



Saint Paul's United Methodist Church
"A Compassionate Community Led and Transformed by the Spirit."
Sunday, December 7th, 2025 - 10:30 AM Service
Second Sunday of Advent ~ "Peace"



We welcome you, trusting that this time of worship will open our hearts to experience the Spirit's movement among us. Together, we seek peace, health, and wholeness as we gather in God's presence.

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**Indicates a standing portion of the service. Please stand as you are able.*

GATHERING

Gathering Music "Peace" *Molly MacMillan, piano*
by Taylor Swift

Greetings & Welcome

Lighting of the Advent Candle *Allison Chatrychan, Barbara Morrill,
Jennifer Morrill*

***Opening Prayer (unison)**

**Here, at the nativity of your birth,
give us the courage to face this moment with new air in our lungs.
Open us to new understandings of the unfolding story of your presence
among us.**

Show us the true meaning of peace on earth, good will for all.

**We pray in the name of the Child, the Prince of Peace in our hearts and
lives.**

Amen.

***Opening Hymn** "Star Child" TFWS#2095

***Sharing Love & Peace with All**

PROCLAIMING

A Message for All God's Children *Pastor Alicia Wood*

Special Music "A La Nanita Nana" *Chancel Choir*
arr. by Victor Johnson

Scripture *(See insert)* *Patty Sipman*

Message “Peace, How Long Must We Wait?” *Pastor Alicia Wood*

RESPONDING

***Hymn of Response** “It Came Upon A Midnight Clear” UMH #218

Prayers of the People *Ann Bohman*

Offering Our Gifts to God

Offertory “Prayer for Peace” *Molly MacMillan, piano*
by Bob Mintzer

***Prayer of Dedication** (*in unison*)

**Holy God,
May peace flow through me as music through an instrument,
let flow through me like the warmth from the sun,
may peace flow through meso that I may be a vessel of the love of God
for everyone.**

Amen

Holy Communion (*See insert*)

The Lord’s Prayer

SENDING FORTH

Announcements & Closing Thought

***Closing Hymn** “Let There Be Peace on Earth” UMH #431

***Dismissal with Blessing**

Postlude “My Favorite Things” *Molly MacMillan, piano*
by Rogers & Hammerstein

-----PRAYERS-----

For **Prayer Chain Requests**, confidential concerns seen only by those who participate in the Prayer Chain, please contact Jami Breedlove-Crouch at lovingcare@stpaulsithaca.org or Pastor Alicia at pastor@stpaulsithaca.org.

Prayer Requests: Family of Melissa Gould; Joan Reppert; Linda Yetter; Ruth Lovelace; Andrea Downing Zheng and family; Larry Roberts; Mary and Matthew Boardman. Pray for healing within the United Methodist Church as we live into the new reality of being a fully inclusive denomination.

Prayer requests will be published in the bulletin for four weeks. If you would like someone to remain on the list, Jami Breedlove-Crouch at lovingcare@stpaulsithaca.org or 607-269- 5509. Please remember that we also need permission from the person listed.

***A Memorial Service for Melissa Gould will be held
next Saturday, December 13th at 11am.
Short reception to follow.***

It's Not Too Late to Join the Advent Study Group

It's not too late to join the Advent Study Group as they discuss the book, "The First Advent in Palestine: Reversals, Resistance, and the Ongoing Complexity of Hope." To purchase a copy, please stop by the office and see Dee. The cost of the book is \$11. If paying by check, please make it out to "SPUMC" with "Advent Study Group" in the subject line. Please join us if you can!

Coffee with the Pastor Continues

Coffee with the Pastor meets again **this Wednesday, December 10th at 9:45am**, where we'll continue to discuss the Daily Journal for Advent that follows our Advent worship series, "What Child IS This? Beyond the Lullaby." Copies are available on the table outside the sanctuary; if you'd prefer to follow along online or download a copy at home, follow the link provided in the Friday email. Let us go deeper on our journey of faith this season.

St. Paul's Ministries ~ Week of December 7th, 2025

Sunday, December 7th – Second Sunday of Advent

10:30am – Worship with Communion- Sanctuary
11:30am – Coffee/Fellowship Time – Memorial Room
11:45am – "Connections" Young Adult Group – Durham Room

Monday, December 8th

4:45pm – Lay Leadership Team - ZOOM
7:00pm – Advent Study Group – Memorial Rooms/ZOOM

Tuesday, December 9th

6:00pm – Finance Meeting – ZOOM
7:15pm – Trustees Meeting - ZOOM

Wednesday, December 10th

9:45am – Advent Coffee w/the Pastor – Memorial Room
5:30pm – Local & World Missions – ZOOM

Thursday, December 11th

10:00am – Fiber Arts Group – Durham Room
11:30am-12:30pm – OAM Christmas Luncheon & Cookie Exchange
6:00pm – Festival Chimes rehearsal – Sanctuary
7:15pm – Chancel Choir rehearsal – Dining Room

Friday, December 12th

Church Offices Closed

Saturday, December 13th

11:00am – Melissa Gould Memorial Service & Reception – Sanctuary & Memorial Room

Sunday, December 14th– Third Sunday of Advent

10:30am – Worship– Sanctuary
10:45am – Faith Explorers – Rm. 115, Main Floor
11:30am – Coffee/Fellowship Time – Memorial Room
12:00pm – Children's Ministry Cookie Decorating – Memorial Rooms

Children and Worship – Children are always welcome in worship! To help keep small hands busy, we have books and toys on the black cart near the main sanctuary door. ***Children aged 4 to 11 are invited to participate in “Faith Explorers” following the “Message for Children” segment during worship (except on Communion Sundays).***

OAM Holiday Luncheon This Thursday

The Older Adult Ministry team invites you to join them for a festive holiday lunch, carol singing, and homemade cookies to be held in the Memorial Room **this Thursday, December 11, from 11:30am-12:30pm**. If you didn't receive an e-vite but wish to attend, **please RSVP as soon as possible with Dee in the office** so we can get an accurate head count. Hope to see you there!

Don't Miss Cookie Decorating Next Sunday!

St Paul's will be holding its 3rd Annual Intergenerational Cookie Decorating on **Sunday, December 14 in the Memorial Room after worship at 12:15pm**. Everyone is invited to participate and to bring friends! Please sign-up ASAP with Dee at office@stpaulsithaca.org or call 607-273-5971 so we have enough cookies and decorating items on hand for everyone.

Calling All Cookie Bakers

We need 15 dozen sugar or gingerbread cut-out or flat drop cookies for our Cookie Decorating party on December 14th. A few dozen gluten-free cookies are needed as well. If you can bake cookies to decorate, please contact Joellyn Tuttle at jrwuttule@gmail.com or ring/text her at: 315-289-7187. Thank you in advance!

***It's almost time to order your holiday poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one! You'll find an order form in the 2025 Winter Newsletter, as well as on our website. Dee in the office has copies as well. Don't delay!**

Our Staff

Rev. Alicia (Pastor Alicia) Wood / Senior Pastor / pastor@stpaulsithaca.org
Jami Breedlove-Crouch / Loving Care Ministries Coordinator / lovingcare@stpaulsithaca.org
Dee Levine / Church Administrative Assistant & Communications / office@stpaulsithaca.org
Michelle Eells / Business & Building Ministries Coordinator / business@stpaulsithaca.org
Maia Finkel / Choral and Ensembles Director / choirdirector@stpaulsithaca.org
Molly MacMillan / Pianist / pianist@stpaulsithaca.org
David Kingsley / Technical Director / dkingsley@stpaulsithaca.org
Dorothy Preston / Festival Chimes Director / dpreston@stpaulsithaca.org
Sue Orzel / Custodian

St. Paul's United Methodist Church

402 North Aurora St., Ithaca, NY

Find us at www.stpaulsithaca.org, Facebook and Instagram

Church Office Hours are 9:00 AM-12:00 PM Sunday – Thursday

Office Phone: 607-273-5971 Pastoral Care Line: 607-269-5509

Star-Child

2095



1. Star - Child, earth - Child, go - be - tween of God,
2. Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
3. Grown child, old child, mem - ory full of years,
4. Spared child, spoiled child, hav - ing, want - ing more,
5. Hope - for - peace Child, God's stu - pend - ous sign,



love Child, Christ Child, heav - en's light - ning rod,
 hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,
 sad child, lost child, sto - ry told in tears,
 wise child, faith child, know - ing joy in store,
 down - to - earth Child, Star of stars that shine,

Refrain



This year, this year, let the day ar - rive when



Christ - mas comes for ev - ery - one, ev - ery - one a - live!

WORDS: Shirley Erena Murray (Matt. 2:1-12)

MUSIC: Carlton R. Young

STAR CHILD
45.45 with Refrain

Scripture: **Luke 1: 5-25, 57-80** (*The Inclusive Bible*)

Patty Sipman

Introduction by Reader: Today we hear the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth. They lived in a time called the “Pax Romana,” or Roman Peace, and many called Caesar a “savior” because he ended, by force, the seemingly endless cycle of war. In the book, “The First Advent in Palestine,” author Kelley Nikondeha says this: “What made some see Caesar as a savior was a kind of peace that benefited the few while exploiting the many; one that usurped land and harvests from the poor. Perhaps, I thought, the first Advent was God’s critique of what the world called peace.” It was in this time of “peace with oppression” that religious leaders like Zechariah had to serve, making sure to walk the line of honor to God, but deference to Caesar and to Herod, the so-called “King of the Jews.”

Hear the story from Luke 1:5-25:

In the days of the ruler Herod, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the priestly class of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. Both were worthy in the sight of God and scrupulously observed all the commandments and observances of our God. They were childless—unable to conceive—and they were both advanced in years. Now it was the turn of Zechariah’s priestly class to serve. And as he was fulfilling his priestly office before God, it fell to him by lot, according to priestly usage, to enter the sanctuary of our God and offer incense. While the full assembly of people was praying outside at the time of day when the incense was offered, an angel of our God appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was deeply disturbed upon seeing the angel, and was overcome with fear.

The angel said to him, “Don’t be frightened, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son, whom you’ll name John. He will be your joy and delight and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of our God. He must never drink wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb. And he will bring many of the children of Israel back to their God Most High. He will go before God as a forerunner, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the rebellious to the wisdom of the just—to make ready a people prepared for our God.” Zechariah said to the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife too is advanced in age.” The angel replied, “I am Gabriel, who stands before God. I was sent to speak to you and bring you this good news. But because you have not trusted my words, you’ll be mute—unable to speak—until the day these things take place. They’ll all come true in due season.” Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondered about his delay in the sanctuary. When he finally came out he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision inside. But he could only make signs to them and remained mute. Then, when his time of priestly service was over, he went home.

Sometime later, Elizabeth conceived. She went into seclusion for five months, saying, “Our God has done this for me. In these days, God has shown favor to us and taken away the disgrace of our having no children.”

Reader Continues: We move forward in the same chapter of Luke to verses 57- 80 where the story of Zechariah continues after the birth of their son. As was promised, Zechariah was silent no longer. When he began to speak, it was a word of prophecy about his son John making the way for the Promised One and the way of true peace.

Hear the story as it continues:

When the time came for Elizabeth to deliver, she gave birth to a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard that God had been merciful to her, they shared her joy. When all had assembled for the circumcision on the eighth day, they intended to name the baby after his father Zechariah. But his mother spoke up, “No, he is to be called John.” They pointed out to her, “But no one in your family has this name.” Then they made signs to the father to find out what he wanted the child to be John.” They were all astonished. Immediately Zechariah’s mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. Their neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea, people were talking about these events. All who heard the news stored it in their hearts and said, “What will this child turn out to be?” For God’s hand was with him. Zechariah, John’s father, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

“Blessed are you, the Most High God of Israel—for you have visited and redeemed your people. You have raised up a mighty savior for us of the house of David, as you promised through the mouths of your holy ones, the prophets of ancient times: salvation from our enemies and from the hands of all our foes.

You have shown mercy to our ancestors by remembering the holy Covenant you made with them, the oath you swore to Sarah and Abraham, granting that we, delivered from the hands of our enemies, might serve you without fear, in holiness and justice, in your presence all our days. And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you’ll go before our God to prepare the way for the Promised One, giving the people the knowledge of salvation through forgiveness of their sins.

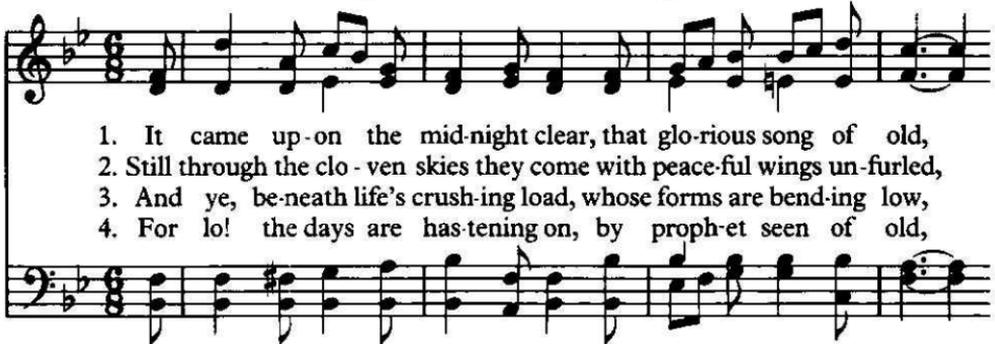
Such is the tender mercy of our God, who from on high will bring the Rising Sun to visit us, to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow of death and to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

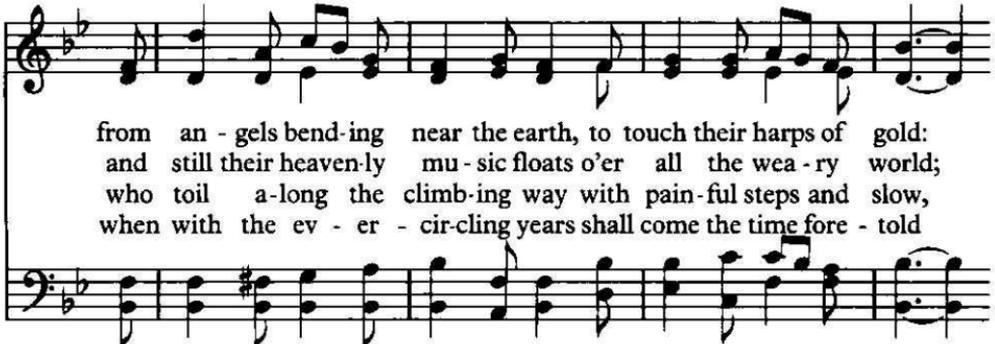
In the meantime, the child grew up and became strong in spirit. He lived out in the desert until the day he appeared openly in Israel.

Hear What the Spirit is Saying to the Church!

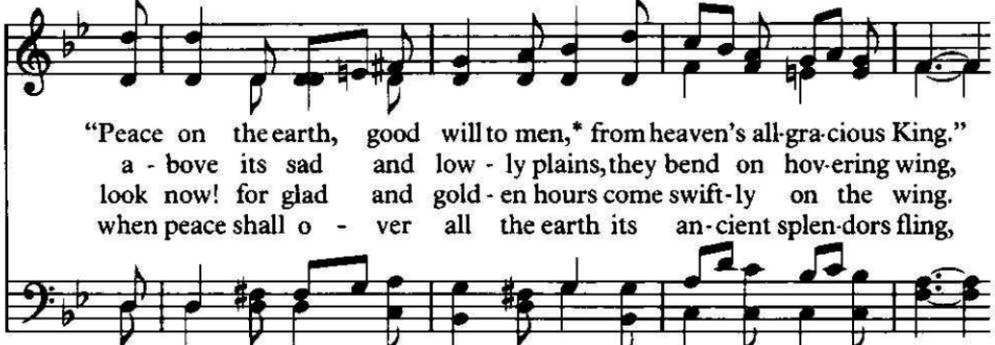
Thanks be to God!

218 It Came upon the Midnight Clear

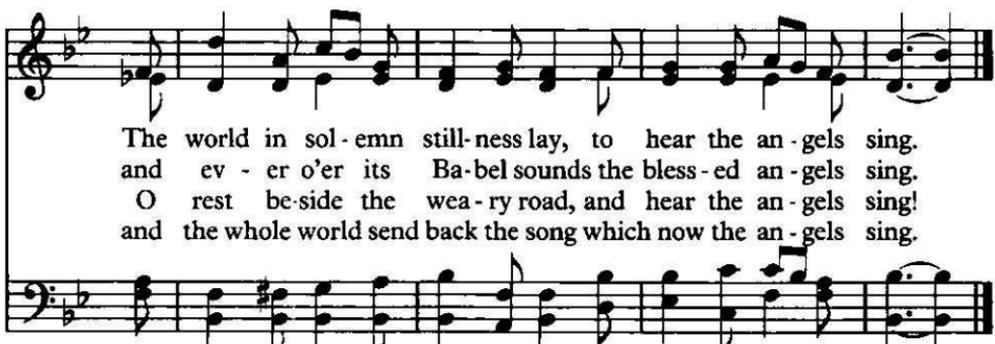
- 
1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-ri-ous song of old,
 2. Still through the clo-ven skies they come with peace-ful wings un-furled,
 3. And ye, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,
 4. For lo! the days are has-tening on, by proph-et seen of old,



from an - gels bend-ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:
and still their heav-en-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
who toil a-long the climb-ing way with pain-ful steps and slow,
when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told



"Peace on the earth, good will to men,* from heaven's all-gracious King."
a - bove its sad and low - ly plains, they bend on hov-ering wing,
look now! for glad and gold - en hours come swift-ly on the wing,
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an-cient splen-dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay, to hear the an - gels sing.
and ev - er o'er its Ba-bel sounds the bless-ed an - gels sing.
O rest be-side the wea - ry road, and hear the an - gels sing!
and the whole world send back the song which now the an - gels sing.

*"all" may be substituted

Holy Communion

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is good, Holy One, to give thanks to you,
always and everywhere.

You created us, you loved us into being,
you delivered us, and you spoke to us through prophets.
And then the time came for you to be with us, Emmanuel.

(Bolded words sung to the tune of UMH#221, "In the Bleak Midwinter")

**In a time of trouble, poverty, and pain,
Living was a struggle. Hoping was a strain.
Fear and desperation robbed the world of joy.
In a weary nation, Mary had a boy.**

And so,
with your people on earth
and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy, God of pow'r and might.
Raise we now, "Hosanna," to the highest height.
Heav'n and earth proclaim it, in all time and space.
Blest are we to meet you, in this holy place.**

Mary's boy became a man, compassionate and kind.
He invited all to follow the way of the kin-dom,
the commonwealth of God.
Wherever he went, he tended to those who suffered.

**Teaching, feeding, healing, Jesus showed the way,
Sacred love revealing day by day by day,
Practicing resistance, cultivating care,
Centered in persistence, every act a prayer.**

His own suffering at the hands of the elite
gave birth to a movement of your Spirit, O God,
that would forge a new covenant of [hope/peace/joy/love/light].
Jesus promised to be with us always,

in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

When the supper was over, he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me.”

And so,
in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ’s offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

**Christ came to uplift us, by his life we give.
Christ gave up his lifeblood, by his death we live.
Christ comes to us now, still, as we gather here.
Christ will come again, so, nothing shall we fear.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
so that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.
Amen.

**So, my friends and neighbors, now it’s up to us.
May we welcome strangers, building faith and trust.
May we live like Jesus in our time and place
’Til this weary people know amazing grace.**

Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with

me; let there be peace on earth, the peace that was

meant to be. *With God our cre - a - tor,

chil - dren all are we. Let us

walk with each oth - er in per - fect har - mo - ny.

*Original words: *With God as our Father, brothers all are we. Let me walk with my brother in perfect harmony.*

WORDS: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

MUSIC: Sy Miller and Jill Jackson; harm. by Charles H. Webb, 1987

WORLD PEACE

Irr.

Let peace be - gin with me; let this be the mo - ment

now. With ev - ery step I take, let

this be my sol - emn vow: to take each mo - ment and

live each mo - ment in peace e - ter - nal - ly.

Let there be peace on earth, and let it be - gin with me.