

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

P. O. Box 267, 201 Veterans Dr., Columbus, TX 78934

PH# (979) 732-2423 Fax (979) 733-0489

E-mail: admin@splctx.org www.splctx.com **Pastor:** pastor.akethan@gmail.com

Thursday, December 24, 2020 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM

Nativity of Our Lord

Senior Pastor	Alan Kethan	<u>Home:</u> (979)-942-9060	<u>Cell:</u> (830)-708-1200
Deacon of Word and Service			Sandye Fletcher
Youth & Family Specialist			Stephanie Polasek
Music Minister			Robert Eaton
Congregational Chair			Curtiss Schonenberg
Creative Child Center Director			Briana Bedford
Secretary			Elena Holub
Custodian			O. C. S.
Parish Nurse Program Coordinator			DyAnn Lauzon
Organist			Joan Hunsicker

MISSION STATEMENT: Love God, Love Neighbor

VISION STATEMENT: Showing our love of God and neighbor, we will work to double the number of members that are serving as well as those that are being served from 2018 to 2021.

- *As we enter into a sacred time and space, a friendly reminder to please set your cell phone to vibrate.*
- ***We want to welcome all of our guests today and thank you for worshiping with us. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding our services, programs, day care, or preschool programs at St. Paul, please visit our Welcome Center in the narthex immediately following our service, and an attendant will be more than happy to assist you. If this is your first time at St. Paul, we hope you will take a gift along with you. We also have a gift bag for children.***

* This symbol indicates that the congregation is invited to stand physically or in spirit.

INTRODUCTION

*In winter's deepest night, we **welcome** the light of the Christ child. Isaiah declares that the light of the long-promised king will illumine the world and bring endless peace and justice. Paul reminds us that the grace of God through Jesus Christ brings salvation to all people. The angels declare that Jesus' birth is good and joyful news for everyone, including lowly shepherds. Filled with the light that shines in our lives, we go forth to share the light of Christ with the whole world.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP AND LIGHTING CHRIST CANDLE:

(The center candle representing Christ in the middle of the Advent wreath is lit.)

(Please stand if you are able.)

- P: We recognize that at the center of our lives Christ's light shines.
- C: May this light remind us to keep Christ at the center of Christmas.**
- P: We remember his birth.
- C: The light of God came into human flesh.**
- P: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
- C: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them the light has shined.**
- P: Unto us a Child is born.
- C: Unto us a Son is given.**
- P: And his name shall be called:
- C: Wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**
- P: Son of David, Son of Mary.
- C: Prophet, Priest, King.**
- P: Alpha and Omega,
- C: The beginning and the end.**
- P: Immanuel, God with us,
- C: a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.**
- P: God's promise that a child would be born,
- C: and born he was, thanks be to God.**

* **HYMN ELW - #283 "O Come, All Ye Faithful"**

1. **O Come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant! O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem; come and behold him, born the king of angels:**

REFRAIN:

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

2. **The highest, most holy, light of light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he comes; Son of the Father now in flesh appearing! REFRAIN**
3. **Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God in the highest: REFRAIN**
4. **Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n! Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: REFRAIN**

* **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

P Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

A Our first reading is from Isaiah, chapter 9, verses 2-7.

This poem promises deliverance from Assyrian oppression, a hope based on the birth of a royal child with a name full of promise. While Judah's king will practice justice and righteousness, the real basis for faith lies in God's passion for the people: The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this!

The reading begins:

²The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined. ³You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN ELW - #270 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

1. **Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, god and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

REFRAIN:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

CCLI Song #27738 Words: Charles Wesley Music: Felix Mendelssohn, arr. William H. Cummings
©Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

PSALM: Psalm 96

A The Psalm today is Psalm 96. We will read the Psalm responsively. The congregation will please respond by reading the words in bold print.

¹Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

²**Sing to the LORD, bless the name of the LORD; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.**

³Declare God's glory among the nations and God's wonders among all peoples.

⁴**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised, more to be feared than all gods.**

⁵As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but you, O LORD, have made the heavens.

⁶**Majesty and magnificence are in your presence; power and splendor are in your sanctuary.**

⁷Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

⁸**Ascribe to the LORD the honor due the holy name; bring offerings and enter the courts of the LORD.**

⁹Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; tremble before the LORD, all the earth.

¹⁰**Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is king! The one who made the world so firm that it cannot be moved will judge the peoples with equity."**

¹¹Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

¹²**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy at your coming, O LORD, for you come to judge the earth.**

¹³You will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with your truth.

HYMN ELW - #275 "Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

1. **Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
once you sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:**

REFRAIN:

Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

CCLI Song # 31669 Words: James Montgomery Music: Henry Thomas Smart
©Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

A Our second reading is from Titus, chapter 2, verses 11-14.

The appearance of God's grace in Jesus Christ brings salvation for all humanity. Consequently, in the present we live wisely and justly while also anticipating the hope of our Savior's final appearance.

The reading begins:

¹¹The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹²training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,

¹³while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN ELW - #300 "The First Noel"

1. **The first Noel the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.**

REFRAIN:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

CCLI Song #31047 Words: English Traditional Music: Traditional English Carol, arr. John Stainer
©Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

* **GOSPEL:** Luke 2:1-20

God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

P The holy gospel according to St. Luke, chapter 2, verses 1-20.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

* **HYMN ELW - #282 "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"**

- 1. It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious king."
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.**

CCLI Song #31078 Words: Edmund Hamilton Sears Music: Richard Storrs Willis
© Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

SERMON

* **HYMN ELW - #290 "Go Tell It on the Mountain"**

REFRAIN:

***Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!***

- 1. While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *REFRAIN***
- 2. The shepherds feared and trembled when, lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *REFRAIN***
- 3. Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born;
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *REFRAIN***

CCLI Song #29080 Words: John W. Work, Jr. Music: African American Spiritual
©Words: Public Domain Music: Public Domain CCLI License #1729377

* **APOSTLES' CREED**

A With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

(The congregation may be seated during the prayers.)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A The shepherds sing, "Jesus Christ is born!" Let your church throughout the world proclaim this good news, over the hills and everywhere. Unite the voices of all your faithful people in songs of praise and rejoicing. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A Heaven and nature sing, "Joy to the world!" Give respite to flocks, fields, and those who tend them. Come near to us in the beauty of nighttime, the shining of the stars, and the hush of a world at rest. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A The angels sing, "Peace on earth!" Come quickly to still the strife of this world. Hush the noise of war and violence in places of unrest. Inspire leaders of nations to seek lasting peace and sustainable provision for all in their care. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A We pray for those in need of healing and whose needs are diverse and known to you including:
Cindy Kahlden; Melanie Appelt; Janis Stancik; Verna Nell Dittmar; Mae Dene Zajicek;
Tiger Bergfeld.

A God of mission, we pray for the church throughout the world. May we all proclaim the good news of your love effectively. We ask, especially, that you would bless the ministry of our sister congregation, Cristo Rey in Peru, all Missionaries, especially St. Paul's supported missionary, Dina Anton de Espinoza, and our companion synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Central African Republic. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

A The heavenly chorus sings, "Glory to God in the highest!" We give you thanks for all the saints who have proclaimed your glory in word and deed. Let us join them this night in joyful praise around your eternal throne. Hear us, O God.

C Your mercy is great.

P God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

C Amen.

*** SHARING THE PEACE**

P At the birth of Christ the angels sang a song of peace and goodwill. May the peace of the Lord be you always.

C And also with you. *(Share the "Peace of the Lord" with your neighbors.)*

(We will be collecting offerings before and after worship each week. This includes Power of One dollars.)

OFFERING and POWER OF ONE

"Power of One" is a ministry sponsored by your Stewardship Team. We are asking each and every one of our members to give \$1.00 above what your normal giving would be. We are asking each member to place this \$1.00 bill or change in the offering plate each week. The team is also inviting all children to participate to develop the habit of giving as part of their

worship experience. Parents, a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, or dollar bill, any of these will do to help your children develop a habit of giving. These "Power of One" dollars will be used to support local ministries and ministries abroad. The purpose of this ministry is to demonstrate that something as small as one dollar can be used to make a difference in the lives of others.

Special Music:

Ava Schindler (4:00 PM) – "When Love Crossed Over"

Mahlon Lighthill accompanied by Carol Lighthill (7:00 PM) – "Wonder of Wonders"

*** OFFERING PRAYER**

P Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C Amen.

*** GREAT THANKSGIVING** *(Responses Spoken)*

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,

heav'n 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.

* **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

* **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**C 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.**

* **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine. Come meet Christ in this meal.

C Amen.

(Please be seated.)

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION (Continuous with Individual Cups)

{We have an open communion policy for everyone who wishes to receive. Distribution will be continuous. Please come down the center aisle starting from the front. Follow directions of the ushers, coming up one side at a time. Please keep 6 feet between those who are not your family members. Pastor will hand you the bread. If you wish to have a gluten-free wafer, please tell Pastor "Gluten-free, please." Afterward, you will choose either wine or white grape juice from the individual cups in the tray – white grape juice in the center with wine surrounding. Place the empty cups in the baskets located off to the side. Although communion is continuous, you are welcome to kneel at the rail in prayer after receiving communion. Please return to your seat by the side aisles.}

Hymns during communion: ELW – #277 “Away in a Manger”
ELW – #279 “O Little Town of Bethlehem”
ELW – #296 “What Child is This”

* **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

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

C Amen.

* **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.

C Amen.

* **A CELEBRATION OF LIGHT**

The pastor takes the light from the center candle on the Advent wreath, which symbolizes Jesus Christ, the light of the World. The pastor then gives the light to the acolytes. They pass the light to the ushers who pass it to the worshipers throughout the pews. Please note: Always hold the lighted candle upright and tilt only the unlit candle. After all of the candles are lit, the dialog is said.

P: The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.

C: We have seen his glory.

P: Glory as the only Son from the Father

C: Full of grace and truth. (John 1:3-4)

P: In Him was light,

C: And the light was the light of all people. (John 1:3-4)

* **HYMN ELW - #281 “Silent Night, Holy Night!”**

**1. Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.**

**Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**2. Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**3. Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

Words: John Freeman Young/Joseph Mohr *Music:* Franz Xaver Gruber
© *Words:* Public Domain *Music:* Public Domain
CCLI Song #27862 CCLI Licenses #172937

* **CLOSING PRAYER**

P: As we extinguish our candles, may the light of Christ continue to burn in our hearts and actions.

C: Amen.

Candles are extinguished. Please continue to keep your candles upright until the wax has cooled, and return them to the ushers as you depart.

* **BLESSING**

P Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day † through the Word made flesh.

C **Amen.**

* **HYMN ELW - #289 “Angels We Have Heard on High”**

1. **Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.**

REFRAIN:

Glo – ria in excelsis Deo; glo – ria in excelsis Deo.

2. **Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song? *REFRAIN***

3. **Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king. *REFRAIN***

Words: French carol; tr. Henri Frederick Hemy
Music: French carol; arr. Edward S. Barnes

* **DISMISSAL**

P Go in peace. Continue to receive and share the gift of Jesus.

C **Thanks be to God, and we will.**

POSTLUDE

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.
Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.
New Revised Standard Version Bible, Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Revised Common Lectionary, Copyright © 1992 Consultation on Common Texts, admin Augsburg Fortress.
Used by permission.

USHERS: 4:00 PM: Victor & Ruth Bedford; Brad Hajdik; Debbie Yancey; Byron Marburger

7:00 PM: Mahlon Lighthill; Curtiss Schonenberg

LAY READERS: 4:00 PM: Brad Hajdik

7:00 PM: Curtiss Schonenberg

ACOLYTES: 4:00 PM: Makayla Woolery-Price

7:00 PM: Nate Muir

ALTAR GUILD: Janeen Venghaus, Belle Dungen, DyAnn Lauzon and Sharon Johnson

WELCOME: In the name of Jesus, the newborn Babe of Bethlehem, welcome to Christmas Eve worship.

THANK YOU to everyone who provided special music for the services this year!

Organist: Joan Hunsicker

Flute: Elena Holub

Trumpet: John Holub and Clayton Holub

Vocalists: Ava Schindler (4 PM) and Mahlon Lighthill accompanied by Carol Lighthill (7 PM)

COLLECTION OF OFFERING: Offering for the worship services is collected before and after worship. Offering bowls are placed in the back entrance and inside the side sanctuary door for you to place your offering in. This includes “Power of One” dollars.

ATTENTION: *Names on the prayer list in the bulletin will be printed for 2 weeks. After 2 weeks, the names will be removed from the bulletin unless the church office has been notified to keep them.*

Over the Christmas break please keep in your prayers:

Those battling cancer:

Jo Ann Moeller; Lily Presswood; Denise Lange; Cliff Grohmann; Doug Mason; Wanda Sutton; Fran Gillett; Dr. Tom Hancher; Stanley Yearwood; Joe Berry; Joyce Templeton; Tim Dahlstrom; Gracie Brune; Margaret Rogers; Leonard Kahlden; Curtis Wallin; Harvey Skow; Megan Burch; Jennifer Aleman; Lisa Grazier; Phyllis Behrend; Bill Stolle; Jamie Stokes; Jessica Mauchlen; Larry Guthrie; Donna Tiner; Libby Divin; Tina Barten; Anthony Baumbach; Cindy Masek; Denver Meyer; Diane Brooks; Bob Loy; Joe Hluchanek; Devon Tiffin; Stanley King; Monty Gillett; Dawn Foster; Amber Smith; Edward Halcolm; Alison Randazzo; Amber Kutach; Louis Camacho; Melvin Schobel; Janet Greene; Karen Teal; Sabrina Galindo; Debbie Grimes; Horst Traub; Margie Fisk; Preston Carter; Penny Miller; Carl Hahn; Megan Cain; Bob Rutta; Amanda Fuchs; Cyndi Wallace; Karen Broussard; Donna Young; Sharon Heimann; and Brenda Baker that they may know healing and comfort.

All expectant mothers and especially for:

Hannah Pavlicek; Kelsey Maertz Zapalac; Courtney Busselman; Chandler Divin; and Kelsey McNeely that they have healthy terms and deliveries, and if not, may they find comfort and peace.

Those who reside in care facilities and the homebound including:

Coy Dell Schindler; R. O. (Reuben) Barten; Clemons Venghaus; Deanna Lee; Dolores Wessels; Alma Larmer; Doris Poppe; Bill Rodgers; Barbara McMath; Linda Munos Rodgers; Mabel Krenek; Judy Brisco; Barbara Prause; Lou Cordes; Madeline Menke; Adeline Spross; Doris Horndt; Helen Perrard; Delores Purcell; Curtis Berger; Marjorie Brune; Dolores Hoelscher; Jesse Grabow; Beatrice Zikuhr; Robert Eaton; James Booker; Adrian Fritsch; Don Morrison; and Sylvia Marburger that they receive your caring and compassion.

All law enforcement officers including Troy Neisner; Jacob Gorman; Marley Mayo; Johnny Kovar; Abigail Weido; Dustin Lattimore; Andrew Lattimore; Luke Kanz; Bruno Flores; Jessica Dimas; Zane Weido; as well as Donnie Templeton and Jason Templeton who are also fire fighters. **For all fire fighters, first responders, healthcare workers and 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially** Brent Gorman, Sr.; Brent Gorman, Jr.; Reid Brasher; Dusty Dittmar; John Maertz; Ron Luedke; Randy Neuendorff; Pastor Alan Kethan; Kristi Weyand; Eric Weyand; Bradley Berger; Jon Berger; James Chollett; Edward Thraen, Jr.; Garrett Flores; Kyle Burris; Dylan Walcik; Brenda Henkes; Jan Willette, **as well as those active duty military members including** Jeanna Willett; Arturo Mares; Keven Rios; Michael Graham; Brian Anderson; Landon

Cheatham; Bryan Kubena; Brad Bergfeld; Cody Jowers; Kyle Appelt; Montana Appelt; Douglas Neuendorff; Scott Cherniss; Kameron Page; Ryan Neisner; Anthony D'Angelo; Dalton Kapel; Kindra Dawson; and William Phillips that they are protected and kept safe.

◆ **GLUTEN-FREE WAFERS:** For those who are allergic to gluten, we will have a few gluten-free wafers available at communion. Please tell Pastor when coming forward, "Gluten-free, please."

** **NOTICE REGARDING BULLETINS:** Please take your bulletin home after worship. If you do not wish to take your bulletin home, please place it in the recycling container after worship. We will **not** be reusing them for the next service. Thank you! **

** **Get the new year off to a good start!** 2021 Pocket Calendars are available for you to pick up in the narthex and church office for your use. They are a gift from the Evangelism Team. Enjoy!

► **2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE HERE!!!** Please check the coat area of the narthex for your 2021 offering envelope boxes. You can also take the box of a family member, friend or neighbor and deliver it to them. That would be appreciated very much! The boxes are in alphabetical order. Thank you!

Upcoming Worship Services: There will be no services on Christmas Day. Worship services for the weekend of December 26 & 27, 2020 will be as follows:
Saturday, December 26, 2020 – face-to-face worship at 7:00 PM
Sunday, December 27, 2020 – watch on **facebook only** at 9:00 AM – no face-to-face

SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:

Sat., Dec. 26 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship in Person
Sun., Dec. 27 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship **on facebook only**
Dec. 28, 2020 – Jan. 1, 2021 – **Office Closed! (Happy Holidays!)**
Sat., Jan. 2, 2021 – 7:00 PM – Holy Communion Worship
Next Sun., Jan. 3, 2021 – 9:00 AM – Holy Communion Worship
10:00 AM – Adult Sunday School & Confirmation
11:05 AM – Holy Communion Contemporary Worship
Wed., Jan. 6, 2021 – **Annual Reports due in the Church Office!**

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Saturday, December 26, 2020 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr
Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need.

Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

Sunday, December 27, 2020 John, Apostle and Evangelist

The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was one of the twelve disciples and witness to the transfiguration. Tradition has named him also the writer of the Gospel of John, the three New Testament letters bearing his name, as well as Revelation.

Monday, December 28, 2020 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs

This day commemorates the young children killed by Herod in Bethlehem in his jealous attempt to murder the baby Jesus, a sobering reminder of the evil that led Christ to be born for our salvation.

Friday, January 1, 2021 Name of Jesus

By Jewish law, every baby boy was circumcised and named on the eighth day of life, so on the eighth day of Christmas the church celebrates this event in Jesus' life. The keeping of the covenant as well as Jesus' name are signs of God's salvation given to us through him.

Saturday, January 2, 2021 Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, renewer of the church, died 1872

A nineteenth-century German Lutheran pastor, Loehe worked to enliven the church with the eucharist at its center, from which would flow evangelism and social ministry. He sent pastors to North America, Australia, New Guinea, Brazil, and the Ukraine.

From sundaysandseasons.com. Copyright © 2020 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS006327.

+++++

Next Week's Theme (December 26 & 27): Presentation of Jesus

Next Week's Scriptures (December 26 & 27):

First Reading: Isaiah 61:10- -62:3
"Clothed in garments of salvation."

Psalm: Psalm 148
"The splendor of the LORD is over earth and heaven." (Ps. 148:13)

Second Reading: Galatians 4:4-7
"Children and heirs of God."

Gospel: Luke 2:22-40
"The presentation of the child."