

WELCOME TO WORSHIP!



**So you are no longer a slave but a
CHILD, and if a child then also an
HEIR, through God.**

Galatians 4:7, NRSV

WHAT CHILD IS THIS:
HE TURNS SLAVES INTO SONS
Second Sunday after Christmas

ST. PAUL'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH | *Wisconsin Rapids, WI*

January 2, 2022



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

If you are a visitor to our church, we extend you a warm welcome. We are happy you are here. If you have any questions, just ask an usher or other volunteer. Please also fill out our Connect Card to let us know how we might continue to serve you.

SERVICE NOTES FOR THIS SUNDAY



The ability to appreciate Christmas is directly proportional to the understanding of whom Christmas is for. Christmas is only meant for those who are held captive by our enemies, sin and death. Christmas is for people who have no power of their own to free themselves from those enemies. Christmas is for people who patiently wait for God to set them free. God's Christmas gift is for slaves, but it does not leave them that way. Jesus takes those born in slavery and turns them into sons and daughters of God. He makes us heirs of a glorious, eternal inheritance. He sets us free from a forced servitude to our enemies and replaces it with joyful service to our loving Father.

Today's service includes a celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. For personal preparation, consider using the Questions for Examination on page 7 of this service folder or Christian Questions on page 295 of the blue hymnal.

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THE SERVICE: SETTING ONE

Starting on page 154 of the blue hymnal

Please understand that there have been some unexpected delays with the release of the Service Builder. This software would help us create a more complete service folder like we have grown used to. Until we have access to that, we will be producing service folders that rely much more heavily on using the hymnal as part of the worship experience.

All hymns and page numbers, unless otherwise noted, correspond to the blue hymnal.

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising | 362

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION

*on page 154
Beginning with "If we claim..."*

LORD HAVE MERCY

on page 156

GLORY BE TO GOD

on page 157

The Word

The service continues on page 160.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled us with the new light of the Word who became flesh and lived among us. Let the light of our faith shine in all that we do; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

FIRST READING

Genesis 17:1-7

The Lord promised Abram that his descendants would become a great nation whom God Almighty would love as his own sons and daughters.

After the reading:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 148 (in the front of the hymnal)

Pastor will sing the verses; please join in the refrain and the "Glory be to the Father..."

The service continues on page 160.

SECOND LESSON

Galatians 4:4-7

Christ has freed us from slavery and made us God's children and heirs.

After the reading:

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. He has remembered his mercy and his faithfulness to the house of Israel.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Alleluia! (Psalm 98:3 EHV)

GOSPEL

Luke 1:68-75

God's people, held captive by their enemies, are redeemed and set free.

After the reading of the Gospel:

This is the Gospel of our Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

The Only Son from Heaven | 383

SERMON

Christmas Is for Children

Stand

CREED

Nicene Creed on page 162

Be seated

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

on page 164

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe that your coming as our Savior was foretold by men of old. Like Simeon, we rejoice to know that the Scriptures have been fulfilled and that you are our Savior from sin.

Establish our hearts in the truth that your perfect sacrifice has purchased pardon and peace for us.

Keep us ready at all times to depart this life with joy, certain of the assurance that you have redeemed us with your blood.

Send the light of your gospel into hearts everywhere, and bring many to faith in you as their Savior.

Direct also the governments of the world so that people everywhere may worship and serve you without fear of persecution. Grant that those who have been brought to faith will remain close to you and be brought into everlasting life.

Give your children confidence to praise you in all things and at all times.

Special Prayers and Intercessions

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent Prayer

Direct our footsteps in this new year by your holy Word. By your love, help us to lead lives that conform to your holy will.

Hear us, Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

OFFERING

Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. Guests, please don't feel obligated to take part in the offering. We're just happy you're here as our guest to hear and take to heart the message of Jesus. If the gospel message has moved you to give and you would like an electronic option, you can scan this QR code with your mobile phone. It will connect you with our website's giving page.



MUSICAL OFFERING

Here in the Dark

The Sacrament

Stand

PREFACE

on page 165

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

on page 167

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

on page 168

LORD'S PRAYER

on page 168

WORD OF INSTITUTION

on page 168

O CHRIST, LAMB OF GOD

on page 169

DISTRIBUTION

Be seated and await the direction of the ushers.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

- † *Do I believe that I am a sinner in need of forgiveness?*
- † *Do I believe that Jesus died on the cross to win forgiveness for me?*
- † *Do I believe that Jesus offers his true body and blood with the bread and wine in this sacrament?*
- † *Do I believe this sacrament strengthens my faith and strengthens me to live a God-pleasing life?*
- † *Am I a member of a church that belongs to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS)?*
- † *If you answered “no” to any of these questions, please hold off on communing with us today. Following worship, one of the pastors would be happy to explain why we ask you to do this.*

For further examination questions, see page 295 of the blue hymnal.

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

*To be sung during the Distribution
I Come, O Savior, to Your Table | 670*

Stand

RESPONSES

on page 170

BLESSING

Be seated

on page 170

CLOSING HYMN

Blessed Be the God of Israel | 954



TAKE HOME QUESTIONS

1. It had been 24 years since God had first made a covenant with Abram, but many of its details were still unclear. In Genesis 17, God finally gives more details of this covenant. What had waiting for God to act on his timeline taught Abram?
2. Zechariah was familiar with waiting, too. After not believing the angel Gabriel's announcement that he would have a child, Zechariah couldn't speak for nine months. Reread his song in the Gospel. What had that waiting taught Zechariah?
3. Paul was speaking to Christians who were still trying to become children of God through the law. In what ways do we still seek to do the same? How can that make it hard for us to fully accept the gift God gives us at Christmas?
4. God fulfilling his promises creates a response in the heart of a believer. Abraham fell to the ground laughing with joy (Genesis 17:17). Paul speaks of the Spirit-filled heart crying out "Abba, Father" (Galatians 4:6). The first words out of Zechariah's mouth were praise and his song, the Benedictus (Luke 1:68-79). List some examples of how our Spirit-filled hearts might respond to God making us his children.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOIN US FOR EPIPHANY

January 6 | 6:30 PM

We will be holding a special Epiphany service on the actual day of Epiphany, January 6. Epiphany is often called the Gentile Christmas, because it is then that we begin to see God's plan of salvation broaden to include those outside of the nation of Israel. Throughout church history, this day has been marked with special worship services. Please join us for our service this Thursday.

LEARN ABOUT THE YOUTH RALLY *Jan. 9 | 12:00 PM*

Parents & teens are invited to the next meeting of St. Paul's Youth (SPYs). In addition to fun and fellowship, you will learn more about the WELS International Youth Rally, which will be held this summer in Tennessee, and the steps necessary to get our youth there.



DIG DEEPER INTO THE BIBLE

Jan. 5 | 6:30 PM

The Bible Book Group invites you to work through the Bible with them, book by book. They are currently finishing up some minor prophets and will be moving on to the New Testament books of 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Come to the Resource Center on Wednesday to learn more.

COME TO THE FOUNDATIONS COURSE

Jan. 13 | 6:30 PM

Whether you've been at St. Paul's for weeks or decades, *Foundations of the Christian Faith* will teach you something new. You will be refreshed with the core teachings of the Bible and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). As the name suggests, the twelve lessons cover the basics of Christianity and what we believe and teach at St. Paul's. The course materials also include a handy index of key terms, Luther's Small Catechism, and a robust appendix of articles, charts, and diagrams covering topics from ancient Bible manuscripts to differences between modern churches. The classes begin on January 13 and are held on Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM in the Resource Center. If that day and time do not work for you, please contact Pastor Plagenz to see if other arrangements can be made: pastorplagenz@stpaulswr.org or 920-689-3036.

NEW YEAR. NEW HABITS.

Jan. 9 | 9:15-10:15AM

The new year is a great time to start a new habit, like coming for Family Bible Hour on Sundays. Your family will grow deeper in their faith. Adults and older teens attend the Bible study in the cafeteria, while their children attend either Sunday School (grades 3K-6) or Confirmation Class (grades 7-8). Classes will resume next Sunday, and there is always room for more students.

MONDAY SERVICES RESUME JANUARY 10

This year, with our holiday worship schedule extending through Epiphany, our Monday night service will not resume until January 10. If you miss Sunday worship for any reason, the Monday services are another great opportunity to gather with fellow believers, hear God's Word, and receive the Sacrament.

TOUR OUR LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Jan. 9

Northland Lutheran High School (NLHS) is holding tours on Sunday, Jan. 9. Look around and see what NLHS has to offer. Families with 7th and 8th graders are especially encouraged to attend—they would love to add you to the ranks of the Wildcats! Sign up for a timeslot at NLHS.org. Freshman Registration is January 18-19, 2022.

PICK UP YOUR ENVELOPES

If you haven't already, please pick up your 2022 contribution envelopes from your mailslot. When you do, please do a quick shuffle through your box to ensure all the envelopes have the same number and that the number matches the number on the box label. If something is amiss, please contact the church office. If there are multiple envelope holders in your family, all of the envelopes may not have fit in your mailslot, so please check on the table immediately across from the mailslots for overflow. If you normally use envelopes but can't find a new set, please let us know.

REMINDER: FILL OUT A CONNECT CARD

Our Peter Plan begins this week. You filling out a Connect Card regularly is essential. It will save our elders and volunteers work. Even if you sit in the same spot each week, the volunteers processing reports and/or doing follow up may attend a different service than you do and not know you were there. If they do know, then they may need to redo reports to note your attendance. Your cooperation will save them time and save you the aggravation of receiving an unnecessary call. Thank you for your help in this matter.

CALENDAR

January 2-9

SUNDAY 8:00 AM Worship
 10:30 AM Worship

TUESDAY 6:45 AM Men's Bible Study at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
 9:45 AM Women Walking in the Word in the Resource Center
 6:30 pm Unified Board Meetings

WEDNESDAY 8:55 AM School Chapel Service
 6:30 PM Bible Book Group in the Resource Center

THURSDAY 7:00 AM Men's Small Group at From the Ground Up Coffee Shop
 6:30 PM Epiphany Worship Service

SUNDAY 8:00 AM Worship
 9:15 AM Bible Study in the cafeteria
 9:15 AM Catechism Class in the West Wing
 9:15 AM Sunday School (grades 3K-6)
 10:30 AM Worship
 12:00 PM St. Paul's Youth (SPYs)

MONDAY 6:30 PM Worship

ATTENDANCE & OFFERING REPORT

Last Week's Attendance: 120

Christmas Eve: 232

Christmas Day: 109

From July 1, 2021 to December 30, 2021

Actual ministry income: \$ 582,817

Actual cost of ministry: \$ 560,180

Mortgage balance: \$1,186,570

Organ Fund balance: \$ 47,187



Epiphany

WORSHIP SERVICE

Thursday, January 6

At 6:30PM



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