“No matter who you are,
No matter where you are
on life’s journey,
You are welcome here.”
Welcome to Worship
at St. Paul United Church of Christ

We are glad you are here!

Christmas Eve Worship 4:30pm & 7pm

Information for our friends ~

• Our **9 am Sunday Morning Worship Service** is inspired with hymns, scripture and a uplifting, theologically-based sermon. The service is both in-person and online. It can be watched live or on-demand on Facebook, YouTube, and stpaulucc.org, and heard on **KSTL-690 AM radio** & streamed on Jubilee690.com at 9am & 9pm Sundays. We hope you can join us soon!

• Please send prayer requests by email to swilhelm@stpaulucc.org or call the church office at 618-233-3303.

• If you are listening or watching online, please call, email or message us!

• If you would like a call or know someone who might need a call, please let us know.

• To share a financial gift, you may place your offering in the box in the narthex, send us a check, or go to [stpaulucc.org](http://stpaulucc.org) for online giving. Contact the church office to set up automatic withdrawal.

• When you or a loved one is admitted to a hospital, please ask the hospital to notify the church office. If you have a new addition to your family, if your address or phone changes, please contact the church office so we can keep our records current.

• Due to Covid, we ask that you wear a mask during the entirety of your time in the building. We also ask that you sit every-other row to maintain physical distance. Thank you!

WORSHIP LEADERS

**Senior Pastor** .......................................................... Rev. Michelle Torigian

**Music Director** .......................................................................................... Dr. Bill Wade

Like us on --

*St Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois*

Watch videos on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/ stpauluccbelleville](https://www.youtube.com/ stpauluccbelleville)
ENTRY INTO WORSHIP (inspired by Psalm 97)

We lift our voices
with all of creation
in praise and wonder
for all that will be
born this night.

We are listening
to all that can change
and all that will change
with this birth.
Light will dawn
and there will be rejoicing on the coastlands
and way up high in the mountains.

The landscape of our imagination will shift
and it will be glorious.
It is this change that we have
been waiting for. We have been
waiting so long.
O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; O come ye to Bethlehem! Come, and behold him, of a virgin, a mortal he comes; very God, be all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all sus, to thee be all glory given; Word of the Father, born the King of angels! gotten, not created! O come, let us adore him; O come, let now in flesh appearing! us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!
Luke 1:26-38 (NRSV)
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” The angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.
Angels We Have Heard on High  (GLORIA)

Text: French carol; trans. James Chadwick, 1860
Music: French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

1. Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?

3. Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Refrain

Gloria...
CHILDREN’S CHAT with Pastor Michelle

ANTHEM  
**Christmas Canon of Peace**  
Based on Pachelbel's *Canon in D*  
Text: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow  
arr. by Ruth Morris Gray

SCRIPTURE READING  
Luke 1:39-56 (NRSV)  
In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leapt for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”  
And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.”  
And Mary remained with her for about three months and then returned to her home.
1 O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mary and, gathered all above,
3 How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
4 O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.

Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!
SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:1-7 (NRSV)
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. 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. 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.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE
A warm glow spreads throughout our world declaring that God is with us. The light which extends from the farthest reaches of our earth to the neighbor next door alerts us that we are not alone throughout these long winter nights.

Tonight we proclaim the hope that inspires us to keep moving forward on our journeys. We recognize the peace that extends from our souls into the world. We celebrate the joy that fills our spirits with excitement. And we herald the love passed between the Christ and us and between our neighbors and us.

As the Christ Candle and its companion candles are kindled, we celebrate the compassion which will overcome hatred and the kindness which will overcome isolation.

May the light seen tonight fill our souls throughout the new year and beyond, enlivening our spirits throughout eternity.
Amen.
Joy to the World

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king; let every heart prepare him room,
   and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
   and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2. Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
   the ground; he comes to make his blessings flow
   and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
   and heaven and nature sing.

3. No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest and heaven and nature sing,
   far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found.
   joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness
   and wonders of his love,
   and wonders of his love.
   found, far as, far as the curse is found.

   
  
SCRIPTURE READING Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)
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. 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.” 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!”

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. 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. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

POEM What It Was

SERMON Mindfulness Rev. Michelle Torigian
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

1. Hark! The herald angels sing,
2. Christ, by highest heav’n adored;
3. Hail the heav’n-born Prince of Peace!

“Glory to the new-born King! Peace on earth and mercy mild,
Christ, the ever-last’ning Lord! Hold him come, offspring of the Virgin’s womb,
Hail the Sun of Righteousness! All he brings, ris’n with healing in his wings.

Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no

of the skies; with the angelic host proclaim,
Deity, pleased as man with us to dwell,
more may die, born to raise us from the earth,

“Christ is born in Beth-lehem!” Hark! The herald
Jesus, our Em-man-u-el. Hark! The herald
born to give us second birth. Hark! The herald

angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”
angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”
angels sing, “Glory to the new-born King!”
REFLECTION OF GIVING
In this season of light and love, we share our gifts of time, talent and treasures, knowing that everything we do makes a difference.

We pray together:

All: Loving God, Holy Light, your gifts make the world stronger. Through the light that we have seen in Christ, we are excited to contribute our gifts. May they build your kingdom, your realm here on earth. Amen.

SPECIAL MUSIC
Still, Still, Still
arr. Anna Laura Page
Mary Lu Bretsch, handbell soloist

SHARING OF THE LIGHT
Where has light come into your life in 2021? Each day, the sun rises, attempting to break through clouds and warm our earth. Each year, the Christ is born, sharing God’s light in a world that can be chilly at times. Jesus told us that we are the light of the world. We have the opportunity to hold the light of Christ and share it with our siblings across our world. Where has light come into your life in 2021? And how will you share it in 2022?
**CAROL**  
*Silent Night! (STILLE NACHT)*  
Text: Joseph Mohr, 1816;  
Music: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1818

1. Silent night, holy night!  
   All is calm, all is bright
2. Stillle Nacht, heilige Nacht!  
   Alles schläf ein sam wacht
3. Silent night, holy night!  
   Shepherds quake at the sight;
4. Silent night, holy night!  
   Son of God, love's pure light

'round yon virgin mother and child!  
Holly Infant, so tender and mild,

nur das trau te hoch heilige Paar.  
Holler Kna be im lockigen Haar;

glo ries stream from heaven a far,  
heavenly hosts sing 'Al le lu ia:

radiant beams from thy ho ly face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,

sleep in heavenly peace,  
sleep in heavenly peace.

schlaf in him mli scher Ruh,  
schlaf in him mli scher Ruh!

Christ the Savior is born;  
Christ the Savior is born!

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
SCRIPTURE READING    John 1:1-9 (NRSV)
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION
Carry the light inside of you into the world to bring joy where it is needed.

Bring the love of this newborn child into the whole wide world so that all might see their own image in God’s glory.

This child was born for you. It was born for the hope of this whole world. God is with us. Alleluia! Alleluia!

SENDING MUSIC    Postlude based on "Adeste Fideles"
arr. by Gordon Young (1919-1998)
CHRISTMAS GIFTS

IN MEMORY OF . . .
William W. Lindauer, by Marlene and Family.
Leroy Kirsch, by his wife Dolly, grandchildren & great grandchildren.
Leonora & Armin A. Ripplemeyer, by Peggy & David Berger.
Bill Strohm, by Gloria Strohm & family.
Patricia Buckrod, Joseph and Lourene Buckrod, Clarence & Edna Georg,
by Gary Buckrod & family.
John & Beulah Komeshak and Wayne & Rene Wagner by Rusty and Sandy Wagner.
David Sutherland, by Paul & Sue Sutherland.
My husband, Russ Scheibel, by Mona Scheibel.
Our Papa, Russ Scheibel, by Izzy, Amia, Abram & Stili.
My parents, Marvin & Rosemary Henke, by Mona Scheibel.
My parents, Walter & Marcella Peter, by Eileen Peter.
Lt. Col (ret.) William J. & Goldie Thomas, Guy D. Thomas and August (Bud) & Linda
Licourt, by James W. Thomas, Marilae `Thomas Perkins & Kiplin Perkins II.

IN HONOR OF . . .
Our Family, by Bruce & Pam Elser.

POINSETTIAS . . .
In memory of Helen and Art Burgott, Lillian & Jacob Ryseff and Kurt & Jacob
Mueller, by Louis and Carolyn Ryseff and James & Dr. Julia.
In memory of Mary Anne & Lucretia Walton, by Larry Walton.
In memory of Ken E. & Michael D. Nettleton and all of my family & friends, by
Vi Nettleton.
In honor of my cousin, Marilyn for her love and support, by Vi Nettleton.
In memory of my parents, A. Lloyd & Martha Culley, by Jane Bonaldi.
In memory of Vincent Torigian, by Laureen Torigian, Pastor Michelle, Lori & family.
In celebration of Pastor Michelle’s Ministry at St. Paul, by Laureen Torigian.
In memory of Mary McCreight, by Edie Elliott.
In celebration of our 35th anniversary on December 27, by Peggy & Scott Burke.
In memory of Elmer & Sue Bretsch, by The Darwin Bretsch Family.
In memory of our parents, Edward & Billy Ruth Pelc, by Lynne, Bruce, Lana & Scott
In memory of Henry & Gladys Caughman, by Wayne Caughman.
In memory of my parents, John & Emma Eiff and my husband Royce Braden, by
Jolene Braden.
In memory of Dave Sherland and Ken & June Dove, by Deanna & Larry