



**It shall
be called
the Way
of Holiness.**

Isaiah 35:8

Third Sunday in Advent
December 14, 2025 • 10:30AM

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

205 St. Paul's Church Road, Salisbury, NC

Website: StPaulsLutheran.Church

Acolyte: Cooper Aldridge • Crucifer: Hila Canup
Cantor: Stan McConnell • Lector: Andrew Baker
Communion Assistants: Travis Alligood & Bonnie Hinson

This Week's Memory Verse

Put not your trust
in rulers,
nor in any child
of earth,
for there is no help
in them.

Psalm 146:2



Memory Verse Aid

PNYT
IR
NIAC
OE
FTINH
IT
PI462

Welcome and Announcements

Special thanks to Gene Brittain, who is our guest organist today.

Prelude: “Gabriel’s Message”

Arr. Paul Manz

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness *Stand*

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

Amen

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Reflection and self-examination

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

¹You shall have no other gods before me.

**²You shall not take the name
of the Lord your God in vain;
for the Lord will not hold guiltless
those who take his name in vain.**

**³Remember the Sabbath day
to keep it holy.**

**⁴Honor your father and your mother,
that your days may be long
in the land which the Lord
your God is giving you.**

⁵You shall not kill.

⁶You shall not commit adultery.

⁷You shall not steal.

⁸You shall not bear false witness
against your neighbor.

⁹You shall not covet
your neighbor's house.

¹⁰You shall not covet your neighbor's wife,
his workers, his livestock,
or anything that is your neighbor's.

Most merciful God, we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name. Amen

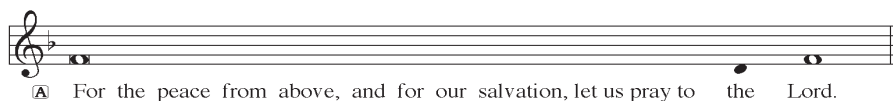
Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Hymn: "Hark, the Glad Sound"

35

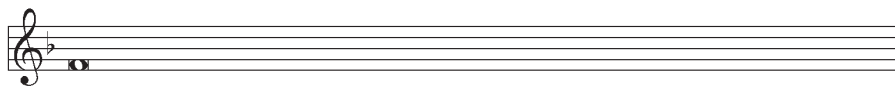
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

The Kyrie





☐ Lord, have mer - cy.



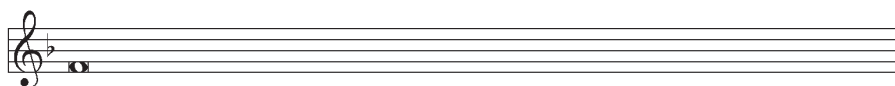
☐ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



☐ Lord, have mer - cy.



☐ For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

☐ Lord, have mer - cy.



☐ Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra-cious Lord. ☐ A - men

Hymn of Praise



☐ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia,



al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia. ☐ Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was



slain, whose blood set us free to be peo-ple of God.



☐ This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. II Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and



strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.



III This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. I Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and



join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



III This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia,



al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. II For the Lamb who was



slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.



III This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day



Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation—for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, forever one God.

Amen

Please be seated.

First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1–10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it 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. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No 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. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.
The word of the Lord.

Psalms 146:1–10

¹Hallelujah! Praise the LORD, | O my soul!*

I will praise the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praises
to my God while I | have my being.

²**Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any | child of earth,*
for there is no | help in them.**

³When they breathe their last, they re- | turn to earth,*
and in that day | their thoughts perish.

⁴**Happy are they who have the God of Jacob | for their help!*
whose hope is in the | LORD their God;**

⁵Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that | is in them;*
who keeps his prom- | ise forever;

⁶**Who gives justice to those who | are oppressed,*
and food to | those who hunger.**

⁷The LORD sets the prisoners free;
the LORD opens the eyes | of the blind;*
the LORD lifts up those who | are bowed down;

⁸**The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD
cares | for the stranger;***
**he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates
the way | of the wicked.**

⁹The LORD shall | reign forever,*
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. | Hallelujah!

Second Lesson: James 5:7–11

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

The word of the Lord.

Please stand for the Gospel.



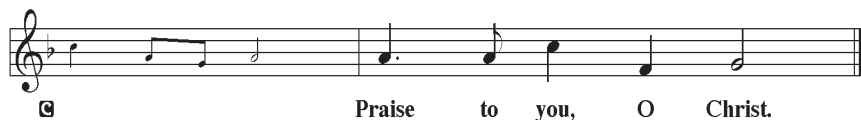
The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter



Gospel: Matthew 11:2-15

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

The Gospel of our Lord.



Confession of Faith

Let us profess our faith in God using the words of the Apostles Creed.

¹I believe in God the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

²I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified,
died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

³I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen

Please be seated.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Casey, Ciji, Sutton,
and Stanton Fisher

Children's Chat

Sermon: "The Highway of Holiness"

Hymn: "Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

25

The Prayers of the Church

Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people, according to their needs.

Following each prayer: Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray,
trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Offering

Anthem: “The King Shall Come”

Heather Canup

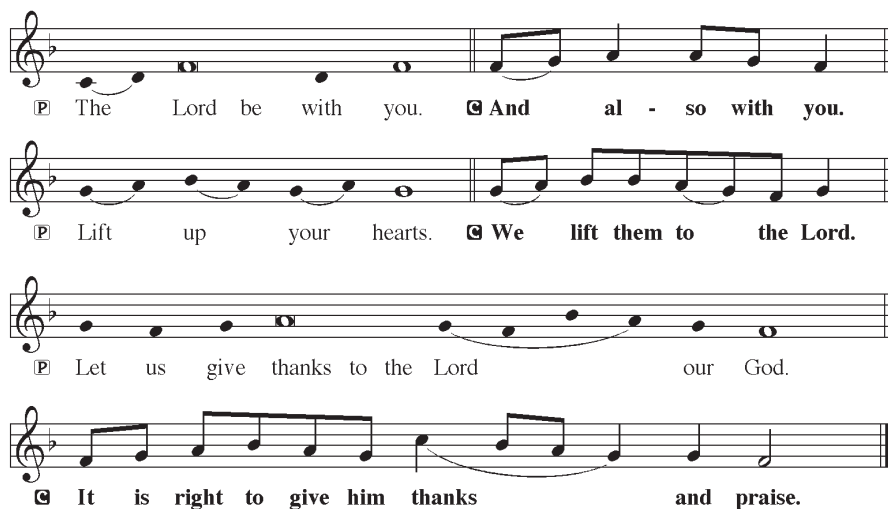
Offertory



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

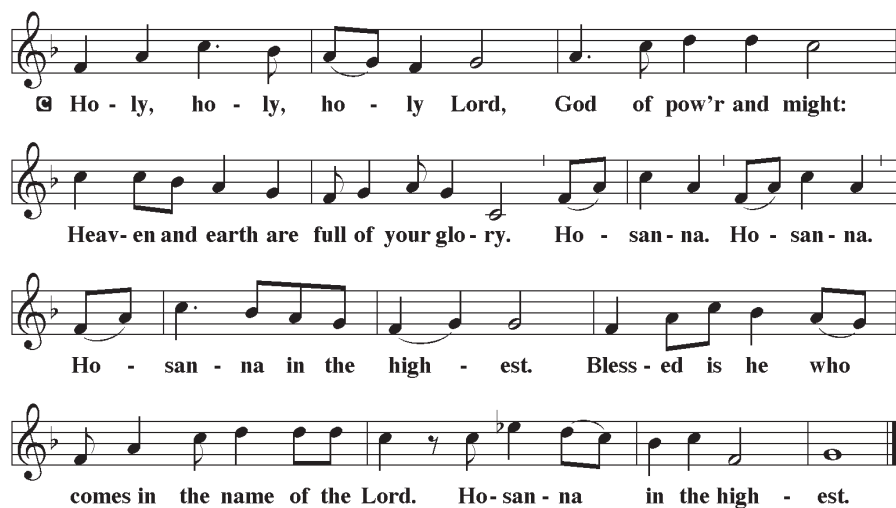
Merciful Father, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you
have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions,
signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him
who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Great Thanksgiving



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
 Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
 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:



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.

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

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

**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.**

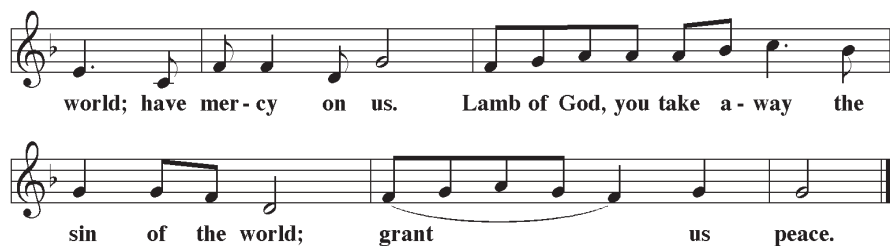
**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen**

Holy Communion

Distribution

If you need a gluten-free wafer or juice, please hold up your index finger in front of you as the server approaches you at the altar rail. A pastor will bring communion to the pews for those who are unable to come to the rail. Please raise your hand so he doesn't miss you.





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



Let us pray. Pour out upon us the spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of those whom you have fed with one heavenly food—through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Postlude: “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending” T. Oliver

We remain seated, worshiping silently during the postlude, standing at the end of the postlude to face the processional cross, now at the rear of the sanctuary.

The Benediction

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you, and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

Amen

*Today's altar flowers are given to the glory of God
by Terri and Alan Powlas.*

*Flowers last Sunday were placed in memory of beloved family members
on their shared birthday, December 6th — father and grandfather
Mitchell Upright, and great-grandmother Daisy C. Sloop,
by Kimberly Pepper, Samuel Pepper, Madeline and Jeremy Scott.*

Contact Information

If your mailing address, email address, or phone number has changed, please contact the church office right away. We will be putting together the 2026 yearbook soon. We ask just a few moments of your time to keep the church records up-to-date.

Mid-week Advent Supper and Service

Please join us on Wednesday, **December 17th**, for supper at 6pm and Advent service at 7pm. In order to help us plan, please let us know if you will be attending the supper by putting “**A**” and the number of people in your party by your name in the friendship register.

Friendship Club

The Friendship Club will meet this Thursday, December 18th, at 10:30am in the church parking lot to carpool to The Classic Restaurant in Denton. **Please let me know if you are going, so I can give the restaurant a head count.** Everyone is invited to join us for a good time and good food. Helen (704)-636-5002

Poinsettias and Luminaries

Today is the deadline to order poinsettias and sponsor luminaries. Order forms are in the Narthex. Poinsettias will be placed in the sanctuary for Christmas. The cost is **\$14 each**. Please take your poinsettias home with you after the Christmas Eve service. Any remaining after the next Sunday service will be thrown away. **Luminaries** are **\$10 each**. Plaques will be placed by the luminaries showing the name of the person you honor or remember with your sponsorship. The deadline for sponsoring luminaries is today. Donations will go to the Youth Fund.

Flowers

If you plan to provide flowers for a Sunday service, please verify with your florist that they are able to get into the church if they will be delivering, and that they know to put the flowers in the cooler. If they do not have a code to get in, you will need to meet them here to let them in and show them where the cooler is. You may call the church office for more information on providing flowers for the coming year.

Basement Restrooms

The ladies restroom by the chapel is **closed for the duration of construction**. The men's room near the chapel is now designated as a 'unisex' restroom, and an inside lock has been installed. The other ladies' restrooms remain open.

Offerings for 2025

Donations for 2025 should be turned in by Sunday morning, December 28th. Any mailed donations or online giving received after December 28th will be counted for the next calendar year.

**He who has ears to hear,
let him hear.**

Matthew 11:15

Sunday, December 14

- Children's rehearsal, 9am
- Christian Education Committee meeting, 2pm
- Worship & Music Committee, 3pm
- Children's Play, "'C' Is for Christmas," 4pm
- Vespers, 6pm

Monday, December 15

- January newsletter articles due this week
- Home school dance class, 10am
- Council meeting, 6:30pm

Tuesday, December 16

- Bible Study class, 10am and 6pm
- Staff meeting, 5pm
- Girl Scouts, 6:30pm

Wednesday, December 17

- Mid-week supper, 6pm
- Mid-week Advent service, 7pm
- Adult Choir practice following the Advent service

Thursday, December 18

- Rowan Smart Start, 10am–12pm
- Friendship Club, 10:30am

Sunday, December 21

- Autumn Care worship service, 2pm
- Contemporary Choir practice, 4pm
- Hand bell ensemble practice, 5pm
- Vespers, 6pm

Barringer's Mission Trip

Sara and Amy Barringer will be traveling with North Hills Christian School on a mission trip to San Pedro de Poas, Costa Rica. The cost is about \$2,000 per person. They are asking you to prayerfully consider partnering with them financially or by prayer as they prepare for this experience. Checks may be made payable to Amy Barringer before January 1, 2026.

Recent Prayer Needs

Please notify the church office when a prayer request should be removed from this list or updated.

- Donald Camerlin – recovering from surgery
- Kelly Gainey – health concerns
- Dot Goodman – health concerns
- Shirley Hoosier – rehab
- Irene Miller – health concerns
- Melinda Redding – recovering from surgery
- Lottie Simpson – health concerns
- Johnsie Taylor – recovering from surgery
- Hollis Wilhelm – health concerns
- The family of Roy Zimmermann who died December 8, 2025

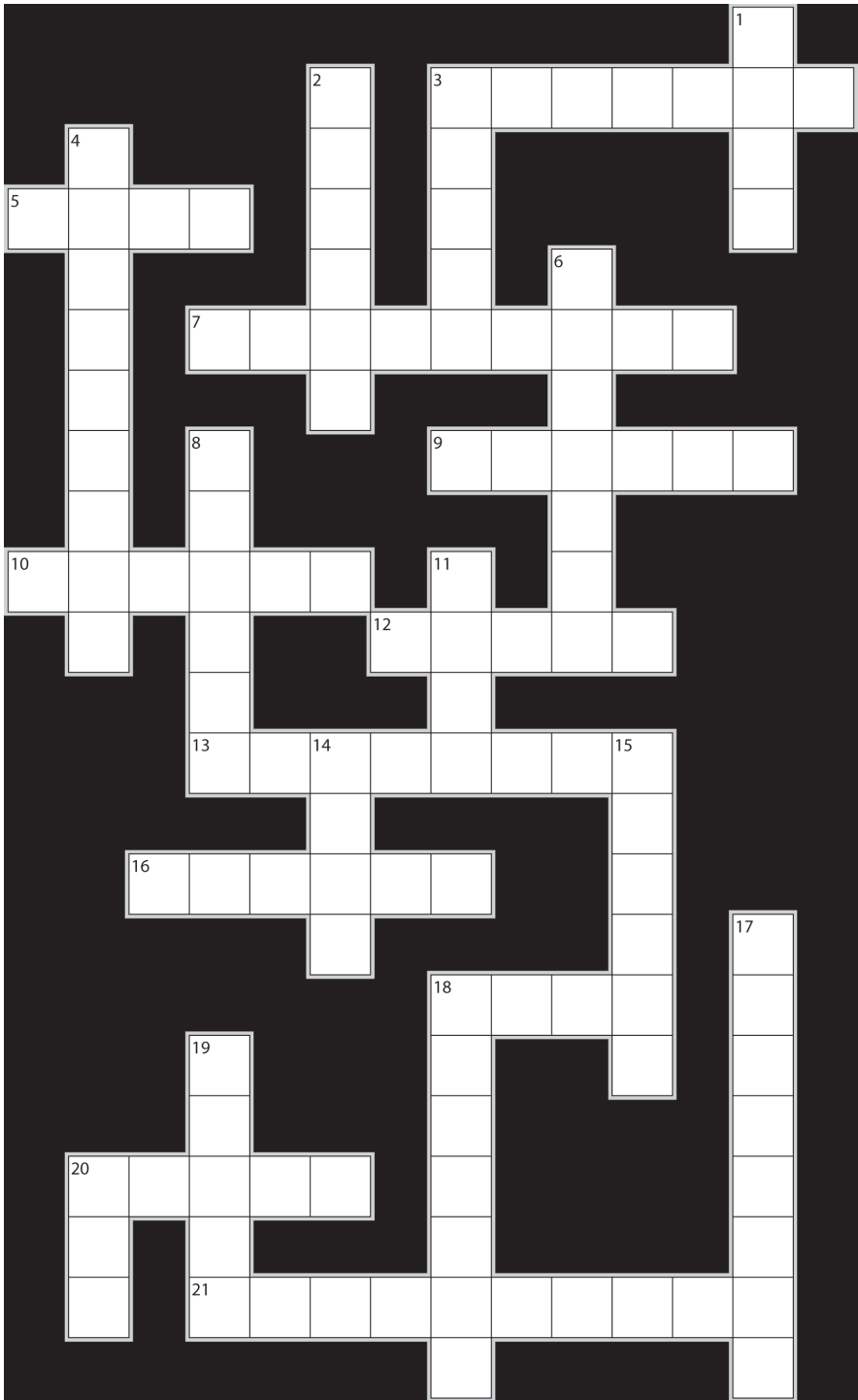
For a longer list of prayer needs, please consult The Monthly Epistle.

This page in the bulletin is to make you aware of the most recent prayer needs.

Typically, after one month on this list the name and request will have migrated to The Monthly Epistle.

**Beloved,
I pray
that you may prosper
in all things
and be in health,
just as your soul prospers.**

3 John 1:2



Advent 3A

*Find the answers in today's lectionary readings from
Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146; James 5:7-11; Matthew 11:2-15.
The English Standard Version is used to build this puzzle .*

ACROSS

3. What is the one who hopes in the Lord?
5. The ransomed will come there with singing.
7. They are blessed who remain this way.
9. Where was John in the Gospel Lesson?
10. Establish them since the coming of the Lord is at hand.
12. Blessed is the one who keeps this forever.
13. They will walk on the Way of Holiness.
16. Men return to the earth when this departs.
18. They have good news preached to them.
20. He is standing at the door.
21. It will be glad.

DOWN

1. Tell the anxious to not do this.
2. The Lord brings them to ruin.
3. They receive their sight.
4. John sent a question through them to Jesus.
6. James says to be this way until the coming of the Lord.
8. He waits for the precious fruit of the earth.
11. They walk.
14. They are raised up.
15. It will blossom.
17. This way or road will be in the wilderness.
18. Do not place your trust in them.
19. The Lord upholds her.
20. You have heard of his steadfastness.

Stats

General Fund offering 12/7	\$13,689
Other offering 12/7	\$6,251
Worship attendance 12/7	185
Sunday School attendance reported 12/7.....	53

Children's Change Collection

Last Sunday: \$151.00 Total so far: \$1,863.00
Collections for this quarter of 2025 will go to
Lutheran Military Veterans and Families.

In the last two+ years, the children have collected
\$23,172.62 for missions.

The total collected for Friends of Madagascar Mission
during the third quarter of 2025 was \$2,248.50.

The total collected for The Table Ministry
during the second quarter of 2025 was \$2,022.

The total collected for Lutherans for Life
during the first quarter of 2025 was \$1,951.00.

More information
about St. Paul's Missions
may be found at
StPaulsLutheran.Church/Missionaries



Reminders: Information for weekly bulletins should be turned in to the church office by Wednesday morning before Noon. Information for monthly newsletters needs to be in by the 3rd week of each month. Also, please be sure your and your family member's names are written in the friendship register each Sunday. It helps the ushers at the end of worship if you will tear out the page and let it show out the top of the booklet so they can get to it easily. Thanks for your help.

Patience

Find the 27 bold words from James 5:7–11 KJV.

M E E L X S U F F E R I N G H
S L R A N O I T C I L F F A T
C T B U R E C E I V E H L B E
A W R R D L C S P E G X E I W
R Y J A E N Y U A I K H L P A
R E D N E T E B N F O L S V R
Z L K I Y H H S I L B A T S D
P A T I E N T R D M L T E D E
E A P I U C U E E E O T H T X
P Z G R U D G E D N R E P E A
K U U W V R O E H N D R O D M
M E R C Y C F R T F A O R R P
P I T I F U L U R J N T P A L
S U O I C E R P A C T F S E E
A F H H D E N M E D N O C H I

Be **patient** therefore, **brethren**, unto the coming of the **Lord**. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the **precious fruit** of the **earth**, and hath long patience for it, until he **receive** the **early** and **latter** rain. Be ye also patient; **stablish** your **hearts**: for the coming of the Lord **draweth nigh**. **grudge** not one against another, brethren, lest ye be **condemned**: behold, the judge **standeth** before the door. Take, my brethren, the **prophets**, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an **example of suffering affliction**, and of patience. **behold**, we count them happy which **endure**. Ye have **heard** of the **patience** of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very **pitiful**, and of **tender mercy**.



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

A family of faith sharing the gospel and love of Christ

Phone: 704-633-0922

Website: StPaulsLutheran.Church

Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPaulsLCMC

Wi-Fi: splcguest – pass: SavedbyGrace

OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m. – 12 Noon

CHURCH STAFF

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jtaylor783@aol.com

Judy Lowman, Treasurer
splcjlw63@gmail.com

Amy Barringer, Girl Scout Coordinator, abarringer@bellsouth.net

Next weeks lessons: Isaiah 7:10-17; Psalm 24; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25

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