

Worship Notes for Visitors & Members

Welcome to worship - Welcome to all, and especially to our visitors, we are glad you are here today, and hope that you will worship with us again soon and often. Please fill out an attendance card and place it in the offering plate. These will aid our record-keeping. Thank you. Large print bulletins are available from an usher in the narthex. *"It is good to worship the Lord together, and to come into his presence with thanksgiving."* Psalm 95

Welcome children - Jesus said "Let the children come to me." Children are welcome and encouraged to worship here at St. Paul. We rejoice that they are among us; however, if you need it, our nursery is available at all services and you can hear the service on audio. An usher will guide you.

St. Paul welcomes all to the Communion Table. Christ is the Host and the Meal. Come, taste, and see that the Lord is good. Grape juice is available for those who prefer it rather than wine. Children and those choosing not to receive Holy Communion are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.

There are **restrooms** located in the basement of this building and on the ground floor of the hallway leading to our fellowship hall and on each floor of the educational building.

PARTICIPANTS

<u>MINISTERS</u>		The People of God
<u>PASTOR</u>		Rev. John Shipman
<u>ORGANIST</u>		Marvis McNeil
<u>CHOIR DIRECTOR</u>		Marty Cantleberry
<u>ASSISTING MINISTER</u>	5:30 p.m.	Carol Kindt
	9:00 a.m.	
<u>LECTOR</u>	5:30 p.m.	Carol Kindt
	9:00 a.m.	
<u>FELLOWSHIP VOLUNTEERS</u>	5:30 p.m.	Joan Smolinski
	9:00 a.m.	Joanne Huggler
<u>USHERS & GREETERS</u>	5:30 p.m.	Bruce Anschuetz
	9:00 a.m.	Cathy Kieliszewski, Tim Moggie Dennis Dziesinski, Jeff Ciupka
<u>ACOLYTE</u>	5:30 p.m.	Odessa Morrison
	9:00 a.m.	
<u>ALTAR CARE</u>		Patti Byce and Laurie Stafford

We thank all participants for enriching our worship service.

St. Paul Lutheran Church Worship Service

celebrates and shares God's love and compassion

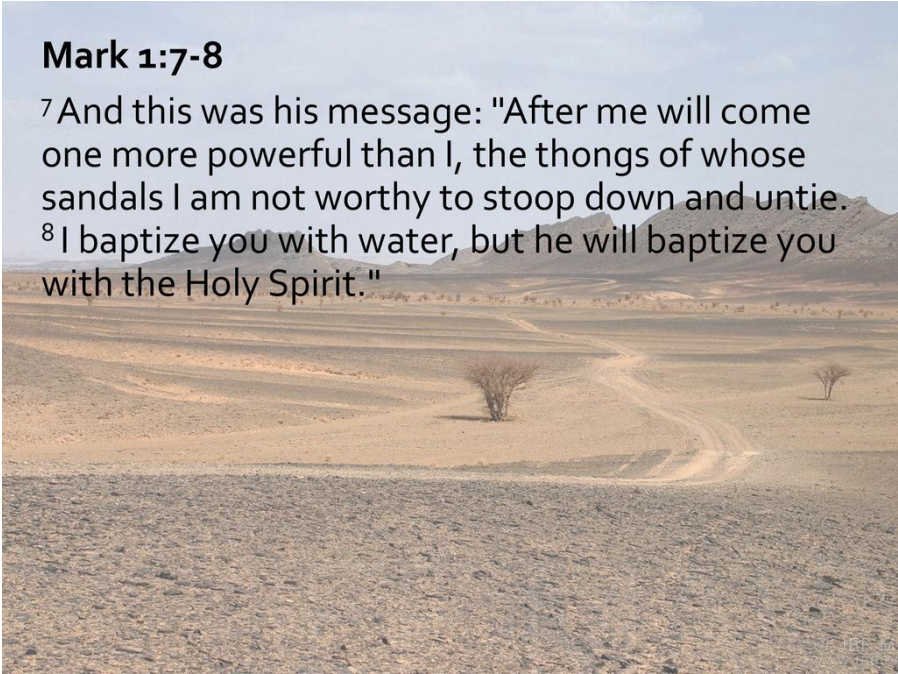
727 S. 2nd, Alpena, MI 49707

Phone 989-356-1658

www.stpaul.org

A Stephen Ministry Congregation

Mark 1:7-8



⁷And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.
⁸I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

December 9, 2023 - 5:30 p.m.
December 10, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.

Pastor John and Miss Nena have planned Advent Educational Opportunities, that run December 6th – 20th. Pastor John’s Class meets on Wednesdays at 1:00 PM and 5:30 p.m. and Miss Nena’s class also meets on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Pastor John will hold a Bible Study on 1st, 2nd, 3rd John and Miss Nena will lead a Book Study on “66 Ways God Loves You” by Jennifer Rothschild.

The Soul Sisters will be gathering on Monday, December 11th at 5:30pm in the Multi-purpose room. Enjoy soup, salad and dessert for dinner. After eating we will sign Christmas cards for residents at Turning Brook Assisted Living, Besser Senior Living Community and St. Paul's homebound members. Join us for food, fun and fellowship! Please RSVP to Val at 989-916-5560 or Shirley at 989-464-6472 by December 8th.

The Adventure Club will go Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 17th at 5:00 p.m. Please join us at the church as we head out to share God’s love with our voices in the community.

If you would like to donate funds to go toward enhancing decorations for the sanctuary at Christmas as a memorial to loved ones or in honor of someone, forms are available for you to fill out in the Narthex and in the church office. The names of the memorials will be included in the Christmas Eve bulletins. ***The deadline to take names and donations is December 15th.***

Pastor John is aware of people who are in need of help during the Christmas season. If you’re able to help meet the needs of those in our community, a contribution to the Good Samaritan Fund would be a wonderful and much appreciated way of sharing God’s compassion and love with others.

The **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services** will be at 3:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24th. Holy Communion will be served at all services. We will also have all of our regular services that week-end. **Please join us for our Christmas Day Worship** on December 25th at 9:00 a.m.

Life Line Screening, the nation’s leading provider of preventive health screenings will offer non-invasive and painless health screenings at St. Paul Lutheran Church on Monday, December 18th. A package of four screenings to identify risk for stroke, heart disease and other chronic conditions will be offered for \$149.00. Please call 1-800-640-6307 to register or visit LLSA.SOCIAL/HC. Two discount tickets are available.

WEEK AT A GLANCE: DECEMBER 10—17, 2023	
<u>SUN.</u>	Sunday Worship/HC – 9:00 a.m.; Fellowship – 10:00; Contemporary Service & Children’s Church –10:30
<u>MON.</u>	Line Dancing – 2:00 p.m.; E.T.A.– 5:00 p.m.; Soul Sisters – 5:30 p.m.; Girl Scouts – 6:00 p.m.
<u>TUES.</u>	Gratitude Lunches – 9:00 a.m.; Stephen Ministry – 9:30 a.m.; Stewardship—5:00 p.m.; Air Rifle Team – 5:30 p.m.; Cub Scouts – 5:30 p.m.; Boy Scouts – 6:30 p.m.
<u>WED.</u>	Breakfast Belles (at JJ’s) – 7:30 a.m.; Advent Soup & Service – 12:00 p.m.; Bible Study (Pastor John)– 1:00 & 5:30 p.m.; Book Study (Nena) – 5:30 p.m.; Choir— 6:00 p.m.
<u>THURS.</u>	3M Men’s Breakfast (JJ’s) – 7:00a.m.; Chair Yoga – 3:00 p.m.; Outreach—5:00 p.m.; Air Rifle Team – 5:30 p.m.; Recovery Yoga – 5:30 p.m.
<u>FRI.</u>	Newsletter Deadline; Line Dancing – 11:00 a.m.; Alpena Line Dance Club – 5:00 p.m.
<u>SAT.</u>	Fellowship – 4:30 p.m.; Worship/HC – 5:30 p.m.
<u>SUN.</u>	Sunday Worship/HC – 9:00; Fellowship – 10:00; Contemporary Service & Children’s Church – 10:30 a.m.; The Adventure Club Christmas Caroling—5:00 p.m.

St. Paul Lutheran Church celebrates and shares God’s love and compassion.

WE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS: Bev Huard - unspecified need Tammy Stoutenburg-unspecified need Don Urban Sr. - health issues Annette Wade – medical issues Art Hoffmeyer – heart issues Doreen Britton – unspecified need Barbara Carlson – unspecified need John Wegmeyer – health issues Marty & Liz Smith – home sells Phyllis Robb- unspecified need Dolores Libka – unspecified need David Reeves – health issues Geri Hanson – unspecified need Eugene Brooks – health issues Bodo Hanson – health issues Sutton Badder – unspecified need Marian Dove – unspecified need Karen Wallace – unspecified need Bob Diemond—illness Jake Shipman - accident Alisha Freese—illness

(Prayer is the best medicine and we are prepared to pray indefinitely for folks. Would you please help the church office keep our list current? Unless we know otherwise, our normal practice is to remove names after a month. Thank you for your partnership in prayer.)

We remember our prayer partners in the North/West Lower Michigan Synod: Trinity Lutheran Church, Kalamazoo, Rev. Ken Johnson, Senior Pastor, Rev. Jacob Lehman, Associate Pastor

We pray for the Dynamic Ministries here at St. Paul Lutheran Church. This week we specifically pray for our Girl Scouts.

THE FLOWERS IN THE CHANCEL (foot of the cross) are given in memory of Robert Seguin. Nine years have flown by. We think of you every day... Barb, Kathy and families.

<u>WORSHIP ATTENDANCE</u>			<u>END OF OCTOBER</u>		<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
Saturday (12/02)	5:30 p.m.	45	Income	25,620.92	266,579.91
Sunday (12/03)	9:00 a.m.	83	Expenses	<u>26,162.41</u>	<u>288,926.06</u>
	10:30 a.m.	<u>34</u>	Difference	(541.49)	(22,346.15)
Total		162			

The December Service Activity is Sanborn Elementary School. Items needed: Chapstick - plain non flavored, Gold Bond Healing Lotion, freezer gallon sized zip lock bags, 24 pack of small sized disposable water bottles. **Clothing** - girls underwear size 10 & 12, girls short sleeved shirts size 14/16, girls long sleeved shirts sized 14/16, boys underwear size 6, boys athletic pants sizes 6, 8, 10 & 12, Boys tennis shoes size 3 & 4. Please leave items on the altar. Thank you for your generosity.

The Wednesday Advent Services continue on December 13th & 20th from 12:00 – 1:00. We have a meal at noon followed by a short service at 12:25. Come and share this time of preparation for the Christ Child. We needn volunteers to help prepare a simple meal.

For December, the Gratitude Lunches will be donating supplies to three animal shelters, along with cookies for those that take care of the animals. So, we are looking for donations of paper towels, bleach, dish soap, clump free cat litter, grain-free dog or cat food, Purina One dog or cat food, clean used towels or any monetary donations. Please drop them off at Nena’s office by December 11th. Call Val Urban is you have any questions,356-4613.

Please note: The **Epiphany Dessert** event will be January 6, 2024 after the Saturday service. We need volunteers to make desserts and/or host a table. Please contact Doreen is interested, at 989-916-9172.

GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD
The Second Sunday of Advent
December 9, 2023 - 5:30 p.m.
December 10, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.

Congregational responses are printed in bold.

Welcome! Celebrations of birthdays, anniversaries and a time to welcome our guests. We ask that you fill out the communion card and place it in the offering plate.

CALL TO WORSHIP

(Please Stand)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation’s bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN “Prepare the Royal Highway” (Red) #264

GREETING

Pastor: The free gift of grace in Jesus Christ, the reconciling love of God, and the life and peace of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

KYRIE (Sung at the 9:00 a.m. service)



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



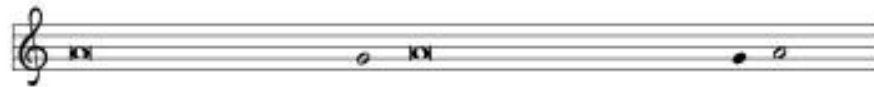
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

SERMON NOTES

Thank - ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev - 'ry -
 one what God has done. Let all who seek the
 Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.
 Send us with your prom - is - es, O God,
 and lead us forth in joy with shouts
 of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

BENEDICTION

SENDING HYMN "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling" (Red) #631

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.

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HYMN OF PRAISE (Sung at the 9:00 a.m. service)

Refrain
 Assisting minister
 This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.

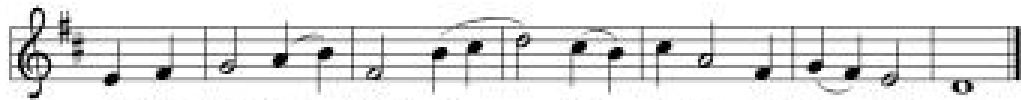
All
 1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us
 free to be peo - ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and
 strength, and hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain
 This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le - lu - ia.

2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the
 hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and
 might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray. Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Pastor: Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth. **Amen.**

Light two candles.

(Please be seated)

FIRST READING: Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass; their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers; the flower fades, [[when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers; the flower fades,]] but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and gently lead the mother sheep.

(Pleased be seated)

HOLY COMMUNION

All are welcome at the Lord's Table. Christ is both the host and the meal. Come, taste and see that the Lord is good. Those not receiving Communion are invited forward for a blessing. There is grape juice for those who prefer it.

"Lamb of God"



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

Pastor: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE

"Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise"

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise . . . *(concluding)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you! My
San - to, san - to, san - to, mi cor - a - zon te a - do - ra! Mi

heart is glad to say the words: you are ho - ly, Lord.
cor - a - zon te sa - be de - cir: san - to e - res Se - ñor.

EUCCHARISTIC BLESSING

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:

People: 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.

PSALM: Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 (Read Responsively)

Lord, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.

You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.

Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

The Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

Righteousness will go before him and will make a path for his steps.

SECOND READING: 2 Peter 3:8-15a (Sunday 9:00 a.m.)

⁸ But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be destroyed with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and destroyed and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³ But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish, ¹⁵ and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(Please Stand)

Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark.

Glory to You, O Lord.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:1-8

¹ The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.

² As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way, ³ the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight,’ ” ⁴ so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

The Gospel of Our Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Children’s Message

“This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine let it shine let it shine

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(Please be seated)

SERMON

“Prepare The Way”

Pastor John Shipman

(Please stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

“All Earth Is Hopeful”

(Red) #266

Confession of Faith: The Nicene Creed

People: We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of the Risen Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

(Please stand)

(Sung at the 9:00 a.m. service.)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

