

ST. PAUL UCC

Jesus

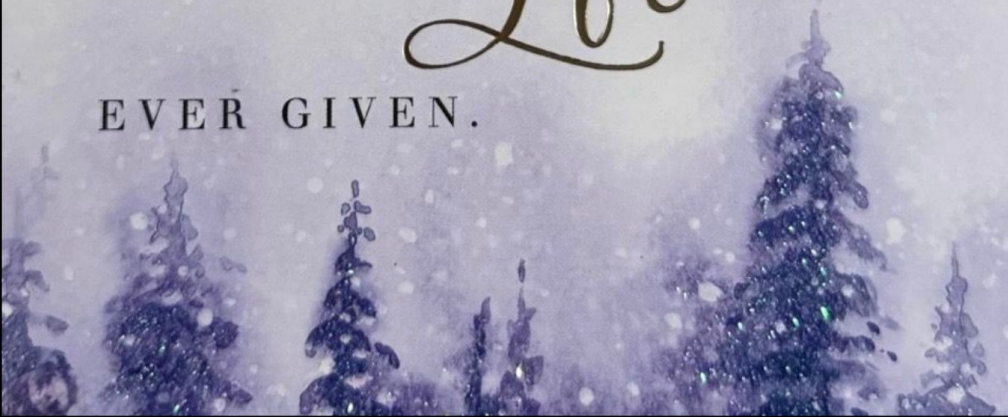


THE VERY FIRST

AND MOST BEAUTIFUL

CHRISTMAS *gift*

EVER GIVEN.





St. Paul UCC

Sunday, December 28, 2025 ~ 9:00 am
First Sunday after Christmas



TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Visiting Clergy	Rev. Joan Mier
Director of Music	Dr. Tristan Frampton
Organist	Cynthia Johnson
Liturgist	Peggy Burke

WELCOME

PRELUDE

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
(Traditional Polish Carol)
setting by Michael Ryan

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Let us celebrate, beloved, as we rejoice in the coming of the Christ-child into the depths of our hearts once again!

People: We thought we could only dream of such a beautiful Savior coming into our lives, but the Lord our God has always known that we needed Him—the One who is a guiding light for all people.

Leader: Let us follow that light, just like the Magi did two-thousand years ago, and let it align us on the path that the Lord our God has placed before us.

People: We pray for such guidance this Christmas season and into the coming year.

ALL: Shine brightly for us, O Lord Jesus, as we praise your holy name! Amen.

*INVOCATION (Unison)

We dream of the day, Lord Jesus, when we shall live eternally with you; but for now, let your Spirit visit us in this time of gathering in your holy name.

We pray that your Spirit will embrace us in divine light and love as we sing praises to you and offer the prayers of our hearts. Find us worthy of a touch of Your grace; we pray in your blessed name. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE

***OPENING HYMN**

129

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

*German and Latin, 14th century
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1855; alt.*

Descant

3 Good Chris - tian friends, re-joyce with heart and soul and voice;

1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;
3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joyce with heart and soul and voice;

now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!
now give heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now you know of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now you need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -
Ox and ass be - fore him bow, a - sleep with - in the
God has o - pened heav - en's door, and you are blessed for -
Calls you one and calls you all to gain the ev - er -

Continued next page

Good Christian Friends Rejoice , continued

last - ing hall. Christ was born, Christ was born to save!

man-ger now. Christ is born to - day, Christ is born to - day!
ev - er-more. Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
last-ing hall. Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

The musical score is written on three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The middle staff is a harmonic accompaniment in treble clef, featuring chords and moving lines. The bottom staff is a bass line in bass clef, providing a steady accompaniment. The lyrics are placed below the corresponding staves.

Tune: IN DULCI JUBILO 6.6.7.7.8.5.5.
German melody, 14th century

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

One: Seek divine wisdom, beloved of God, in this moment when you open yourselves up to pure communication with your Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer. God is open to all that you have to say—all that you want to share. As I cannot put words into your mouth in regard to what you need to say to God, I welcome you into a time of silent confession and reconciliation, and then I will offer the Words of Grace.

Silent Confession and Reconciliation

*WORDS OF GRACE

God's love is so great for us that he sent a Son, Jesus, who will help God's people to turn away from sin and seek God's grace and forgiveness. Through Christ Jesus, who offers the gift of salvation, we are set free from the burdens of sinful lives. Let us dream of such grace offered to us and all brothers and sisters. Let it be so. **Amen**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Christmas Bell Medley
by Christine Anderson
Mary Lu Bretsch, handbell solo

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 63:7-9 and Hebrews 2:10-18
Matthew 2:1-23

Peggy Burke
Rev. Joan Mier

SERMON

DREAMS

Rev. Joan Mier

PASTORAL AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.
Amen.

REFLECTION ON GIVING

In the presence of our Lord—the Christ-child who came to earth two-thousand years ago—let us offer all that we can in His holy name, to help one another to be guided by His light, His love, and His mercy. Let it be so. Amen.

COLLECTION OF THE LOVE GIFTS & OFFERTORY MUSIC

Amid the Cold of Winter
arr. Bret Rhoades
Tristan Frampton, soloist

***DOXOLOGY (Tune: Old Hundreth)**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ in whom God's grace we know
Praise Spirit, with us evermore
One God, triune, whom we adore. Amen

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION (Unison)

In the name of Jesus, we offer these gifts to you O' Lord our God, for the continuance of kind and loving ministry out into the world. We pray that through these gifts, your light will shine even brighter from this place of worship, and that people's dreams of a more peaceful existence may stem from this place. Let it be so according to your holy will. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

As with Gladness Those of Old

***COMMISSIONING**

The Christmas season is not over, for we are in the Twelve Days of Christmas. So, continue to rejoice in the birth of the Christ-child, celebrate the light that led the Wise Men, and always remember to offer praise to the Divine Son who was given for us—the “Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.”

***BENEDICTION**

Go forth and dream of the life that God wishes for every one of us, a life that is guided by holy love and light. Follow the light, receive the light, and be the light for many weary travelers who are seeking peace. Let it be so. **Amen**

POSTLUDE

Noël Provençal
by Pierre-Joseph Candeille

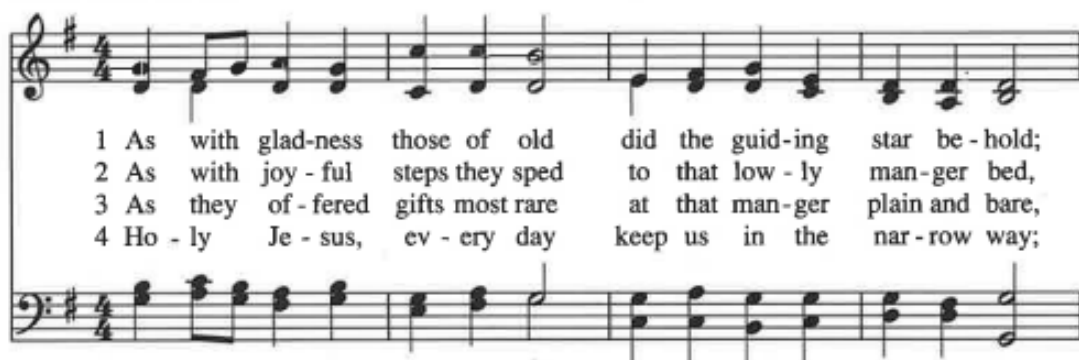


As with Gladness Those of Old

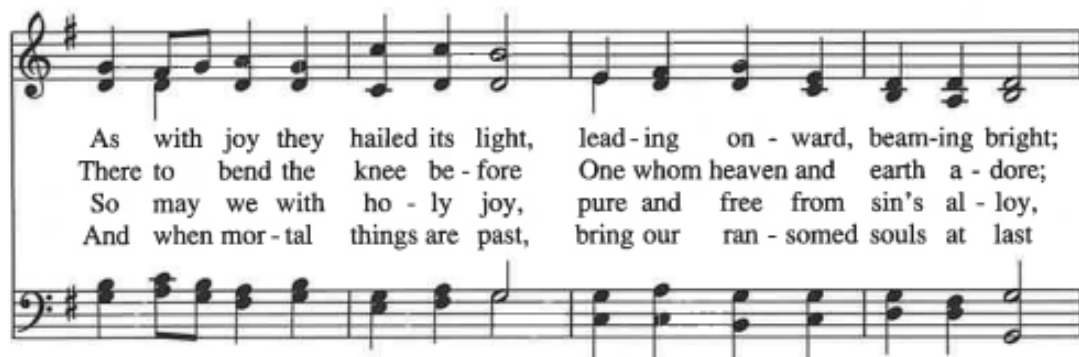
159

William C. Dix, 1861; alt.

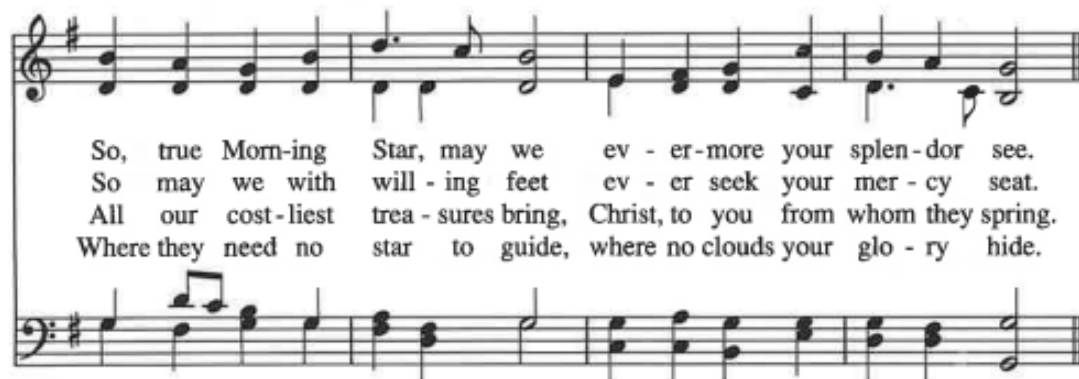
Matt. 2:1-12



1 As with glad-ness those of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped to that low-ly man-ger bed,
 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at that man-ger plain and bare,
 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-ery day keep us in the nar-row way;



As with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be-fore One whom heaven and earth a-dore;
 So may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
 And when mor-tal things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last



So, true Morn-ing Star, may we ev-er-more your splen-dor see.
 So may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek your mer-cy seat.
 All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to you from whom they spring.
 Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds your glo-ry hide.

After reading the Epiphany gospel, William C. Dix penned this hymn. Dix, the manager of a marine insurance company, was also a gifted hymnwriter. Among his many fine contributions

Tune: DIX 7.7.7.7.7.
 Conrad Kocher, 1838
 Adapt. William H. Monk. 1861



GRIEFWORKS
An LGBTQIA+
Grief SupportGroup

A peer support group for anyone in the LGBTQIA+ community who has experienced loss and is struggling with grief.

MEETINGS HELD
4TH MONDAY
EVERY MONTH

6:30-8:00 pm
St. Paul UCC
115 W. B Street
Belleville, IL 62220

griefworks2025@gmail.com



MONDAY FUN-DAY!

4th Monday of every month!

Chair Yoga 6-6:30pm

Yoga 6:30-7pm

Pickleball 6-8pm



IF PICKLEBALL AND
YOGA ISN'T FOR YOU
- WE HAVE PUZZLES
OR YOU CAN BRING
YOUR OWN BOARD
GAME!

St. Paul UCC
115 W. B. Street, Belleville
Enter on 2nd St. at the Activity Center door!
No cost - just a free will offering!
618-233-3303

Bring your
friends!

All are welcome!

For Your Prayers

Carol Hotz & Fred Hotz

Tim Ritter

Tim Ritter Jr., son of Sandy & Tim Ritter

Lou Ann Niemann

Ralph Eckart, brother in-law of

Marlene Mueller

Mike Llamas, brother in law of Mimi Llamas

Jennifer Wick, daughter of

Stephenie Bauza

Gene Buxton

Al Stahl

Audrey Krummrich

Rosie Keller

Laura Sadler

Janie Bloomer

Jerry Pierce-Heisler

Mike Foppe

Jerry Messick

Bob Stone, brother of Kathy Birkner

Weekly Offerings	12/13/2025
Operating	\$ 11,020.91
Building Fund	\$ 40.00
	\$ 11,060.91
Giving YTD	\$ 333,618.00
Weekly Budget	\$ 6,942.65
Budget to Date	\$ 340,189.93
Total Budget	\$ 361,017.89

Weekly Attendance - 9AM Service

December 7, 2025 98 + Online Participants

December 8, 2024 82 + Online Participants

All St. Paul United Church of Christ services may be recorded and/or streamed. Music is used with permission through Onelicense.net License #A-715913, CCLI #1795791, St. James Press License #17755, or public domain.

**Please call the church for
prayer requests:**

Follow us on ...

