

**St. Pauls  
United Church of Christ**

**The Candles of**

***Hope***

***Peace***

***Joy***

***Love***

**Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Fund Offering**

**Sunday, December 22, 2024**

**St. Pauls United Church of Christ**

# Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

(\* = YOU MAY STAND.)

## RINGING THE BELLS AND WELCOMING THE LIGHT

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PRELUDE:** “Prelude on ‘Morning Song’,” arr. Charles Callahan

**CENTERING SONG:** “O Come, O Come Emmanuel,” vrs. 4 #119

### **\*CALL TO WORSHIP:**

In this weary world,

**we sing of joy.**

In this fragile world,

**we lift each other up.**

In this beautiful world,

**we look for God.**

In this tender world,

**we hold onto hope.**

This is the invitation of faith.

So in this time of worship,

may we sing, lift up, look for, and hold onto our with-us God.

**With hope in our hearts, amen!**

**\*OPENING HYMN:** “Hope is Worth the Risk” INSERT

### **LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE:**

Pastor: In a weary and worn world, how do we begin again? Where do we start?

Leader: Let us begin with tenderness. Let us begin with our hearts on our sleeve. Let us begin from a place of vulnerability and hope.

Let us begin with love.

Pastor: Yes, let us start with love.

Leader: Today we light the candles of hope, peace, joy, and love. May the warmth of these lights be our cornerstone. May the truth in these lights help us begin again.

### **\*CALL TO CONFESSION**

Friends, Hope can feel slippery. One moment we may believe that change will come, that good will win, that the suffering of today will not be the suffering of tomorrow. The next moment we can receive word of more gun violence, of more mudslinging, or yet another missile headed toward a group of humans. Hope can feel slippery. Fortunately for us, God's grace is not. No matter what we are able to hold, God is able to hold onto us. So trusting that God's grace does not let us go, join me in the prayer of confession:

### **\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**Gracious God, You paint pictures of what could be, but we declare those visions impossible. You speak of the lion lying down with the lamb, but we spout skepticism and uncertainty. You dream of a more just day, but we poke holes in the plan, unable to fathom that horizon. Forgive us for losing sight of hope. Forgive us for assuming that what we see is all there is. Open up our hearts to see the world as you see it. Open up our hearts to risk hope, to dream dreams, and to not be afraid of either. With gratitude we pray, amen.**

### **\*WORDS OF FORGIVENESS**

Friends, No matter what you hold onto, and no matter what you let slip through your hands, God is holding onto you. That good news will never change. So hear and believe the good news of the Gospel: Today is a new day. Today, we have reason to hope. Today, we are forgiven. And the same will be true tomorrow. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen

## **SHARING OF GOD'S PEACE**

Pastor: The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**ALL:** And, also, with you.

## **READING FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE**

**Liturgist's Reading: Matthew 1: 18-25 (P. 1218)**

**Pastor's Reading: Luke 1:46-55 (P. 1213)**

**SERMON: "Hope is Worth the Risk" Pastor Emma Sancomb**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

...We ask these things in the name of Jesus who taught us to say when we pray:

### **THE 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.**

**\*SERMON HYMN: "My Soul Give Glory" #130**

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH:**

We believe in a God who gives us reason to hope,  
a God who fills our nights with stars,  
who follows winter with spring,  
who dwells with and among us.

We believe that this God has dreams for creation,  
dreams of justice like a mighty stream  
and swords that will be beaten into plowshares.

Therefore, we push cynicism aside.

We risk vulnerability.

We hold onto hope,  
and we declare:

“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”

## **INVITATION TO THE OFFERING**

Leader: We believe in the God of love, and God’s confidence in us to carry forth the mission of loving and caring for this community and the wider community. Let us now share our gifts and resources so that we may continue to walk humbly with God and our neighbors.

## **OFFERTORY**



(Please place your offering in the plates as they are passed, give through your usual method, or click on the QR code to the left by using your cell phone camera and clicking on the St. Pauls Giving website.)

**\*DOXOLOGY**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow  
Praise God all creatures here below  
Praise God for all that love has done  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit one. Amen.*

**\*DEDICATION**

Leader: Loving God - we dedicate these gifts that have been shared for the welfare of your beloved community. May they bring peace into the world and serve as a signal that God is with us, that a day of peace can be known as we become peacemakers in the name of Christ. Amen.

**\*CLOSING HYMN:** "People Look East" #142

**\*BENEDICTION**

As you leave this place,  
may you have the wisdom to lean on one another.  
May you have the courage to hold onto hope,  
the compassion to do the good that is yours to do,  
and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing.  
For in a world full of dead ends,  
Advent invites us to begin again.  
So start here.  
Start now.  
Start with love and begin again.  
In the name of Christ,  
our new beginning,  
go in peace.

**POSTLUDE:** Magnificat Fugue on the 1st Tone, no. 17, J. Pachelbel

+ Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

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## RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL DEVOTIONS

### Lectionary Readings for

December 29, 2024

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

~Luke 2:10

~Isaiah 9:2-3

~Ps 148

~Matt 2:10

### LITURGIST SCHEDULE:

Dec 22 Jeff Jegl  
Dec 24 Amy Krohn  
Dec 29 Kam Lindow

### USHER SCHEDULE:

Dec 22 Team #6: Dethloff  
Dec 24 Team #1: Maury, Martin, Rubatt  
Dec 29 Team #2: Gibowski, Gardebrecht

### GREETER SCHEDULE:

Dec 22 Kam & Tom Lindow  
Dec 24 Julie Loth  
Dec 29 Gibowski

### COFFEE HOUR HOST:

Kam Lindow  
None  
Sue Schuelke & Mike Gresen

## OUR STAFF:

Pastor: Rev. Emma Sancomb  
Minister of Music: Dr. Kelly Kazik  
Bell Choir Director: Chris Sparrow  
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Russell Knoth  
Admin. Asst.: Stephenie Osuji

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You can reach the office at 262-251-5160 or  
email [saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com](mailto:saintpaulsinthefalls@gmail.com)

Pastor Emma's email: [pastor@stpaulsucc.org](mailto:pastor@stpaulsucc.org)  
Kelly's email: [music@stpaulsucc.org](mailto:music@stpaulsucc.org)

## OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Emma: **Wednesday 9:30am-3pm or by appointment**  
Church Office: **Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday 10:00am-2:00pm**

## CPR (Church and Pastor Relations Committee) MEMBERS

|                   |                                                                                  |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Julie Loth        | <a href="mailto:jmhloth@gmail.com">jmhloth@gmail.com</a>                         |
| Mike Dethloff     | <a href="mailto:mdethloff62@gmail.com">mdethloff62@gmail.com</a>                 |
| Terry Tracy       | <a href="mailto:terencepatricktracy@gmail.com">terencepatricktracy@gmail.com</a> |
| Amy Krohn         | <a href="mailto:jakrohn@sbcglobal.net">jakrohn@sbcglobal.net</a>                 |
| Sue Schuelke      | <a href="mailto:sschuelk@charter.net">sschuelk@charter.net</a>                   |
| Jennifer Seehaver | <a href="mailto:jennifer@seehaver.com">jennifer@seehaver.com</a>                 |

## SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Andy Toebe  
Pam Gibowski  
Drew Olson  
Chris Sparrow  
Paul Martin



**PRAYER REQUESTS (To be added to the prayer chain, please contact Julie Loth 262-422-0267)**

- Julie Loth - Whose cousin, Scott Schwinn, died this past November and for his family going through their first Christmas without him.
- Darlene Eisen - who is home recovering from a broken hip.
- Jaye Gardebrecht - Whose brother, Dale passed away and brother Kurt who is going through treatment for his cancer that has returned.
- Carol Rubatt - We celebrate that her CT scans came back good.
- Jean Lipenski - Brother, Dan, is recovering from a stroke.
- Steve Hecky - 6-year-old grandson, Graham's continued medical journey.

**Don't forget to complete the Who's in the Pew form located on the end of the pew near the main aisle. PLEASE put completed forms in the offertory plate.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **REVERSE ADVENT TREE**

Just like in past years, we have the Falls Food Pantry Reverse Advent Tree in Guild Hall. The list and more information will be printed on our website, in the Evangel, and copies are next to the “tree”.

### **COLLEGE STUDENT CARE PACKAGES**

We are putting together care packages for our college students. If you have a student, please let the church office know and please provide their address. If you'd like to donate small snacks, gift cards, or a note of encouragement, we have a box in Guild Hall. We will plan to ship in January in time for the start of the second semester. Thank you!

### **THANK YOU TO THE COOKIE CREW**

Thank you to the cookie crew for your hard work and dedication to make the cookie walk a great success!

### **THANK YOU, ST. PAUL CONGREGATION,**

We are a very generous community! Thank you to everyone who helped support this mission project.



# Giving Totals

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## 12/08/2024 - Sunday

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Current Rent              | 325.00            |
| 3 Current Regular Envelope  | 1,696.00          |
| 10 Current Fund-Christmas   | 25.00             |
| 50 Benevolence Special      | 50.00             |
| <b>Total for 12/08/2024</b> | <b>\$2,096.00</b> |

## 12/12/2024 - Thursday

|                                |                 |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2 Current Altar Flowers        | 51.99           |
| 38 Benevolence-St. Bens (Food) | 57.24           |
| 45 Benevolence - Other         | 44.33           |
| 84 Confirmation                | 21.47           |
| 85 Current - Rally Day         | 28.06           |
| 100 In-Kind Donations          | 77.08           |
| <b>Total for 12/12/2024</b>    | <b>\$280.17</b> |

## 12/15/2024 - Sunday

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Current Rent              | 3,550.00          |
| 3 Current Regular Envelope  | 595.00            |
| 10 Current Fund-Christmas   | 35.00             |
| 56 Building - Other         | 100.00            |
| <b>Total for 12/15/2024</b> | <b>\$4,280.00</b> |

|                            |                   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Total Contributions</b> | <b>\$6,656.17</b> |
|----------------------------|-------------------|



St Paul's Church directory photos  
& personal family photos!

Church directory photos:  
Dec. 8th, 15th, 22nd.  
Choir room, after church.



Personal holiday family photos-  
Message Katie at 414-659-1365 or talk to me in  
person to book.

Indoors at my studio in Menomonee falls!



Katie Elizabeth Photography

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“ ...the Glory of God  
shone around them...  
Luke 2:9 ”

Be the Light

## The Christmas Fund

*"And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them..." —Luke 2:9*

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas "Thank You" gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees.

United Church of Christ congregations and members have blessed the Christmas Fund with their generosity for many years. This year, your care and compassion will be especially appreciated by those servants of the church who are facing a time of need. Thank you!

You will find a Christmas Fund envelope in today's bulletin. We will be accepting an offering for The Christmas Fund on Sunday, December 22nd. As always, offerings can be put in the offering plate or mailed to the office any time before the 22nd.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22**

9:30am - Worship

10:30 - Directory Pictures

10:45am - Fellowship

## **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

6:00pm - Choir Practice

7:00pm - Christmas Eve Service

## **THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26**

5:30pm - Liederkranz Rehearsal

## **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28**

9:00am - Main St. Song & Dance

9:00am - Meditation

## **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29**

9:30am - Worship

# Hope Is Worth the Risk

NOËL NOUVELET 11.10.11.10

Words by Anna Strickland, 2024

Traditional French melody



Col - lege stu - dents ga - ther pro - tes - ting for peace  
Young girls in I - ran to pro - test the re - gime  
In Tai - wan the dream - ers flood the streets with blooms  
Li - ber - i - an wom - en scarred by ci - vil war  
Eth - nic mu - sic rings out from the Bal - tic Sea  
Age to age and coast to coast peo - ple have stood



Stand - ing firm in spite of vio - lence from po - lice  
Take off their hi - jabs to let their hair be seen  
Sun - flow - ers and li - lies li - ber - ty's per - fume  
Keep the peace talks go - ing by bar - ring the doors  
As the peo - ple sing their right to li - ber - ty  
Risk - ing some - thing big in hope of some - thing good



Em - pires will fight with force or pol - i - tics



Still the Spi - rit whis - pers, "Hope is worth the risk"