

# St. Paul's Epistle – December 2020

HERE WE GO AGAIN!

Once again we find ourselves needing to do things differently from where we have just been—transitioning from indoor in-person worship to online worship. We were able to have four months of outdoor worship (July thru October) and three weeks of indoor worship (November 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup>) before needing to go back to either watching the service on Facebook or receiving a hard copy of the sermon and prayer and worshipping that way.

And also, here we go again with a new church year which officially began on Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup> with the first Sunday in Advent, our preparation time before Christmas. We remember “why” Jesus had to come to us in the first place—“from our fears and sins release us,” in the words of the hymn, “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus.”

And again, we have already begun the period between Thanksgiving and the New Year as the “holidays,” although they will be somewhat different from how we have been accustomed to celebrating them in previous years.

So, what is a person to do, amidst all the changing scenes of this life, amidst all the turmoil of a pandemic, the change of seasons, perhaps a change in health, and any number of other things that seem to come all too repetitively in this “world of sin,” as the Christmas song “O Little Town of Bethlehem” puts it.

Come what may, we know, in the words of a hymn we generally sing near the end of December or shortly after the New Year begins—

*O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while troubles last, And our eternal home!*

Let us pray: Lord God, bless Your Word wherever and however it is proclaimed. Make it a word of power and peace to convert those not yet Your own and to confirm those who have come to saving faith. May Your Word pass from the ear to the heart, from the heart to the lip, and from the lip to the life that, as You have promised, Your Word may achieve the purpose for which You send it; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. And God's people said: AMEN.

*Pastor  
Poganski*

## Worship Notes

**Let us come near to God** as shared in Hebrews chapter 10, verse 22 and following: “So let us come near to God with a sincere heart and a sure faith, with hearts that have been purified from a guilty conscience and with bodies washed with clean water. Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess, because we can trust God to keep his promise. Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer.” (Good News Bible)

What a privilege, what a blessing...to worship our Lord and Savior! As stated, **“Let us hold on firmly to the hope we profess... let us be concerned for one another...let us not give up the habit of meeting together (even if it is virtual at this time) and...let us encourage one another all the more.”**

Our **Worship in December** will be Virtual on Sunday mornings and will also include special Advent meditations, worship for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

**Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>** is the Second Sunday in Advent. We look to Mark 1:1-8 as our Gospel and Sermon theme and are enriched to hear, “Believe in the Lord Jesus”. The Old Testament lesson is taken from Isaiah 40:1-11 and New Testament from 2 Peter 3:8-14. We will share Hymns selected from Lutheran Service Book (LSB) : “When All the World Was Cursed” (# 346); “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” (#344); and, “Hark the Glad Sound” (#349).

**Sunday, December 13<sup>th</sup>** is the Third Sunday in Advent. The Gospel lesson from John 1:6-8 and 19-28 provides the text for the Sermon titled, “God’s Unexpected Salvation”. Other lessons are Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24. Hymns from LSB may include “Light of Light, O Sole-Begotten” (#914); “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding”(# 345); and, “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (# 338).

**Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>** is the Fourth Sunday in Advent. We read Luke 1:26-38 as the Gospel and meditate on "Mary, Mother of God" in the Sermon. The Old Testament reading is 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 and the New Testament reading, Romans 16:25-27. Hymns will be selected from LSB: "Savior of the Nations, Come" (#332); "O Come O Come, Emmanuel" (#357) and, "What Hope! An Eden Prophesied" (#342).

**Sunday, December 27** is the First Sunday After Christmas. The Sermon is titled, "Simeon's Song" based on a portion of the Gospel from Luke 2:22-40. We also hear from Isaiah 61:10-62:3 and Galatians 4:4-7. We share Hymns from LSB: "Let All Together Praise Our God" (#389); "Lord, Bid Your Servant Go in Peace" (#937) and, "Let Us All with Gladsome Voice" (#390).

**"Comfort, comfort," says the voice, "My people that they may rejoice"**  
**The weight of sin, the judgement rod, Removed by Christ, the Son of God.**  
**Witness, witness to the world The glory of the Lord unfurled. The hour now strikes, the dawn-light breaks, God keeps the promises he makes.**  
**Lift your voice, speak words of pow'r That none may fear the awesome hour. Now comes the Lord, your God is here, His grace and might rule far and near.**

(#21 Lutheran Worship verses 1, 4 and 6)

Hope, Comfort, Joy in Him,


Karen Broach, Worship Committee member

P.S. We will also have midweek Advent meditations, and do something for Christmas Eve/Day.

### **December Mission of the Month - LAMP Ministries**

LAMP or Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots, has been providing spiritual witness and nurturing faith in communities in remote areas of Northern Canada since 1970 through the ministry of Pastor/Missionary/Pilots, and short- and long-term volunteers-in-mission. Each year over 5000 children, youth and adults are impacted by the ministry of LAMP. If you would like to give a gift, please use your offering envelope which states on it "Designated gift for December". You may also give an earmarked gift to "LAMP Ministries". [Note: Please make any checks out to "St. Paul Lutheran Church"-Thanks!]

# December 2020 - St. Paul, Auburn

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
			A Midweek Advent Meditation will be available on Facebook			
<b>Second Sunday in Advent</b> 9 a.m. Online Worship 10:30 Zoom Bible Class	7	8	9	10	11	12
			A Midweek Advent Meditation will be available on Facebook			
<b>Third Sunday in Advent</b> 9 a.m. Online Worship 10:30 Zoom Bible Class	14	15	16	17	18	19
			A Midweek Advent Meditation will be available on Facebook	10 a.m. Ladie's Bible Study on Zoom		
<b>Fourth Sunday in Advent</b> 9 a.m. Online Worship 10:30 Zoom Bible Class	<b>St. Thomas, Apostle</b> 21	22	23	24	25	26
				<b>Christmas Eve</b> An online meditation will be available on Facebook	<b>Christmas Day</b> An online meditation will be available on Facebook	<b>St. Stephen, Martyr</b>
<b>First Sunday after Christmas, and St. John, Apostle</b> 9 a.m. Online Worship 10:30 Zoom Bible Class	<b>Holy Innocents, 28 Martyrs</b>	29	30	31		