

HE COMES,
BEARING
gifts

THE GIFT OF HOPE



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 2, 2018 – First Sunday in Advent

In an ever-changing world, St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church exists to build Christ's kingdom in people's hearts with the un-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Welcome! Thank you for joining us for worship this morning. In our service we gather before our almighty God to offer Him our worship and praise. We also gather to strengthen ourselves through the study of God's holy and powerful Word.

- ⌘ **Restrooms** are located in the fellowship hall and in the basement of the church.
- ⌘ **Broadcast Sponsor** Our broadcast today is sponsored in loving memory of Lois Schroeder by her family and friends. Lois would have celebrated her 85th birthday November 26th.
- ⌘ **Guest Book** Please sign our guest book which is located at the top of the steps in the front entryway.
- ⌘ Our Sunday morning service can be heard on KWBE 1450AM (94.7FM) and viewed live and archived at www.stpaulsplymouth.org. Please share this information with those who are not able to attend worship.

WORSHIP NOTES

OUR WORSHIP SERIES: Our Lord Jesus is coming, bearing real gifts, profoundly important gifts. He came that first Christmas to win forgiveness and give all the gifts that come with it: hope, peace, joy, love. He is coming again at the end of this world to give the gift of resurrection to eternal life. In the season of Advent, we connect Christ's first coming with His second coming. We rejoice in all the unconditional gifts He gives. Each Sunday during the gathering rite Advent candles are lighted. Music occurs throughout this rite to accompany singing and as background music to communicate themes of longing and repentance.

THEME OF THE DAY: The world seems to grow more dangerous each year. People are more divided than they have been in a long time. Immorality is no longer something that people try to hide. As a nation, we have become largely disinterested in God. Disgusted by the world, we then look in the mirror, and we see our sinful nature living inside us is no better! For we confess with Paul in Romans 7, "what a wretched man I am!"

Looking at our world or at ourselves, it is easy to become discouraged. But today on the first Sunday of Advent, Christ Jesus wants us to live in hope. Our hope is not a naïve wish that things will get better. Our hope is rooted in the fact that Christ came at that first Christmas to forgive every sin. Our hope is that just as He kept His promise to come the first time, Jesus will keep His promise to come again and destroy everything that is wrong with Creation. Judgment Day will be full of incomprehensible terror for those who have aligned themselves with the world. But Christians hope that day comes soon. Confident that we are wrapped in Christ's righteousness, it will be a day of great deliverance.

Order of Service for THE SEASON OF ADVENT



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHOIR “Children Get Ready” by Lynn Bailey & Becki Mayo

STAND

INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF SINS AND ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

M: When God created the world, He made the crown of his creation—the human race—in His image. Perfect people lived in a perfect world in a perfect relationship with God.

C: **But mankind rebelled against God, bringing sin into the world and death to all. God declared the wages of sin to be death. We too are guilty, and we confess our sinful thoughts, words, and actions.**

M: However, God—who is Love—did not want to be separated from His children forever. He promised a Savior who would bear the punishment for sin, defeat the devil, and break the bonds of death. *Genesis 1:26; Romans 6:23*

ALL:

O, come, O, come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
Un-til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - joice! Re - joice!
Em - man - u - el Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

M: When the time had fully come, God sent His Son. Jesus, our Savior, has paid the ransom for your debt; your sins are forgiven. In view of God's mercy, today we light the hope candle. The Spirit declares through the psalmist, "Put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love, and with Him is full redemption."

C: We wait for the Lord, and in His word we put our hope. *Galatians 4:4,5; Psalm 130:5,7*

ALL:



O, come, our Hope, who has de-clared "Sal - va - tion's won; do
not de-spair." Help us be-lieve that once for all
You bore God's wrath, re - deem - ing all. Re-joice! Re-joice!
Em-man - u - el Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

M: In the hope of God we go to the world—to our friends, relatives, acquaintances and neighbors. We regard no one from a worldly point of view. If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

C: God has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making His appeal through us. Jesus, who had no sin, became sin for us; in Him we have become the righteousness of God. *2 Corinthians 5:16-21*

ALL:



Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man - u - el Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

✠ The Word ✠

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M: Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by Your strength and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: **Amen.**

BE SEATED

FIRST LESSON

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The nation of Israel lived in hope that, one day, a descendant of King David would provide perfect justice, safety, and righteousness. God fulfilled this promise when He sent Jesus, not to be the worldly King of the nation of Israel, but to be the Savior of the world.

¹⁴ “ ‘The days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the gracious promise I made to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

¹⁵ “ ‘In those days and at that time
I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David’s line;
he will do what is just and right in the land.

¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved
and Jerusalem will live in safety.
This is the name by which it will be called:
The LORD Our Righteousness.’



To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul;*
in you I trust, O my God.

Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,*
for they are from of old.

Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways;*
according to your love remember me,
for you are good, O LORD.

Refrain

Turn to me and be gracious to me,*
for I am lonely and afflicted.

Look upon my affliction and my distress*
and take away all my sins.

Guard my life and rescue me,*
for I take refuge in you.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

SECOND LESSON

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

We live in the certain hope of being found holy and blameless on Judgment Day. We can be certain in that hope because God promises that through His Word He will strengthen the faith in Jesus in our hearts.

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. ¹² May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. ¹³ May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

VERSE OF THE DAY

Matthew 12:18,21

“Here is my servant whom I have chosen,
the one I love, in whom I delight;
I will put my Spirit on him,
and he will proclaim justice to the nations.
In his name the nations will put their hope.”

STAND

GOSPEL

Luke 21:25-36

There are signs all around us that Christ could return anytime. We hope that He does, because we know that for God's children, Jesus isn't bringing judgment, but redemption.

SERMON TEXT

²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. ²⁶ Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken. ²⁷ At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹ He told them this parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees. ³⁰ When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near. ³¹ Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.

³² “I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³⁴ “Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap. ³⁵ For it will come upon all those who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be always on the watch, and pray that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen, and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man.”

M: This is the Gospel of our Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

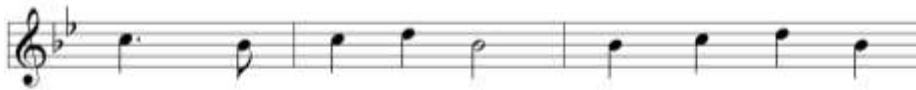
BE SEATED

HYMN OF THE DAY — 2

Savior of the Nations, Come



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; Vir - gin's
 2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, By the
 3 Won - drous birth! O won - drous Child Of the
 4 From the Fa - ther's throne he came And as -
 5 Praise to God the Fa - ther sing, Praise to



Son, make here your home. Mar - vel now, O
 Spir - it of our God Was the Word of
 vir - gin un - de - filed, Though by all the
 cend - ed to the same, Cap - tive lead - ing
 God the Son, our King, Praise to God the



heav'n and earth, That the Lord chose such a birth.
 God made flesh, Wo - man's off - spring, pure and fresh.
 world dis - owned, Yet to be in heav'n en - throned!
 death and hell— High the song of tri - umph swell!
 Spir - it be Ev - er and e - ter - nal - ly.

SERMON

STAND

APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

BE SEATED

OFFERING

STAND

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Prayers are brought to the Lord

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring You our private petitions.

Silent prayer

LORD'S PRAYER

M: We pray in Jesus' name, and join in the prayer that He has taught us:

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.

BE SEATED



1 Je - sus, your Church with long - ing eyes For your ex -
 2 E'en now, when tem - pests round us fall And win - try
 3 Come, gra - cious Lord, our hearts re - new, Our sins for -
 4 Oh, come and reign o'er ev - 'ry land; Let Sa - tan
 5 Teach us in watch - ful - ness and prayer To wait for



pect - ed com - ing waits. When will the prom - ised
 clouds o'er - cast the sky, Your words with plea - sure
 give, our foes sup - press, Our root - ed en - mi -
 from his throne be hurled. Let na - tions bow to
 your ap - point - ed hour, And fit us by your



light a - rise And glo - ry beam from heav - en's gates?
 we re - call And know that our re - demp - tion's nigh.
 ty sub - due, And crown your gos - pel with suc - cess.
 your com - mand; Let grace re - vive a dy - ing world.
 grace to share The tri - umphs of your con - qu'ring pow'r.

STAND

PRAYER

M: Blessed Lord, You have given us Your Holy Scriptures for our learning. May we so hear them, read, learn, and take them to heart, that being strengthened and comforted by Your Holy Word, we may cling to the blessed hope of everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BLESSING

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.

Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give ✠ you peace.

C: Amen.



1 Ho - san - na to the com - ing Lord! Ho - san - na
 2 O Sav - ior, with pro - tect - ing care A - bide in
 3 O Ad - vent King, our sins for - give; Come in our
 4 Then in the last and dread - ful day, When earth and

to the in - car - nate Word! To Christ, Cre - a - tor, Sav -
 this your house of prayer, Where we your part - ing prom -
 lives and hearts to live, And let our hum - ble souls
 heav'n shall melt a - way, Your flock, re - deemed from sin -

ior, King Let earth, let heav'n ho - san - na sing.
 ise claim, As - sem - bled in your sa - cred name.
 be - come A tem - ple wor - thy of your name.
 ful stain, Shall swell the sound of praise a - gain.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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NOTES AND NEWS

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Organist: Angie Zulauf
Teen Usher: Johnathan Kerwood
Greeters: Brian & Elaine Burger
Childcare: Annie Hummel, Dianne Weishahn
Broadcast Announcers: Nathan Schwab, Craig Scheele

Our Church Family

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Today – Don Weichel, Wes Schroeder

Monday – Derrick Damrow, Carter Holtmeier, Mary Nitz, M/M Preston Gronemeyer

Thursday – Dana Upchurch, Derek Weichel

Friday – Elizabeth Kerwood **Saturday** – Rori Scheele, Deegan Swartz

Sunday - Brenda Scheele, Cindy Weichel

LET US ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER (HEBREWS 10:25)

259 were present to receive God's grace in worship: Thanksgiving-186; Sunday-62; Monday-11

127 computers logged on for the live broadcast (Thanksgiving 17; Sunday-110)

47 were present to learn God's Word in Bible Study: Sunday School-11; Bible Class-15

Ladies Aid-10; Men's Bible Study Breakfast-11

In our Prayers

Stu Freese – Stu had hernia surgery at Bryan West on Tuesday.

Thank You – Along with the 502 lbs. of food collected at school, the food we collected at church was delivered to the Blue Valley Food Pantry in Fairbury last Tuesday. Thanks to all who contributed to the food drive or gave a donation to the St. Paul's Benevolence Fund.

This Week, By God's Grace (December 2nd – December 9th)

Today	PreK SS, K-8 Christmas Practice, Bible Class, BIC Class	9:00am
	Worship	10:00am
	Endowment Committee Meeting	11:00am
	Ladies Advent Prayer Service at Grace, Seward	4:00pm
Monday	Faculty Meeting	7:15am
	DMB Teleconference	12:00pm
	Church Decorating BB Practice (A&B Teams)	2:00-7:00pm
Tuesday	Faculty Devotion	7:15am
	LES Catechism	8:30am
	Pastor Mentor Meeting	12:00pm
	Church Decorating (if needed)	
Wednesday	School Chapel	8:30am
	BB Practice (A Team Only)	
	PSI Class	6:00-7:30pm
Thursday	Adult Choir	7:00pm
	Faculty Devotion	7:15am
	LES Catechism	8:30am
Friday	Junior Choir	3:50-4:20pm
Sunday	PreK SS, K-8 Christmas Practice, Bible Class, BIC Class	9:00am
	Worship- Communion	10:00am
	(Greeters: John & Marcie Vossler) (Childcare: Stacey Freese, Steph Wehrman)	

CFK—Children in PreK3- 6th grade are invited to attend Christmas for Kids on Saturday, December 22nd. Registration information will be available soon.

Mailbox Usage Reminder—If using the church mailboxes for personal communication such as Christmas cards or thank you notes, please feel free to do so. If you would like to place mass mailings which are not personalized in the mailboxes, please speak to the elders beforehand. Thank you!

Christmas Eve Service 2018—In addition to the practice today, students participating in the 2018 Children's Christmas Service will be practicing Dec. 9th and December 16th from 9:00-9:45 a.m. in the school. The fourth practice and complete rehearsal (Dec. 23rd) will be at church, starting at 8:30 a.m.

Adult Christmas Choir—For the Christmas choir session we will sing a beautiful Advent/Christmas song, "Peace Came to Earth" at the **Sunday morning service on December 23rd**. Please consider joining us this time if you were not able to come for the September session! The remaining rehearsal times are: Dec. 5; Dec. 12; and Dec. 19 (from 7 - 8:00 pm). Practices are in the balcony, and there is childcare provided in the church basement.

Save the Date—St. Paul's School will be hosting their annual auction fundraiser on Saturday, February 16, 2019 at Classics in Beatrice. This year's theme will be "The Gallery Walk." It's not too early to begin thinking about how you can help with a donated item.

Christmas Caroling—Anyone who is interested is invited to come to St. Paul's Lutheran School on Friday, December 14th at 12:30PM. We will be dividing into groups to share the Christmas joy in song!

Christmas Invitations—A few years ago, LifeWay Research conducted a survey of 15,000 unchurched adults. 63% of those adults say that a personal invitation from a friend or neighbor would “be very or somewhat effective” in getting them to visit a church, especially during the Christmas season. That number jumps to close to 80% when the invitation is for Christmas Eve. So what does this look like? It’s as easy as handing someone a hardcopy flier (found in your church mailbox and on the back table) or clicking the “like” and “share” button on our facebook flier. Your invitation could be what brings a soul in contact with his/her Savior!

Offering Envelopes—The 2019 offering envelopes have been distributed, along with an explanation about the various funds and how they are used. Please remember that 2019 envelopes should not be used until January 6th.

St. Mark (WELS) in Lincoln Christmas Concert—Our brothers and sisters at St. Mark in Lincoln extend to us an invitation to join them on Friday, December 14th at 7PM for a Christmas concert. “Come hear our choirs, soloists, and instrumentalists share Christmas joy in song. Stick around afterwards for some delicious Christmas cookies.” St. Mark Lutheran Church is located at 3930 S. 19th Street, Lincoln, NE.

Thank You—We recently received the following thank you note:

Thank you for all the letters and cards you have sent me over the last few months. I truly appreciate all of your thoughts and prayers.

Your brother in Christ,
Edwin Schneider

SCRIP—If you would like to utilize the Scrip program at NELHS, please note that we have new order forms available on the table in the front entrance. These forms may be mailed in or given to Steph Scheele – she is our Scrip coordinator. You are also able to order online – just go to www.NELHS.org and then to the Support NELHS tab at the top of the page. From there you click on the SCRIP option and ordering information will be listed. Through this program, a percentage of your gift card purchases goes to NELHS to support their ministry.

November 2018 Church Council Highlights

1. Devotion – We watched a video produced by our District President, Phil Hirsch, who informed us about work of the Synod and encouraged the continued giving of Congregational Mission Offerings. There was also a short devotion from Pastor Berger about making sure that we remain a church that is waiting for Christ’s return this Advent as we pray, “Come, Lord Jesus.”
2. Elders’ Report
 - Transfer membership of Caleb Bergmeier to St. Mark (WELS) in Lincoln, NE. It was moved and seconded and passed.
 - Funeral Statement: St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church conducts Christian funerals for those who have professed their faith in Christ with church membership. The funeral gives comfort to those who are still living that their loved one, by his/her own profession of faith, believed in Jesus and is now spending eternity in heaven with his/her Savior. For those who are not members but are currently being ministered to and have professed their faith in Jesus to the pastor, these situations will be evaluated on a case to case basis by the pastor and elders. (If you have any questions/comments about this statement, as always, the pastor and elders welcome your feedback!)

3. Board of Education Report

- Principal's Report – 96 children will be participating in the Christmas Eve Children's Service.
- School Donation List – After working with the faculty and school parents (and school parents will continually have opportunity to add items to this list) the Board of Education recommended a donation list of items that could be purchased if an individual or family wants to give a special gift to our school. If you would like to give a special gift to the school, please talk to Mr. Danner and he will print this list off for you. Motion was made and seconded and passed to adopt this school donation list.
- School Auction – 1/3 towards outdoor classroom, 1/3 toward transportation-van fund, 1/3 toward tuition assistance. Discussion took place on other options. Discussion revolved around what we need in our church and school to progress in our goals of furthering Christ's kingdom with the gospel. The motion was made and seconded and passed.
- Financial Report was shared with the church council.

4. Trustees' Report

- Ceiling will be touched up in Pastor's office sometime in December
- Reminder - Trustees are asked to help distribute Christmas sacks after the Christmas Eve service.
- Trustees will put out the Christmas decorating materials on Sunday; they will also work on the nativity scene
- Trustees will be adding rock to fill in the pot holes in the parking lot
- Other big projects in the possible future from which the trustees will propose building fund projects for 2019:
 - A/C unit needs to be replaced soon for the church office area (estimate for a 3 ton air conditioner is \$4,000 without labor)
 - Thermostats to match the new one in the sanctuary (4 would \$685.53);
 - New gutters with leaf guards and downspouts on parsonage and garage (\$1,659...parsonage only is \$1,234.25)
 - Leaf guards and downspouts on teacherage (\$964.52)
 - Power wash church siding (\$3,500);
 - Carpet cleaning of front of church and aisles;
 - New carpet for fellowship area, kitchenette, and church offices (current carpet is 27 years old);
 - Others?

5. Stewardship Report

- New Member Welcome will take place sometime in 4th quarter

6. NELHS Report

- The winter sport season is upon us. There are 11 girls out for basketball, coached by Mr Wells, Mr Ring, and Tutor Schoch. Boys basketball has 24 students out, coached by Mr Dorn and Tutor Santos. The season tips off on December 1 against Meridian.
- The first home game is 12-18 against Exeter-Milligan.
- NELHS depends on volunteers to help sell tickets at games, provide snacks, pick up kids for the airport and more. If you are willing to volunteer your time, be it 10 minutes or 10 days, we would LOVE to add you to our list. Currently, we need volunteer "grandparents" to host students during vacations when the dorms are closed. You don't need to entertain them, just provide a safe environment for them. This is an opportunity

to experience another culture and model an attitude of Christian giving. Please contact tfickel@nelhs.org or sbremer@nelhs.org if you want to help.

- At a recent Quiz Bowl, our students took 1st place on the written test and 2nd in the Quiz Bowl. Overall the kids had a ton of fun and did a great job representing themselves, our school and their Savior.
 - A member of the class of 1985 has challenged all the other classes to match his in giving \$1000.00 per year since graduation to reduce the dormitory roof repair debt. The graduate stated "I know NELHS has a special place in all of our hearts. It's amazing what we can do with God in our hearts and working together." See our website at www.nelhs.org for information on making a donation to meet this challenge.
 - Thanksgiving is upon us already! What a joy it has been to be adding the "40 Days of Thanksgiving" on our social media sites and out through our emails. If you haven't been getting them - we need your email address! Please send it to us. As always, please do not hesitate to ask me any question about the fabulous ministry called, NELHS.
 - Mrs. Dorn has received a call to Fox Valley Lutheran in Appleton, WI
 - Follow Mr. Bremer on Twitter: [@NELHS_Admin](https://twitter.com/NELHS_Admin) Facebook: [@NELHS](https://www.facebook.com/NELHS)
7. Pastor Berger's Report
- Advent Home Devotions
 - Ladies Aid Christmas Party – Thursday, December 13th
 - December 21 – Chapel; December 22 – Christmas For Kids; December 23 – Worship; December 24 – Christmas Eve Service; December 25 – Christmas Day Song Service; December 30 – Sunday morning worship with a new year theme and December 31 – normal Monday Night Service at 7:30pm
8. Other Business
- Health Insurance Letter was emailed to the called workers to change to WELS Veba Plan 3 with HSA.
 - Nominating Committee met on Tuesday and will meet on December 13th at 6:45PM in Pastor's office.
 - Budget Committee (Brian Burger, Pastor Berger, Nathan Schwab, Joel Schroeder, Brett Scheiding, Stan Hueske, Ethan Schroeder, Logan Scheele, Doug Weishahn, 2 At-large members appointed by Brian Burger) will meet on Thursday, December 13th at 7PM
 - The council will continue to update the membership in regard to the home fund deficit.
 - Next Council Meeting – Thursday, January 3rd at 8PM
9. Pastor closed with Prayer focusing on our thanks for the Christ-child after it was moved and seconded to adjourn.