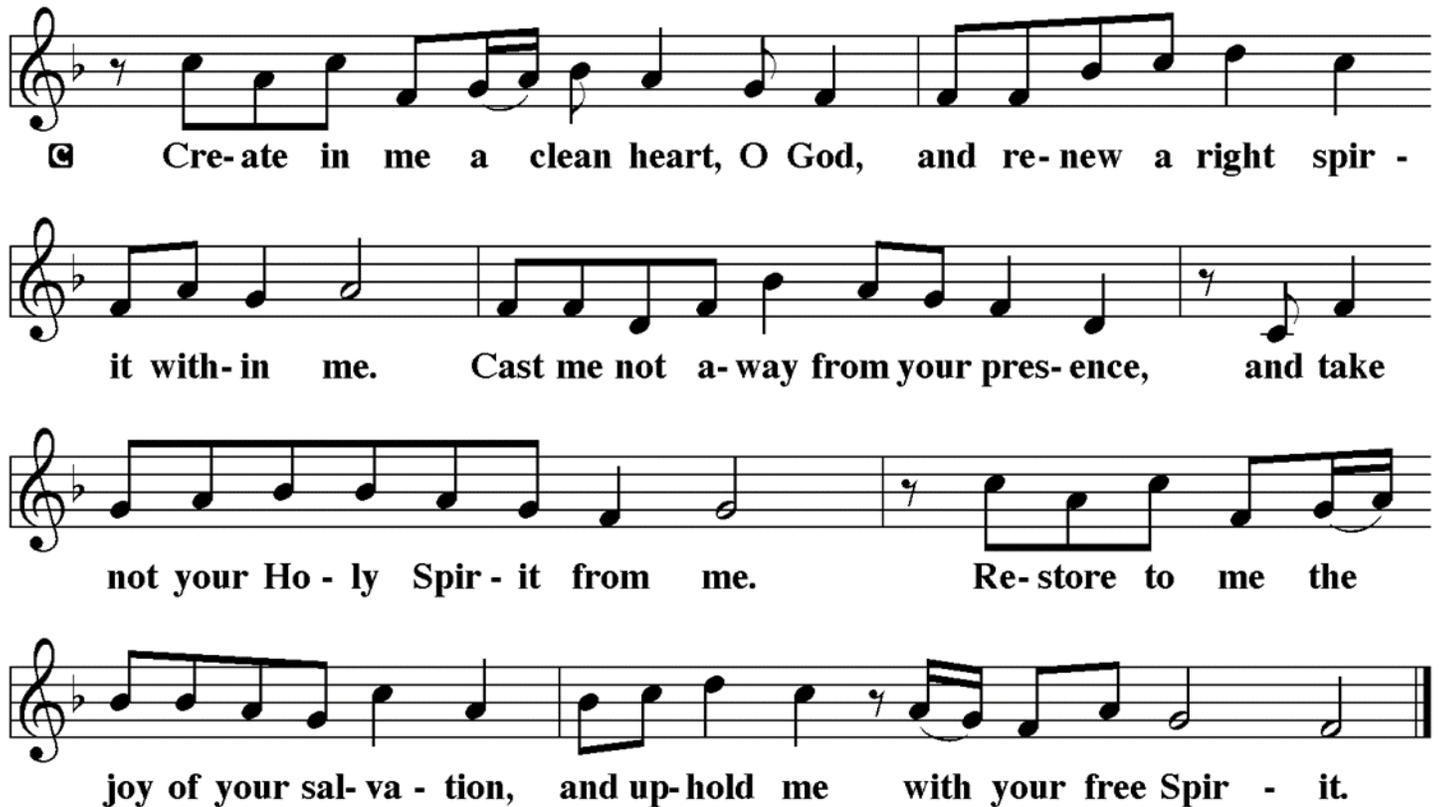
C. Piutti

**Anthem (10:30)**

\*“Prophets Knew”  
*Chancel Choir*

L. Larson

## OFFERTORY HYMN



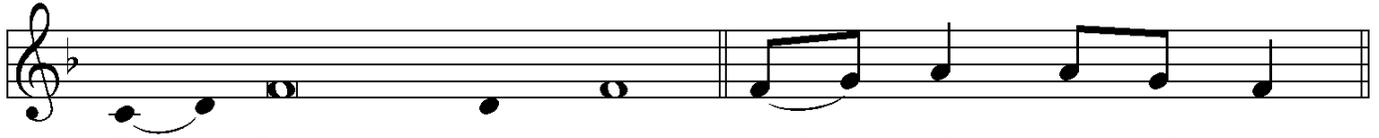
Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right spir -  
it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take  
not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re-store to me the  
joy of your sal-va - tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir - it.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

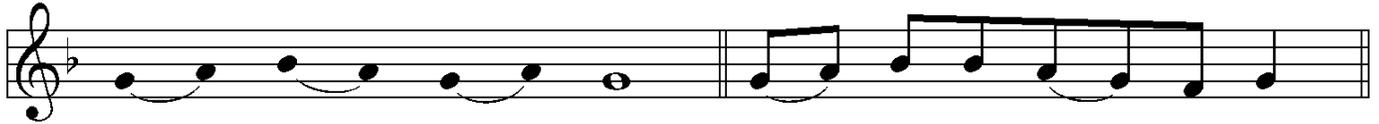
Giver of every good thing, we set before you the gifts that you have given to us to sustain our lives and to share with others. Help us to be good stewards of the earth and all that is in it, and let our lives be a testimony to the abundant feast you prepare for all who hunger. **Amen.**

# MEAL

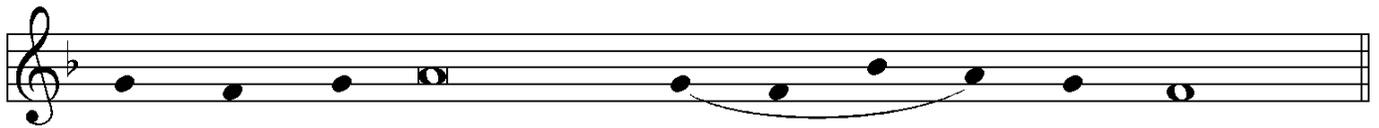
## GREAT THANKSGIVING



**P** The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



**P** Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.



**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



**C** It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and ever living God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## SANCTUS



☐ Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav- en and earth are full of your glo- ry. Ho - san- na. Ho - san- na.



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho- san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, Lord of heaven and earth.

In mercy for our fallen world you gave your only Son,  
that all those who believe in him should not perish,  
but have eternal life.

We give thanks to you for the salvation  
you have prepared for us through Jesus Christ.

Send now your Holy Spirit into our hearts,  
that we may receive our Lord with a living faith  
as he comes to us in his holy supper.

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

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.

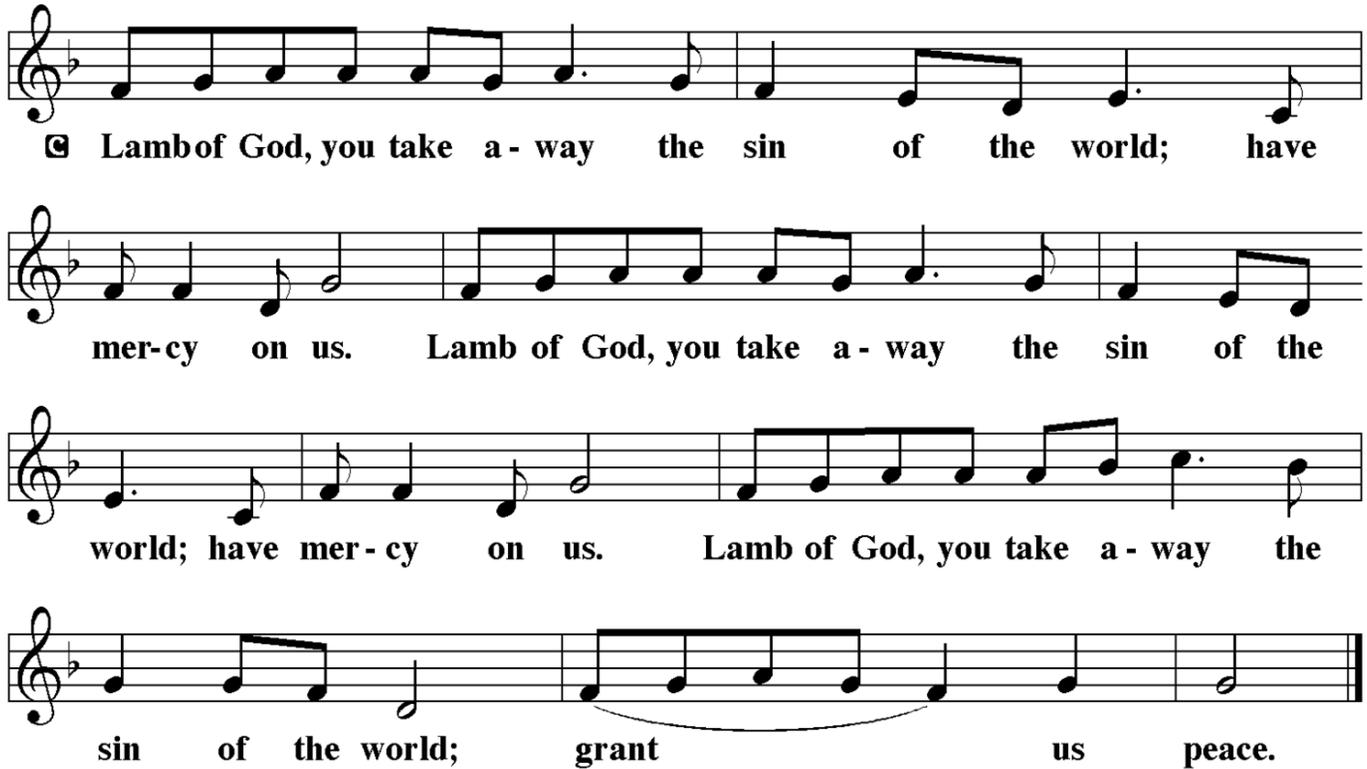
### **THE LORD'S PRAYER (In Unison)**

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 and ever. Amen.

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Come with joy to Emmanuel's table.  
Let us share in God's banquet of hope and love.

## AGNUS DEI



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## DISTRIBUTION

*The Sacrament will be distributed by Intinction, pulpit side first. Please move into the center aisle, proceed to the Pastor, and receive the bread in your open hand. Then turn to the assistant, where you may dip the host into the wine and partake, returning to your seat by the side aisle. The lectern side will follow, then the choir. Those unable to come forward may receive the Sacrament in their pews. Those who do not desire to receive the Sacrament may come forward to receive a blessing.*

**COMMUNION HYMN**      “Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”      #488

## TABLE BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God of abundance, we give you thanks that in this holy meal you have invited us to feast with you and one another. May our words and our work invite others into your bountiful grace. Now send us from your table to proclaim your goodness, even as we await the glorious coming of Christ our Savior. **Amen**

## SENDING

### **BLESSING**

May God, who gathers us in love,

lead you in pathways of righteousness and justice.

May God, who knows us more deeply than we know ourselves,

lead you in pathways of forgiveness and freedom.

May God, who fills us with good things,

lead you in pathways of equity and abundance.

The blessing of the holy Trinity,

the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen**

### **SENDING HYMN**

“Fling Wide the Door”

#259

### **THE DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **POSTLUDE**

“Christians, Be Joyful”

J. S. Bach

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**Altar flowers** are presented in memory of Jack Taylor by Skip and Family

**Chancel flowers** are presented in memory of Francis & Margaret Piacine by Danielle Richards and Nate Dixon

**Bulletins** are presented in honor of Jordan J. Post on his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday by Loved Ones.

**\*Today's anthem** is presented in honor of Joshua Clarke on his confirmation by his parents and sister. (1997)

**SERVING TODAY (12/15/19)**

**8:00 AM**

**LECTOR: Deb Moyer; COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Kay Weidensaul;**

**10:30 AM**

**LECTOR: Doug Travor; COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Sue Schenck;**

**USHERS: Sue Reier & Karen Travor; GREETER: Doug Travor;**

**COUNTERS: Joyce O'Rourke, Gloria Diewechter, & Dana Jenkins;**

**ALTAR GUILD: Barbara Lafko & Fern Moyer**

**SERVING NEXT SUNDAY (12/22/19)**

**8:00 AM**

**LECTOR: Gail Rarick; COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Kay Weidensaul;**

**10:30 AM**

**LECTOR: Robert Schuld II; COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Chris Long;**

**USHERS: Scott Butler & Brian Miller; GREETER: Doug Travor;**

**COUNTERS: Connie Teter, Jean Premich, & Barb Sterner;**

**ALTAR GUILD: Hope Clarke & Madelyn Knecht**

**CALENDAR**

Sunday, December 15	8:00 AM	Worship Breakfast Gathering Angel Tree Gifts Wrapping
	9:15 AM	Adult Forum
	10:30 AM	Worship
Monday, December 16	6:30 PM	Finance
Wednesday, December 17	6:00 PM	Bell Choir
	7:00 PM	Chancel Choir
Saturday, December 21	5:30 PM	Worship
Sunday, December 22	8:00 AM	Worship
	9:15 AM	Adult Forum
	9:15 AM	Property
	10:30 AM	Worship
	4:00 PM	Christmas Concert

## **CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Our Annual Christmas Concert will be held on Sunday, December 22, at 4 PM. Selections will be offered by the Bell and Chancel Choirs and several instrumentalists. Come and bring your family and friends!

## **REFRESHMENTS NEEDED!**

Refreshments and good fellowship following our Christmas Concert is a tradition here at St. Paul's. If you can bring a snack (or snacks) to share, please see the sign-up sheet in the gathering room!

## **CHURCH FLOWER PRICES**

As of January 1, Freed's Flowers will increase their prices: The minimum price for a Chancel Basket will be \$25.00 and Altar Flowers will cost \$30.00. If you would like to order a special arrangement for a given date, you can do that by contacting Freed's directly; just mark the flower book accordingly. Please see Sue Schenck with any questions.

## **PASTOR ON VACATION**

Pastor Mike will be on vacation and will not lead worship on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Reverend Norman Drescher of Hamburg, PA, will lead worship on those above dates. If you or someone you love needs pastoral care in an emergency during this time, please call 717-649-3532 and leave a detailed message.

## **THANK YOU ALL!**

Our thanks to the members of St. Paul's for supporting our Christmas Dinner last Sunday. The meal was delicious and the fellowship was heart-warming. Again, thank you!  
From the Men of St. Paul's and the Women of the ELCA.

## SHARING THE SIGN OF PEACE!

The sign of peace is a wonderful part of our liturgy. As God has sent his peace to us in Jesus Christ, we delight in sharing that peace with one another. During this cold & flu season, let us share God's peace in ways that are not likely to spread illness from physical contact. You may even choose to "signal" your peace to one another without leaving your pew. Please remember that while winter colds and flu are troublesome to most people, they can literally threaten the lives of others.

## CHRISTMAS DECORATING

The final decorating of the church for Christmas will be done at 10 A.M. on Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup>. Help will be needed to arrange the large number of poinsettia plants that have been ordered. Please join us!

## GROCERY CARDS FOR OUR FOOD PANTRY

One of the ways you can help the Orwigsburg Food Pantry during the cold winter months is by donating gift cards from our local grocery stores. These cards purchased in any amount and donations will allow our food pantry to purchase any item which they may need when they need it. They are an easy and effective way to help our food pantry help those in need. If you are interested in donating grocery gift cards, please tape your receipt to the gift card's back, and place it in the offering plate or in one of the alms' boxes located in our narthex. Thank you!

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