

Special 2023 Christmas Love Offering



At Christmas God's love came down to us. Jesus is the greatest gift of love and hope to the world! Our Special Christmas Offering 2023 brings God's love down into human need. 80% of gifts will start a **Scholarship Fund** Families in need to send their children to St. Paul's Preschool. 10% of gifts will empower our Community Care Team to serve the **200 Foster Children** in Amherst schools. 10% will **relieve hunger in Somalia** where 6.7 million are starving. Special envelopes for "Love Came Down" will be available in the narthex. This giving opportunity is limited to the month of December. Please pray about this opportunity, asking God to guide you to determine a gift that truly celebrates God's love which has come into *your* life.

St. Paul Lutheran Church & Preschool

115 Central Drive, Amherst, Ohio 44001

www.stpaulamherst.com (440) 988-4157

Sunday Worship Services: 8:30AM & 10AM

In-Person or Live Stream @ www.stpaulamherst.com

Church/Office: 440-988-4157 Fax: 440-988-5436

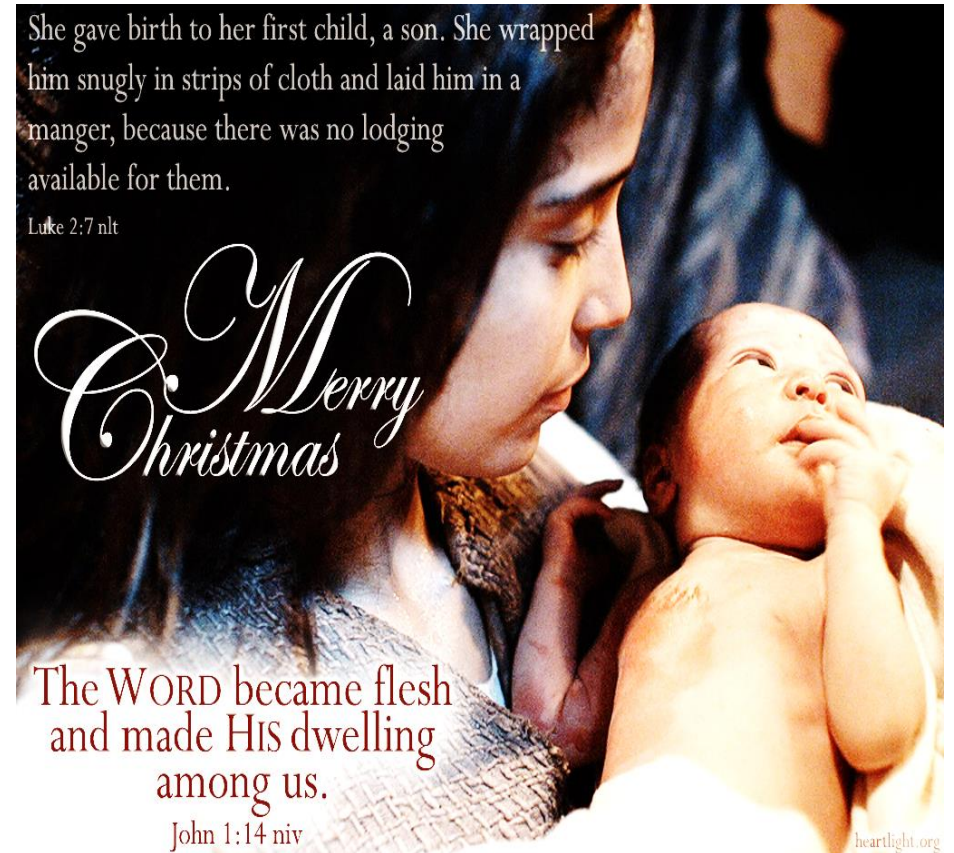
E-Mail: churchoffice@stpaulamherst.com Church Website: stpaulamherst.com

Rev. Paul G. Werner, Pastor - Office: (440)988-4157 Cell: (586)201-3302

Mike Warnock - Director of Worship Technology

Beth Naro, Preschool Director - Preschool Phone: (440)988-5427

James Feddeck, Organist



Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023 ~ 4PM & 7PM

Welcome to St. Paul!

We're glad you're here! Whether this is your first visit or you're a St. Paul veteran, we're honored to share Christmas with you. We hope you sense our "welcome mat" is out and you'll consider joining us again for one of our weekend services in the New Year, every Sunday at 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM, right here. Please fill out a white "Communication Card" found in front of you in the pew rack, and place it in the offering plate later. And about the offering ... don't feel obligated to participate in giving because we – and God – are really glad you are here as our guest!

Ushers are standing by to assist you in locating a seat, directing you to restrooms, coat racks, and to our nursery.

Nursery is available for children ages 3 and under. An usher will be happy to direct you to our Nursery where parents may care for infants, and rambunctious toddlers will find a place to be ... themselves.

Crayons and coloring booklets are available for young children who would enjoy them. Please see an usher for these.

Worshippers who wish to receive Holy Communion tonight are encourage to thoroughly read the announcement on the following page regarding Communion reception.

Altar flowers given to the glory of God by

- Lil Hamilton in memory of loved ones.
- Ron & Tina Muska in memory of loved ones.

Christmas Poinsettias used to decorate the church were donated by: John Schick, Judy Starbuck. They may be picked up and taken home following tonight's 7:00PM worship service.

Portals of Prayer daily devotions are free booklets available in the lobby area at St. Paul. Issues for the months of January - March are available now. Pick one up today.

Offering Envelopes for 2024 are in member's mailboxes on the narthex (lobby) wall. You may also give to God electronically by clicking on the "giving" tab at St. Paul's web site (www.stpaulamherst.com)

Food Collection Sunday, January 7th Your gifts of non-perishable food goes to Second Harvest and to families in Lorain County.

January Prayer Cards will be distributed on Sundays December 31st & January 7th.

Free Coffee & Donuts for Christmas decorations taker-downers. Join us on Saturday, January 6th, 2024 at 9:30 am. You'll enjoy the friendship as we work together to get the task done.

AUDIO , VIDEO, & LIVE STREAM INSTALLATION Contractors are finishing installing the new sound, video, and live-stream technology. Please be patient with us as we continue to discover and "work out the bugs." Your constructive comments are welcome and helpful. Please tell us what is good about the new technology, concerns or problems you see, and your hopes for future improvements. You may write comments on a white "communication card" and pop it into the offering.

2024 Wall Calendars are available for free in the lower narthex, with the church resources.

The Church Office will be Closed Tuesday, December 26th, and Tuesday, January 2, 2024.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study will resume Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 10 as we begin the Bible book of Genesis. All are invited!

This Week For The Lord	Looking Ahead One Week
12/24 Holy Communion 4 PM & 7 PM 12/25-26 Church Office Closed	12/31 Holy Communion 8:30 AM & 10 AM 1/1-2 Church Office Closed

Serving in God's House:

Pastor	Rev. Paul Werner
Elders	John Brabander (E) Bob Steindl (L)
Readers	Christine Krupp (E) Sandy Long (L)
Greeters	Mike & Debbie Smith (E) Steindl Family (L)
Altar Guild	Wanda Aschenbach, Karla Staylon (E) Donna Kemmerle (L)
Head Usher	Ron Fisher
Ushers	Harold Gibson, Steve Warnock (E) Bryan Draga (L)

WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER in our worships services this evening firmly believing that Jesus' Words, *"This is My Body...This is My Blood"* mean what they say, namely that with the bread and wine of Holy Communion is really given Jesus' Body and Blood. Holy Communion is more than a "memorial," a remembrance, or a representation of Jesus. God's promise to us in the Bible is that Jesus is really present to forgive your sins and strengthen your faith. Furthermore, receiving Holy Communion is not a good work we perform and offer up to God to pay for our sin. Rather, Communion is Jesus coming down to you personally through the bread and wine to give and work in you His forgiveness won on the cross.

Since scripture instructs us to examine ourselves before receiving Holy Communion, please sincerely reflect on these questions before receiving Communion:

- Am I so sorry for my sins that I don't want to go back and repeat them?
- Do I believe that Jesus Christ is my personal Savior from sin because He gave His life on the cross for me? Am I depending on Him, and not my own goodness, as the way to Heaven?
- Do I believe that Jesus gives His Body and Blood and His gift of forgiveness in the eating and drinking of the bread and wine of Communion?
- Do I sincerely intend, with the help of God, not to return to a life of sin but to live for God and love others deeper?

If you sincerely agree with these beliefs, then you are welcome to receive communion in today's worship service. If you are uncertain, we ask you to simply talk with Pastor before or after today's worship service.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

PRELUDE

RINGING OF THE BELL / CALL TO WORSHIP

PASTOR'S WELCOME

GREETING ONE ANOTHER

HYMN *"Joy to the World"* LSB 387

INVOCATION (SPOKEN RESPONSIVELY)

PRAYER FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

THE REASON GOD SENT HIS SON *GENESIS 3: 1-16*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

(4:00 p.m.) **ANTHEM** *"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"* LSB 357, vs. 1

(7:00 p.m.) **ANTHEM** *"Messiah"* Francesca Battistelli

PROPHECY OF THE SAVIOR'S COMING

CAROL *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"* LSB 361, vs. 1

JESUS IS BORN *LUKE 2:1-7*

CAROL *"Away in A Manger"* LSB 364, vs. 1

ANGELS ANNOUNCE JESUS' BIRTH (SPOKEN RESPONSIVELY) *LUKE 2:8-14*

(4:00 p.m.) **CAROL** *"Angels We Have Heard on High"* LSB 368, vs.1

THE SHEPERDS GO TO SEE THE BABY JESUS (SPOKEN RESPONSIVELY) *LUKE 2:15-20*

STATEMENT OF FAITH

HYMN *"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"* LSB 374

SERMON *"THE CHRISTMAS MIRACLE"*

OFFERING

(7:00 p.m.) **OFFERTORY** *"Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella"*

✠ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT ✠

PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION (SPOKEN RESPONSIVELY)

PREFACE

LORD'S PRAYER

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

THE PEACE

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *"Angels from the Realms of Glory"* LSB 367

(7:00 p.m.) **ANTHEM** "A Baby Changes Everything" Faith Hill

COMMUNION HYMN "On Christmas Night All Christians Sing" LSB 377

(4:00 PM) **COMMUNION HYMN** "Now Sing We, Now Rejoice" LSB 386

BLESSING OF COMMUNICANTS

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

The Candle Lighting Ceremony

Pastor will receive the light from the "Christ Candle" which symbolizes that Jesus is born and alive with us. Ushers will receive the light from Pastor and share the light with people seated along the center aisle. The light will then be shared down each row. Please keep lighted candles upright at all times to avoid dripping wax on yourself, and the floor. Tip only UNLIT candles to receive the light.

BENEDICTION

CANDLELIGHT CAROL "Silent Night" LSB 363

SILENT PRAYER

**PLEASE EXTINGUISH ALL CANDLES.
COLLECTION BOXES FOR CANDLES ARE LOCATED
AT DOORS AS YOU EXIT.**

Merry Christmas!

POSTLUDE

"THANK YOU" FOR WORSHIPPING WITH US

We hope this time has been a blessing to you, and that your Christmas is filled with joy because of the gifts of God's love, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

We invite you to join us again soon. Weekend worship services are held Sundays at 8:30 and 10:00 a.m.

Prayer Requests this Week: "The Lord is Near to all who Call on HIM." Psalm 148:18

- Pray for Don Lamoreaux who is recovering from kidney surgery last week Thursday.
- Coralie Swanzer who fell and is in pain with broken ribs.
- Pray for Nancy Wilbur, Amy Akosi's mom, who is recovering from heart surgery.
- Pray for Clyde Strader as he recovers from total shoulder replacement.
- Pray for Tim Ross, Sheryl Gregg's brother in hospice care.
- Please pray for healing in Edna Klentz's lungs.
- Pray for Elija to receive a kidney for transplant.
- Pray for Jeff Howells who had a brain bleed and is in the hospital.
- Pray for Ron Klein that he keeps getting stronger.
- Please pray for Gerri Deidrick who is in the middle of chemotherapy to follow-up on a surgery which removed colon cancer; Janet Bremke who has cancer; Lori Gingrich, sister of Lynn Jiovanazzo and Terri Gerber, as she goes through chemotherapy; Brian Harcula as he has cancer; Paxton Roby with cancer; Priscilla Harden's sister in California who has cancer; Pat who has a brain tumor; Heather, a young mother of 3, who has cancer; Sherry (Kevin Starbuck's mother-in-law); Chris (sister-in-law of Virginia Warnock); and pray for Pat Kidder.
- Pray for those who have on-going chronic illnesses or shut-in: Charles Waryu, Don Lamoreaux and Don Gramer, Ruth Murdy, Jack & Marilyn Green, Dorothy Barckert, Dale Mack, Phyllis Darakis, Will & Lydia Rice, John Harden, Andy Lasko.
- Pray for those celebrating birthdays this week: Ken Hubbard, Jennifer Gregg.