

SAINTE PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



LITURGY OF THE LONGEST NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2022
SEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

WELCOME TO SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH

Whatever brings you here, and whoever you are,
we are glad you are here.

CHRISTMAS SERVICE SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve Eucharist with Pageant - 4:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist - 7:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist - 10:00 p.m.
Christmas Day Eucharist - 10:00 a.m.

FIRST TIME WORSHIPPING AT ST. PAUL'S?

Are you new to St. Paul's or the surrounding area? Let us know by filling out a Welcome Card located in the pew rack, and we will connect with you. We also have a Welcome Table you can visit following the service in the Memorial Garden.

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located in the Parish House.

COVID SAFETY

St. Paul's is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for everyone who enters our building and grounds. You can read more about our safety protocol, including for children and our response if there is a COVID exposure at St. Paul's, on our website at www.stpaulsrva.org/covidsafety.

CONTACT THE CLERGY

The St. Paul's clergy are eager to hear from you if you have questions, concerns, or a pastoral emergency. Contact can be made by phoning the church at 804.643.3589. The church office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

HOLY EUCHARIST

PIANO VOLUNTARY

In the bleak midwinter

arr. Mark Hayes (b. 1953)

WELCOME

TAIZÉ CHANT

Wait for the Lord, his day is near.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

Text: Isaiah 40, Philippians 4, Matthew 6-7

Music: Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)

AN ADVENT LITANY OF DARKNESS AND LIGHT

from The Wideness of God's Mercy: Litanies to Enlarge Our Prayers (*Church Publishing*)

Voice 1 We wait in the darkness, expectantly, longingly, anxiously, thoughtfully.

Voice 2 The darkness is our friend. In the darkness of the womb, we have all been nurtured and protected. In the darkness of the womb, the Christ-child was made ready for the journey into light.

People **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Voice 1 It is only in the darkness that we can see the splendor of the universe—blankets of stars, the solitary glowings of distant planets.

Voice 2 It was the darkness that allowed the magi to find the star that guided them to where the Christchild lay.

People **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Voice 1 In the darkness of the night, desert people find relief from the cruel relentless heat of the sun.

Voice 2 In the blessed darkness, Mary and Joseph were able to flee with the infant Jesus to safety in Egypt.

People **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Voice 1 In the darkness of sleep, we are soothed and restored, healed and renewed.

Voice 2 In the darkness of sleep, dreams rise up. God spoke to Jacob and Joseph through dreams. God is speaking still.

People **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Voice 1 In the solitude of darkness, we sometimes remember those who need God's presence in a special way—the sick, the unemployed, the bereaved, the persecuted, the homeless; those who are demoralized and discouraged, those whose fear has turned to cynicism, those whose vulnerability has become bitterness.

Voice 2 Sometimes in the darkness, we remember those who are near to our hearts—colleagues, partners, parents, children, neighbors, friends. We thank God for their presence and ask God to bless and protect them in all that they do—at home, at school, as they travel, as they work, as they play.

People **You are with us, O God, in darkness and in light.**

Voice 1 Sometimes, in the solitude of darkness, our fears and concerns, our hopes and our visions rise to the surface. We come face to face with ourselves and with the road that lies ahead of us. And in that same darkness, we find companionship for the journey.

Voice 2 In that same darkness, we sometimes allow ourselves to wonder and worry how we will survive.

People **We know you are with us, O God, yet we still await your coming. In the darkness that contains both our hopelessness and our expectancy, we watch for a sign of God's Hope. Amen.**

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us.

People **To give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

O HOLY ONE, whose coming we await, you invite us into the light of your presence on this longest night of the year: Illumine the dark and doubting places of our weary and wounded hearts, community and world. We are thirsty for your healing comfort, compassion, and peace. Draw near to us and fill us, that we may pour out your goodness to all who hunger and thirst for your mercy. **Amen.**

The people are seated.

—————THE LITURGY OF THE WORD—————

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-11

COMFORT, O COMFORT my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: 'In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.' A voice says, 'Cry out!' And I said, 'What shall I cry?' All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, 'Here is your God!' See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm is read responsively.

BLESS THE LORD, O my soul,
And praise him, my inmost heart.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,

And remember her unchanging love:

Who forgives you for your wrongdoing

And heals you of selfishness and fear;

Who frees you from the darkest pit

And crowns you with his compassion;

Who pours light into you and makes you

As fresh and vivid as a child.

The Lord gives himself equally

To all men and women on earth:

She shines on the rich and the poor,

The powerful and the oppressed.

He reveals his justice to all those

Who search the depths of their minds.

The more they open themselves,

The more they can feel her light.

The Lord is joy and compassion,

Patience and unchanging love.

Higher than the heavens above us,

Vaster than space, is his love.

Longer than ten billion years

Will she wait for us to return.

As a mother has compassion for her children,

So the Lord has compassion on us all.

For he knows what we are made of;

She remembers that we are dust.

Our lives are as brief as the grass is;

We blossom like a flower in a field:

When a strong wind comes, it is rooted up

And disappears from its place.

But the Lord's love is eternal,

And his justice is everlasting.

Her law extends through the galaxies

And into the atom's core.

Bless the Lord, you angels,

Echoing with the sound of light.

Bless the Lord, you people

Who have grown transparent in her love.

Bless the Lord, all creatures,

Through infinite dimensions of the world.

Bless the Lord, O my soul.

LET THE REST
L in this rested place
rest for you.

Let the birds sing
and the geese call
and the sky race
from west to east
when you cannot raise
a wing to fly.

Let evening
trace your loss
in the stonework
of a fading sky.

So that
you can give up
and give in
and be given back to,

so that you can let
winter
come and live
fully inside you,

so that
you can
retrace
the loving path
of heartbreak
that brought you here.

So you can cry alone
and be alone
so you can let
yourself alone
to be lost,

so you can
let the one
you have lost
alone,

so that
you can let
the one
you have lost
have their
own life
and even
their own
death
without you.

So the world
and everyone
who has ever lived
and ever died
can come and go
as they please.

So you can
let yourself
not know, what
not knowing
means.

So that
you can be
even more generous
in your letting go
than they
were
in their leaving.

So that you can
let winter
be winter.

So that you can let
the world alone
to think of spring.

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
 4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
 cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim throng - ed the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow — on — snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf - ficed
 but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
 if I were a wise — man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord — God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Text: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music: Cranham, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:22-38

Gospeler The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

WHEN THE TIME came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the

parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Gospeler The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

HOMILY

The Rev'd Gwynn Crichton, *Associate Rector for Pastoral Care*

LITANY OF HEALING

from Book of Occasional Services, 2018 (Church Publishing)

Presider Let us name before God those for whom we offer our prayers.

Intercessor God the Father, your will for all people is health and salvation.
People **We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Intercessor God the Son, you came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly.
People **We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Intercessor God the Holy Spirit, you make our bodies the temple of your presence.
People **We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Intercessor Holy Trinity, one God, in you we live and move and have our being.
People **We praise you and thank you, O Lord.**

Intercessor Lord, grant your healing grace to all who are sick, injured, or disabled.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or despondent,
a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor Mend broken relationships, and restore those in emotional distress
to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor Bless physicians, nurses, and all others who minister to the suffering,
granting them wisdom and skill, sympathy, and patience.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor Grant to the dying peace and a holy death, and uphold by the grace and consolation
of your Holy Spirit those who are bereaved.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by human sin, in our lives,
in our nation, and in the world.
People **Hear us, O Lord of life.**

Intercessor You are the Lord who does wonders:
People **You have declared your power among the peoples.**

Intercessor With you, O Lord, is the well of life:

People **And in your light we see light.**

Intercessor Hear us, O Lord of life:

People **Heal us, and make us whole.**

Intercessor Let us pray.

A period of silence is kept.

Presider Gracious God, we give you thanks for your beloved Jesus Christ, in whom you have shared the beauty and pain of human life. Look with compassion upon all for whom we pray, and strengthen us to be your instruments of healing in the world, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

People **Amen.**

CONFESSION

The people say together.

MOST HOLY GOD, in this season of Advent as we await the coming of Christ anew, we confess: We have resisted the light of your love; we have not fully shared the gifts entrusted to us; and we have not treasured the gifts of others around us. We stand in need of your love. Holy Father, make us holy. Holy Jesus, make us holy. Holy Spirit, make us holy. Holy God, make us whole. Amen.

The Presider gives the absolution.

CANDLE LIGHTING WITH LAYING ON OF HANDS AND ANNOINTING

TAIZÉ CHANT

O Lord hear my pray'r, O Lord hear my pray'r.

When I call, an - swer me. O Lord hear my pray'r. O

Lord hear my pray'r, Come and lis - ten to me. O

Fine

Text: Psalm 102

Music: Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

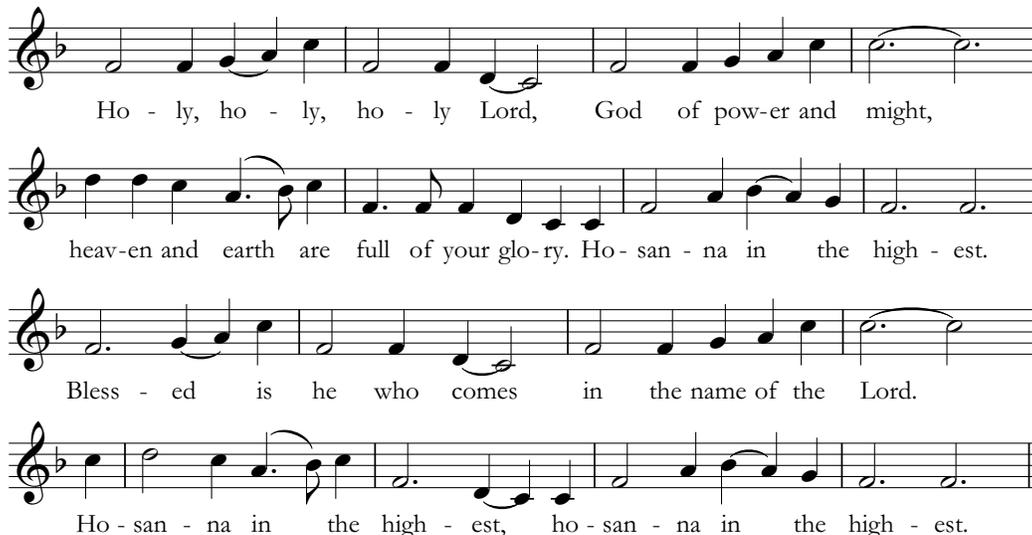
from Common Worship: Additional Eucharistic Prayers (Church House Publishing)

Presider God be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Presider Lift up your hearts.
People **We lift them to the Lord.**
Presider Let us give thanks to God, our Life and Creator.
People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The Presider continues

GOD OF ALL LIFE, you created the universe, where all living things reflect your glory. You give us this great and beautiful earth, to discover and to cherish. You give us friends and families, communities to support us and care for us. You have made us all, each wonderfully different, to join with angels and archangels in singing your praise.

SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Text: Mass Ordinary, Fifth century
Music: *Land of Rest*, American folk tune

The people remain standing as the Presider continues.

WE THANK YOU, loving God, because, when we turned away, you sent Jesus, your Son. He gave his life for us on the cross and shows us the way to live. On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his friends, saying: 'Take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

After they had eaten, Jesus took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his friends, saying: 'Drink this, all of you; this is my Blood of the New Covenant which is shed for you and for all, for the remission of sins. As often as you shall drink it, do this in remembrance of me.'

And so, present God, with this bread and this cup we celebrate your love, your death, your risen life. Send your creative Spirit upon your people and upon these gifts of bread and wine that they may be for us Christ's body and blood.

As we look forward to that day when suffering is ended, help us to love one another and all creation. Through the awakened and risen Christ, be all honor and glory, world without end. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the bread followed by silence.

Presider Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People **Therefore, let us keep the feast.**

THE INVITATION TO THE TABLE AND HOLY COMMUNION

Everyone is invited to receive Holy Communion.

HYMN

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil - e - ad, to make the wound - ed
whole, there is a balm in Gil - e - ad, to
heal the sin - sick soul. soul.

1 Some - times I feel dis - cour - aged, and ___
2 If you can - not preach like Pe - ter, if you

think my work's in vain, but ___ then the Ho - ly
can - not pray like Paul, you can tell the love of

Repeat Refrain
Spi - rit re - vives my soul a - gain.
Je - sus, and say, "He died for all."

Text: African-American spiritual

Music: *Balm in Gilead*, Afro-American spiritual; acc. David Hurd (b. 1950)

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

The people stand and say together.

LOVING GOD, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, and renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

THE BLESSING

The Presider says

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Redeemer, Sanctifier, be with you and remain with you always. Amen.

THE DISMISSAL

Presider Let us go forth in the light of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God!**

PIANO VOLUNTARY

Ricercar pro Tempore Adventus: Ave Maria klare

Johann Kaspar Fischer (1650-1746)

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————— PARTICIPANTS —————

Clergy

The Rev'd Gwynn Crichton, *Associate Rector for Pastoral Care*
The Rev'd Keli Shipley Cooper, *Associate for Formation*

Musicians

Christopher Reynolds, D.M.A., *Director of Music and Organist*
Stephanie Hill Blackwood, *Cantor*

Lectors

Jeanelle Moritz
Nancy Burns

Intercessor

Mike Francis

Eucharistic Minister

Nancy Burns



ST. PAUL'S
CELEBRATING 175 YEARS