



Fourth Sunday in Advent  
December 21, 2025 • 10:30AM

## **St. Paul's Lutheran Church**

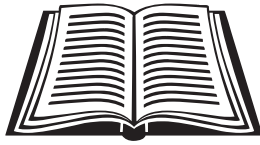
205 St. Paul's Church Road, Salisbury, NC  
Website: [StPaulsLutheran.Church](http://StPaulsLutheran.Church)

Acolyte: Clara Canup • Crucifer: Reese Goodman  
Cantor: Heather Canup • Lector: Melissa Bernhardt  
Communion Assistants: Travis Alligood & Bonnie Hinson



## **This Week's Memory Verse**

She will bear a son,  
and you shall call his name Jesus,  
for he will save his people  
from their sins.  
Matthew 1:21



## **Memory Verse Aid**

SWBAS  
AYSCHNJ  
FHWSHP  
FTS  
MI2I

## Welcome and Announcements

### Prelude

#### 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.

**<sup>1</sup>You shall have no other gods before me.**

**<sup>2</sup>You 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.**

**<sup>3</sup>Remember the Sabbath day  
to keep it holy.**

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

**<sup>5</sup>You shall not kill.**

**<sup>6</sup>You shall not commit adultery.**

<sup>7</sup>You shall not steal.

<sup>8</sup>You shall not bear false witness  
against your neighbor.

<sup>9</sup>You shall not covet  
your neighbor's house.

<sup>10</sup>You 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

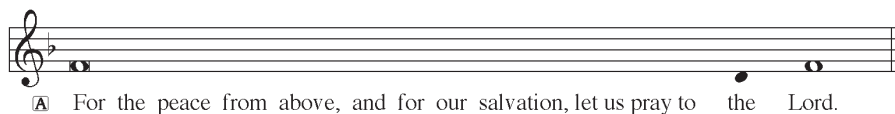
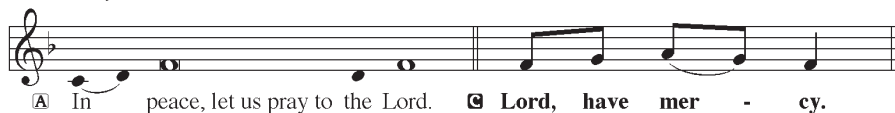
Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and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

**Hymn:** "Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

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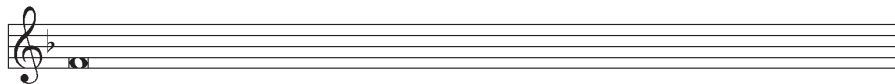
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

## The Kyrie

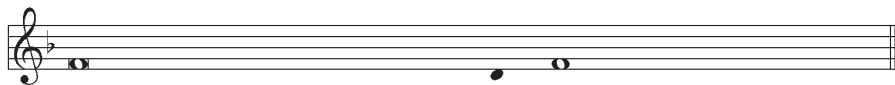




☐ Lord, have mer - cy.



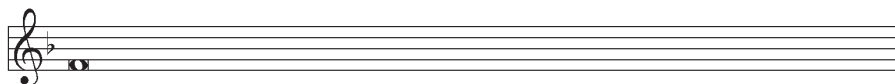
☐ For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



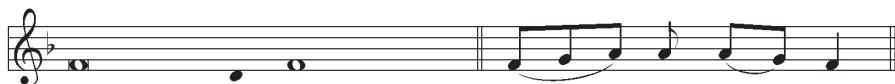
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



☐ 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,



## Prayer of the Day



☪ The Lord be with you.

☪ And al - so with you.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. With your great might, give us your help, that whatever is hindered by our sins may be speedily accomplished by your grace—for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen**

*Please be seated.*

### **First Lesson:** Isaiah 7:10–17

<sup>10</sup>Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz: <sup>11</sup>“Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” <sup>13</sup>And he said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. <sup>15</sup>He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup>For before the boy knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be deserted. <sup>17</sup>The LORD will bring upon you and upon your people and upon your father’s house such days as have not come since the day that Ephraim departed from Judah—the king of Assyria!” *The word of the Lord.*

### **Psalms 24:1–10**

<sup>1</sup>The earth is the LORD’s and all | that is in it,  
the world and all who | dwell therein.

<sup>2</sup>**For it is he who founded it up- | on the seas  
and made it firm upon the rivers | of the deep.**

<sup>3</sup>“Who can ascend the hill | of the LORD?  
and who can stand in his | holy place?”

<sup>4</sup>“Those who have clean hands and | a pure heart,  
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,  
nor sworn by what | is a fraud.

<sup>5</sup>They shall receive a blessing | from the LORD  
and a just reward from the God of | their salvation.”

<sup>6</sup>**Such is the generation of | those who seek him,  
of those who seek your face, O | God of Jacob.**

<sup>7</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates; lift them high,  
O ever- | lasting doors;  
and the King of glory | shall come in.

<sup>8</sup>**“Who is this | King of glory?”  
“The LORD, strong and mighty,  
the LORD, migh- | ty in battle.”**

<sup>9</sup>Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high, O ever- | lasting doors;  
and the King of glory | shall come in.

<sup>10</sup>**“Who is he, this | King of glory?”  
“The LORD of hosts, he is the | King of glory.”**

## **Second Lesson:** Romans 1:1-7

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup>concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup>and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup>through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, <sup>6</sup>including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup>To all those in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. *The word of the Lord.*

*Please stand for the Gospel.*

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the first chapter.



### **Gospel:** Matthew 1:18–25

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

<sup>19</sup> And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall call his name Immanuel”

(which means, God with us). <sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, <sup>25</sup> but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

*The Gospel of our Lord.*



### **Confession of Faith**

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

**<sup>1</sup>I believe in God the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**<sup>2</sup>I 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.

<sup>3</sup>I 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**

Jennifer, Lee, Cooper,  
and Caroline Aldridge

## **Children's Chat**

**Sermon:** "Imagine the Faith"

**Hymn:** "Savior of the Nations, Come"

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## **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:** "Advent"

Adult Choir

## Offertory



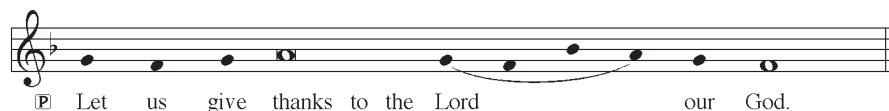
Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our  
cup of bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the  
seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life.  
Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u - nite them with the  
prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble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



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:



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.

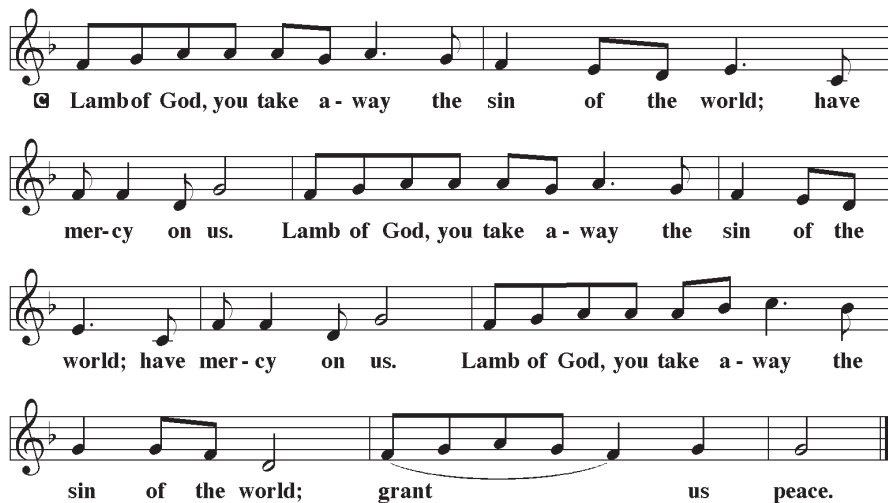
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

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.*



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

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



Lord, now you let your ser- vant go in peace; your word has been ful- filled.

My own eyes have seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre- pared in the

sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re- veal you to the

na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo- ple Is - ra - el.

Glo- ry to the Fa- ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho- ly Spir - it,

as it was in the be- gin - ning, is now, and will be for- ev- er. A - men

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

*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**

*The altar flowers are given to the glory of God  
and in honor of all those who serve on the Altar Guild  
by Bonnie and Wayne Hinson.*



## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

Join us this Wednesday, December 24th, for the Christmas Eve Candlelight and *Gemütlichkeit* Service at 7pm in the sanctuary. *Gemütlichkeit* [guh MÜT lich keit] is a German word that conveys the idea of a sense of warmth, friendliness, and good cheer.

## **2025 Offerings**

Donations for 2025 need to be turned in by Sunday morning, December 28th. Any mailed donations, or online giving received after December 28th will be counted and posed for 2026.

## **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.

## **Barringer's Mission Trip**

Sara and I are incredibly grateful for everyone who has prayed and supported us financially for our mission trip. We wanted to let you all know that we have reached our goal. Your generosity and kindness mean more to us than we could ever express.

Through your support we have the opportunity to step out in faith, serve others, and share God's love in a meaningful way. Sara and I are nervous but excited about our upcoming opportunity. Please continue to pray that we have a safe and productive trip. We are deeply thankful for your prayers, encouragement, and gifts.

### **Sunday, December 21**

- Sunday School, 9:30am
- Autumn Care worship service, 2pm
- Contemporary Choir practice, 4pm
- Handbell Ensemble practice, 5pm
- Vespers, 6pm

### **Monday, December 22**

- Lutheran Men's meeting, 6:30pm

### **Tuesday, December 23**

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

### **Wednesday, December 24**

- Christmas Eve Candlelight and *Gemütlichkeit* service, 7pm

### **Thursday, December 25**

- Merry Christmas! The church office is closed Thursday and Friday for Christmas.

### **Sunday, December 28**

- Sunday School, 9:30am
- Worship, 10:30am
- Vespers, 6pm

### **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 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 (basement) is closed for the duration of construction. The men's room near the chapel is now designated as a 'unisex' restroom. An inside lock has been installed on that door. The other ladies restrooms remain open.

# The King of Glory

*Find the 24 bold words from Psalm 24:1-10 KJV.*

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

The **earth** is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; The **world**, and they that **dwell** therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas, And **established** it upon the **floods**. Who shall **ascend** into the hill of the LORD? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath **clean** hands, and a **pure heart**; Who hath not lifted up his soul unto **vanity**, Nor sworn **deceitfully**. He shall receive the **blessing** from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his **salvation**. This is the **generation** of them that **seek** him, That seek thy face, O **Jacob**. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lift up, ye **everlasting** doors; And the King of **glory** shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD **strong** and **mighty**, The LORD mighty in **battle**. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; And the **King** of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The **Lord** of **hosts**, he is the King of glory.

## **Recent Prayer Needs**

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

- Don Camerlin – recovering from surgery
- Kelly Gainey – health concerns
- Dot Goodman – health concerns
- Shirley Hoosier – recovering from surgery
- Irene Miller – health concerns
- Melinda Redding – recovering surgery
- Lottie Simpson – health concerns
- Johnsie Taylor – health concerns
- Greg Wilhelm – health concerns
- Hollis Wilhelm – health concerns

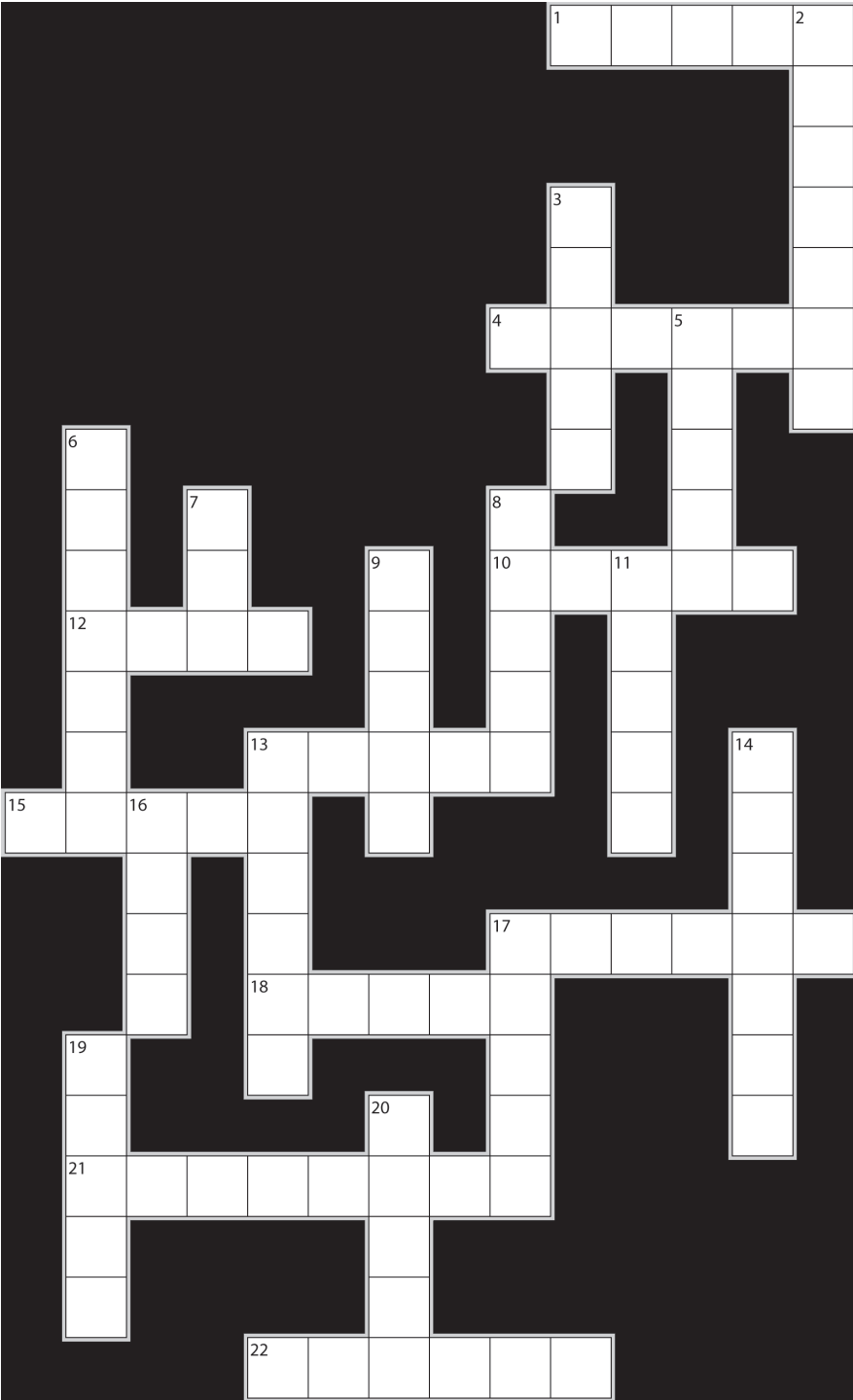
*For a longer list of prayer needs, please consult The Monthly Epistle.*

*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.*

**Heal me,  
O Lord,  
and I shall  
be healed.**

Isaiah 40:29



# Advent 4A

*Find the answers in today's lectionary readings from  
Isaiah 7:10-17; Psalm 24; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25  
The English Standard Version is used to build this puzzle .*

## ACROSS

1. They were to call him Immanuel, so Joseph named him what?
4. She would conceive and bear a child.
10. He appeared to Joseph in a dream.
12. The promised child would save his people from these.
13. Lift up your...
15. Grace to you and...
17. Mary's child was from him.
18. It is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.
21. God with us
22. Paul was set apart for this.

## DOWN

2. Paul was this for Jesus Christ.
3. Paul received his apostleship in order to bring about this obedience.
5. Through Christ Jesus Paul received apostleship and...
6. Paul was called to be one.
7. The virgin shall conceive and bear one.
8. Lift up your heads, O...
9. The one with these hands may ascend the hill of the Lord.
11. The psalmist calls the Lord the King of...
13. Ask for a sign as high as this.
14. These doors were to be lifted up.
16. The Lord spoke to him in the First Lesson.
17. Ask for a sign as deep as this.
19. Before Mary and Joseph came to together she was found to be with what?
20. "God with us" will eat honey and...

## Stats

|                                               |          |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------|
| General Fund offering 12/14 .....             | \$16,152 |
| Other offering 12/14.....                     | \$18,160 |
| Worship attendance 12/14 .....                | 208      |
| Sunday School attendance reported 12/14 ..... | 72       |

## Children's Change Collection

Last Sunday: \$178.00 Total so far: \$2,041.00  
Collections for this quarter of 2025 will go to  
Lutheran Military Veterans and Families.

In the last two+ years, the children have collected  
\$23,350.62 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



**Reminder:** 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 during the 3rd week of each month or earlier. You may email, call, or bring information. **Also, please be sure your and your family member's names are written in the friendship register each Sunday.**





# 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](http://StPaulsLutheran.Church)

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/StPaulsLCMC](http://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

Rev. Dr. Mark Ryman, Senior Pastor  
[pastor@stpaulslutheran.church](mailto:pastor@stpaulslutheran.church)

Brian Lord, Associate Pastor  
[wingman@stpaulslutheran.church](mailto:wingman@stpaulslutheran.church)

Pamela Cottingham, Secretary  
[secretary@stpaulslutheran.church](mailto:secretary@stpaulslutheran.church)

Eric Barringer, Council President  
[ebarringer@bellsouth.net](mailto:ebarringer@bellsouth.net)

John Brock, Music Director  
[splcmusicalisbury@gmail.com](mailto:splcmusicalisbury@gmail.com)

Johnsie Taylor, Organist  
[jtaylor783@aol.com](mailto:jtaylor783@aol.com)

Judy Lowman, Treasurer  
[splcjlw63@gmail.com](mailto:splcjlw63@gmail.com)

Amy Barringer, Girl Scout Coordinator, [abarringer@bellsouth.net](mailto:abarringer@bellsouth.net)

**Next weeks lessons:** Isaiah 63:7-14; Psalm 111; Galatians 4:4-7; Matthew 2:13-23

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