December

Worship Leaders

Dec. 6 - Craig Bielke

Dec. 13 - Rev. Joan H. Mier

Dec. 20 - The Rev. Jeremy Lopez

Dec. 27 - Craig Bielke

Christmas Eve Service

4: 30 PM - Rev. Joan H. Mier

St. Paul Friends Christmas Party

Friday, December 11

@ 6:30pm

Heritage Hall

Everyone is invited.

Guests please bring an appetizer or dessert, your favorite beverages and a $10 donation.

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For Your Prayers

Carol Hotz & Fred Hotz
The Ritter family, Tim, Sandy & Tim Jr.
Lou Ann Niemann
Al Stahl
Laura Sadler
Alec Zaber
Jane Bonaldi
Paul Sutherland
Our Pastor Search Committee
Cathy Blaies and family (Mike's sister)
Sylvia, sister of Luci Bradley
Rich Wilburn and his family,
son-in-law of Stephenie Bauza
Stephen Agnew, son of Carolyn Hazelip
Gay Eckert
Larry Walton
Jane Peters, sister of Jerry Pierce
The Gentry family
Daniel Holtzclaw, friend of the Birkners
Gerry Hough
Stephen Schmidt

Please call the office for prayer requests. 618-233-3303

Weekly Offerings		11/20/2026
Operating	$	18,027.00
Building Fund	$	5.00
	$	18,032.00
Giving YTD	*$*	*340,395.64*
*large donation		
Weekly Budget	$	6,974.00
Budget to Date	$	320,804.00
Total Budget	$	362,648.00

Weekly Attendance - 9AM Service		
November 15, 2026	76	+ Online Participants
November 16, 2025	91	+ Online Participants

St. Paul UCC



hope

"No matter who you are, No matter where you are on life's journey, You are welcome here."

www.stpaulucc.org

Welcome



Sunday, November 29, 2026 ~ 9am
1st Sunday of Advent

TODAY'S WORSHIP LEADERS

Lay Leader . . . . . Craig Bielke
Director of Music . . . . . Dr. Tristan Frampton
Organist/Pianist . . . . . Cynthia Johnson
Liturgist . . . . . Lou Ryseff

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
arr. George Lachenauer

***RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP**
Like generations upon generations before us, we enter Advent with longing for hope to reign where despair feels entrenched, for peace to rule where conflict and destruction overwhelm.
Restore us, O God. Let your face shine, that we may be saved.
We gather, wondering whether joy will return when we have experienced so much heartbreak, whether love can make a difference when hate and apathy seem so widespread.
Restore us, O God. Let your face shine, that we may be saved.
Come, you who wait and watch for the coming Messiah, to worship God who invites us to join in the Spirit's restoration song until the days when earth and heaven both reflect the fullness of the kingdom of God.
Restore us, O God. Let your face shine, that we may be saved. Amen.

***UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION**
God of justice and peace, from the heavens you rain down mercy and kindness, that all on earth may rise in awe and wonder before your marvelous deeds. Raise our heads in expectation, that we may yearn for the coming day of the Lord and come without blame before your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

PASSING THE PEACE



Complete the St. Paul UCC
Advent Challenge

- Take home a "Starry Nights" devotional and be in prayer this Advent
- Attend worship EACH Sunday of Advent (beginning Nov. 29) and invite a friend
- Stay Coffee Hour one or more Sunday during Advent
- Attend our Holiday Concerts (Dec. 6 @ 3 PM & Dec. 20 @ 3 PM)
- Make Christmas Crafts for our homebound members Dec. 13 @ 2 PM
- Come to the Culinaires Breakfast (Dec. 20) following worship–bring a friend!
- Make a gift to the church in honor of or memory of someone special

Let's center ourselves on the reason for this joyous season!

St. Paul UCC Congregational Meeting

December 6, 2026
following worship service.

- **2027 Nominees**
- **2027 Budget**
- **St. Paul Bylaws**
- **Pastor Search Committee**

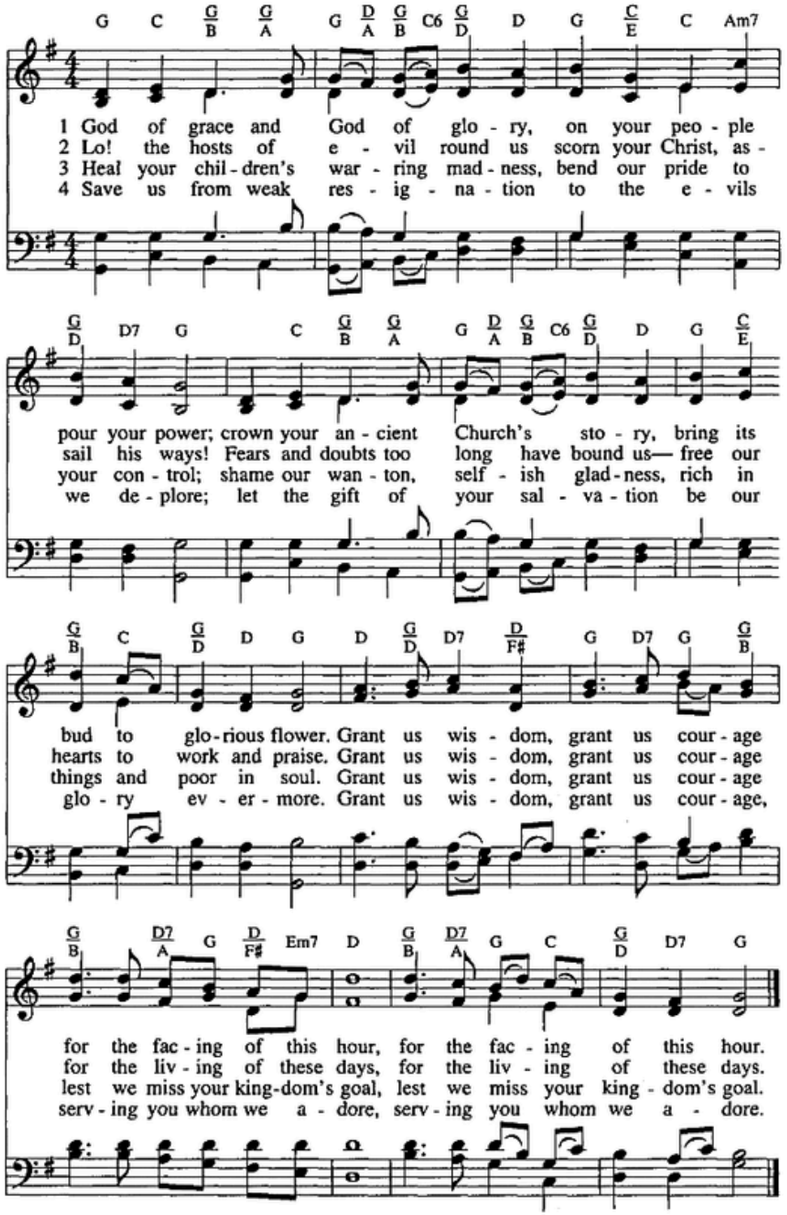
Zoom is available if you cannot be here in person. Contact the church office for the link.
618-233-3303

December 13th @ 2pm

Let's make Christmas crafts for our homebound members!

CLOSING HYMN

569 God of Grace and God of Glory

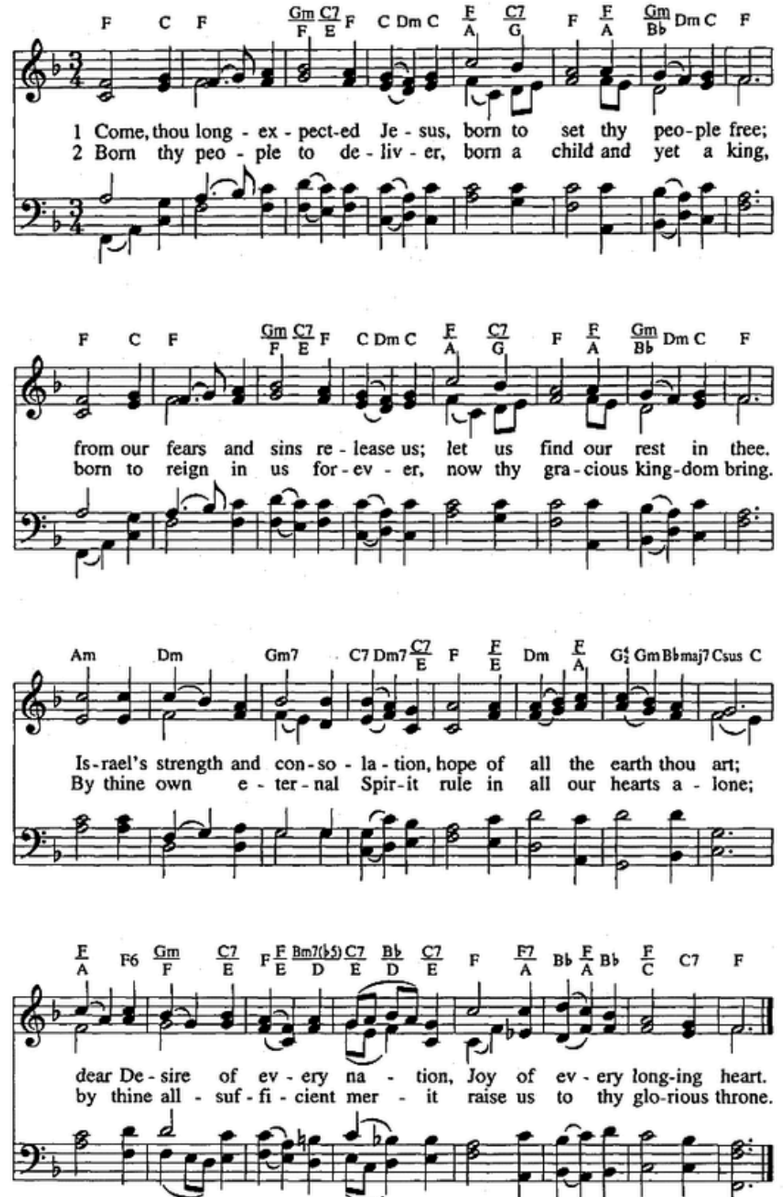


WORDS: Harry E. Fosdick (1878-1969), alt.
MUSIC: John Hughes (1873-1932)

CWM RHONDDA
8.7.8.7.8.7.7.

OPENING HYMN

153 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



WORDS: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard (1811-1887); arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

HYFRYDOL
8.7.8.7.D.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE Dana Rosenzweig & Beverly Brightwell

The prophet Isaiah declares, “From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.” Today, we continue to wait and call out in hope for God’s restoration to meet us here, believing that God knows our struggles and works even now for the fulfillment of our salvation.

When God feels far away, and our lament feels too heavy to bear, we remember God’s steadfast love. May this love empower us to wait and watch in hope for the day when God’s kingdom comes to earth as it is in heaven.

We light this candle of hope as a sign of God’s promises, that we might persevere in hope, a hope grounded not in wishes and whims but in the trustworthy and persistent love of God already at work among us to save and restore all creation.

LITANY

Peace be within your walls
And security within your towers.
For the sake of my relatives and friends
I will say, “Peace be within you.”
For the sake of the house of the Lord our God,
I will seek your good.

RESPONSE HYMN *O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (VERSE 1)*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

CALL TO AND UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful God, we have failed to love you with our whole heart and to be good stewards of your creation. We have failed to take up the cross of discipleship and to be good stewards of your gospel. We have failed to be faithful members of your church and to be good stewards of your spiritual gifts. Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Amen.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION AND WORDS OF ASSURANCE

ANTHEM *Advent Hymn*
by Don Besig
Sanctuary Choir

SCRIPTURES Isaiah 64:1-9 Lou Ryseff
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
Mark 13:24-37

SERMON Craig Bielke

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 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.

RECEIVING OF THE GIFTS AND OFFERTORY MUSIC

Wachet Auf
(Wake up!)
by Johann Gottfried Walther

***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

DEDICATION PRAYER (UNISON)

Restoring God, in seasons when your presence feels distant, you still hear the cries of your people. We come with longing hearts, bringing these gifts as signs of hope in your renewing grace. Receive what we offer and use it to restore what is broken, to strengthen what is weary, and to shine your light in place of despair. As we wait for your coming, shape us into a people who remember your faithfulness, who sing even in difficult days, and who live as witnesses to your promise. Restore us again, O God, that your salvation may be seen through us. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *God of Grace and God of Glory* (see page 6)

COMMISSIONING + CHARGE + BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *Vous qui desirez sans fin*
(You who desire without end)
arr. Jean-François Dandrieu