"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Luke 1

Sunday, December 19, 2021
Advent 4

“No matter who you are,
No matter where you are on life’s journey,
You are welcome here.”
Welcome and Announcements   
Rev. Michelle Torigian

Opening Voluntary   
Vom Himmel Hoch
Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706)

Chant   
Creator of the Stars of Night

Lighting of the Advent Candle   
Avery White

Hymn   
Candlelighting Song, Verse 4  (see next page)

Invocation   
In December Darkness (poem by Ann Weems, adapted)

Pastor:  The whole world waits in December darkness for a glimpse of the Light of God. Even those who snarl “Humbug!” and chase away the carolers have been seen looking toward the skies.  
People: The one who declared he never would forgive has for given, and those who left home have returned,  
Pastor: and even wars are halted, if briefly, as the whole world looks starward.  
People: In the December darkness we peer from our windows watching for an angel with rainbow wings to announce the Hope of the World  
Pastor: Let us worship God.

*Opening Hymn   
Angels from the Realms of Glory (see page 4)
*Hymn  Season of Longing and Anticipation (Candlelighting Song, Verse 4)*

![Sheet music for the hymn](image)

In this season of longing and anticipation, God is at work in the heart of creation, offering all new life and salvation: A woman answers God's call! Open our eyes to sights and wonder; open our ears to hear your word; open our hearts to live with each other in love, Incarnate Lord!

*Prayer of Reflection  In Search of Our Kneeling Places*  
(poem by Ann Weems, adapted)

**Pastor:** In each heart lies a Bethlehem,

**People:** An inn where we must ultimately answer whether there is room or not.

**Pastor:** When we are Bethlehem-bound, we experience our own advent in his.

**People:** When we are Bethlehem-bound, we can no longer look the other way, conveniently not seeing stars, not hearing angel voices. We can no longer excuse ourselves by busily tending our sheep or our kingdoms.

**Pastor:** This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing the Lord has made known to us.

**People:** In the midst of shopping sprees, let's ponder in our hearts the Gift of Gifts. Through the tinsel, let's look for the gold of the Christmas Star.

**Pastor:** In the excitement and confusion, in the merry chaos, let's listen for the brush of angels' wings.

**All:** This Advent, let's go to Bethlehem and find our kneeling places.
Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Sts. 1-3, James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.,
St. 4, Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857

REGENCY SQUARE
Henry T. Smart, 1813-79

All in Harmony: 1. Angels, from the realms of glory, Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Unison Women: 2. Shepherds, in the fields abide, Watching o’er your flocks by night,
Unison Men: 3. Sages, leave your contemplations, Brighter visions beam afar;
All in Unison: 4. All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,

Once you sang creation’s story, Now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
God with us is now residing, Yonder shines the infant light.
Seek the great desire of nations, You have seen his natal star.
Evermore your voices raising To the eternal Three in One.

Come and worship, come and worship, Worship Christ, the newborn king.
Assurance of God’s Grace
The Child Is Born Again (poem by Ann Weems, adapted)

Pastor: Each year the Child is born again. Each year some new heart finally hears, finally sees, finally knows love.
People: And in heaven there is great rejoicing!
Pastor: There is a festival of stars!
People: There is celebration among the angels!
Pastor: For in the finding of one lost sheep, the heart of the Shepherd is glad, and Christmas has happened once more.
People: The Child is born anew and one more knee is bowed!
Pastor: Friends, let us rejoice in the good news:
People: In Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven and all is made new!
Thanks be to God.
Pastor: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Song of Praise

Lift Up Your Heads (Verse 3)

Re-deem-er, come! I o-pen wide my heart to thee; here,
Lord, a-bide. Let me thy in-ner pres-ence feel; thy
grace and love in me re-veal.

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:39-45
Donna Davis
Musical Meditation -

**Kneeling in Bethlehem:**
A Festival of Readings and Carols for Advent and Christmas
*Musical arrangements and original music by Michael Burkhardt*
*Readings form “Kneeling in Bethlehem” by Ann Weems*

**Carol**
All My Heart Again Rejoices
(Rejoice, Rejoice)

**Reading**
The Decree—Dick Erdmann

**Carol**
Morning Star

**Reading**
Sitting on the Hillsides—Donna Davis

**Carol**
Shepherd’s Carol

**Reading**
Unexpected - Sue Hoffmann

**Carol**
Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head

**Reading**
God So Loved the World—Fred Hotz

**Hymn**
Prepare the Royal Highway (see page 7)
Verse 1 – All
Verse 2—Choir
Verse 3—Choir
Verse 4—All
Hymn

Frans Mikael Franzén
Tr. Lutheran Book of Worship

Prepare the Royal Highway
BEREDEN VÅG FÖR HERRAN
17th century Swedish folk tune

All: 1. Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!
All: 4. His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heav’n above.

Let every hill and valley A level road appear!
His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glory, Foretold in sacred story:
So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding:

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s word!
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s word!

*Choir: 2. God’s people, see him coming: Your own eternal king!
All: 3. Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!

Palm branches strewn before him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet every nation Its tribute too may bring.

God’s promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you!
All lands will bow before him; Their voices join your singing:

Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s word!
Hosanna to the Lord, For he fulfills God’s word!
Pastoral Prayer and Lord’s Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

*Closing Hymn  *Angels We Have Heard on High* (An interlude follows each stanza)  *(See next page)*

*Blessing of the Gifts* (Unison):
With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts. We rejoice in your goodness and love. Let our gifts point to your presence in the world, and further your dream for all of your children through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.

*Benediction*  
Let us go forth with eyes to see and ears to hear and voices to proclaim:
In the ordinary and the vulnerable: God-with-us!
In the challenge of the unexpected: God-with-us!
In love giving life in justice and mercy: God-with-us!
In the work of peace: God-with-us!
Let us go forth sharing the love of Christ and celebrating the Christ who abides with us in our midst. Amen!

Postlude  *Noel II*  
Jean-Jacques Beauvarlet-Charpentier (1734-1794)
Angels We Have Heard on High

French carol
Tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, London, 1862

18th-century French carol

Men: 1. Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,

Women: 2. Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?

All: 3. Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing:

And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.
What the glad some tidings be Which inspire your heav'nly song?
Come adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new born King.

Refrain: All in Harmony

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo;
Participants:

Pastor:
Rev. Michelle Torigian

Music Director:
Dr. Bill Wade

Readers:
Dick Erdmann, Donna Davis, Sue Hoffmann and Fred Hotz

Choir:

Organists:
Jan Spencer, Dr. Bill Wade

Glory Ringers:
Mary Lu Bretsch, Karen Boesch, Ruth Klingel, Susan Relfe

Instrumentalists:
Maggie Watts, violin I; Victoria Voumard, violin II; Savannah Brannan, viola; Missy Banker, cello; Colleen McCracken, flute; Melissa Gustafson-Hinds, oboe
Soprano Soloist: Sharifa Black,
Alto Soloist: Caetlyn Van Buren
ST PAUL UCC
HOLIDAY SCHEDULE
Blue Christmas Service
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21
7PM SERVICE
FOR OUR FRIENDS AND THEIR LOVED ONES WHO ARE GOING THROUGH A TOUGH TIME DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Christmas Eve
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24
4:30PM AND 7PM SERVICES

All services held in the Sanctuary at St. Paul UCC, 115 West B Street, Belleville
or stream at stpaulucc.org
All are welcome!

Today at 3:00 pm
St. Paul UCC Sanctuary

Free will offering
Masks required

THE GATEWAY RINGERS,
ST. LOUIS PREMIER HANDBELL GROUP
Sponsored by St. Paul UCC Fine Arts
St. Paul members have always enjoyed getting together and playing cards. What was the name of our 2006 group?

**Archives Artifacts ~ St. Paul trivia from the desk of Roger Henke**

Gus Kuether             Bev Juenger  
Lori Coleman           Karen Zaber  
Al Stahl                    Audrey Krummrich  
Carol Hotz                Joyce Maurer  
Shirley Martin           Lev Reynolds  
Scott Schmidt, brother of Steve Schmidt

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

Please send prayer requests to pastormichelle@stpaulucc.org or call 618-233-3303

Praying for your health and well being!

**Sundays**
- 9am Traditional Worship  
- 10am Coffee & Donuts  
(Culinaire’s Breakfast 3rd Sunday)

Here is how to stay in touch with St. Paul

1) **Watch the services and check for event updates on FACBOOK** - Like us at St. Paul United Church of Christ Belleville, IL
2) **Go to stpaulucc.org** - and you will find: videos of services, sermons, archives, and much more!!

Like us on Facebook
St Paul United Church of Christ, Belleville, Illinois

Watch videos on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/

**Weekly Attendance**

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<th>9am Attendance</th>
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<td>Dec 5, 2021</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>+ Online Participants</td>
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**General Fund**

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Offering for 12/5/2021 - $10,002