SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We believe that God is healing and restoring the world,
and that we are recipients of and participants in that healing and restoration.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025
CHRISTMAS EVE

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Welcome to St. Paul's! We are grateful for your prayers and presence on this day in the life of the parish community. We hope that your worship with us will be both inspirational and spiritually nurturing. Please feel free to participate in the worship service as much or as little as you wish. Everyone is welcome to receive Holy Communion at the Lord's Table.

Our worship service takes place here and online; it is also being recorded for later viewing. Feel free to greet one another as is your custom as you gather. When we are ready to start, our Angels Aloft will sound an opening bell. This signals those gathered that our service is now being recorded. Please maintain quiet and turn your attention to our opening activities at this time.

The Holy Eucharist - Rite II

Opening Bell

Welcome ..... *Presider*

Announcements ..... *Member of Vestry*

Land Acknowledgement *Presider*

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Coast Salish peoples who have reserve treaty rights to this land, especially the Skagit Nation who have stewarded this land throughout the generations. We thank these caretakers of the land, who have lived here and continue to live here since time immemorial.

Mission Statement

Presider and People:
We believe that God is healing and restoring the world, and that we are recipients of and participants in that healing and restoration.

Opening Hymn ..... O Come All Ye Faithful.....Hymn 83

The Opening Acclamation

Presider: Blessed be God: Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier
People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen

The Collect For Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

Hymn of Praise .....Gloria .....Hymn S280
In the front of the Blue Hymnal

The Collect of the Day

Presider: God be with you.
People: And also with you.
Presider: Let us pray.

Presider and People:
O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

Please be seated.

A Reading From Isaiah 9:2-7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96

Chanted Verses

1. Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all you lands.
   Sing to the Lord; Bless his name.
2. Announce his salvation, day after day. Tell his glory among the nations;
   Among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.
3. Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound;
   Let the plains be joyful and all that is in them! Then shall all the trees of the forest exult.
4. They shall exult before the Lord, for he comes; for he comes to rule the earth.
   He shall rule the world with justice and the peoples with his constancy.

A reading from Titus 2:11-14
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn.....O Little Town of Bethlehem..... Hymn 79

Please stand as able.

Presider: The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)
People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

[When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.]

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Please be seated.

The Sermon..... The Reverend Rilla Barrett

Please stand as able.

The Nicene Creed

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.

The Prayers of the People Form III

*The Intercessor reads regular type, the **People** respond **boldly***

Intercessor: Everliving God, we pray for your holy catholic Church;
People: That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Sean, our Presiding Bishop, and Philip, our Bishop, and for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest;
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Silence.

Here other intercessions may be offered, silently or aloud.

Intercessor: Let us pray for the search process for our congregations;
Eternal Guide, please watch over our steps as the congregations of Resurreccion and Saint Paul's walk the path of selecting a new rector. Guide the hearts and minds of those who will choose a spiritual leader and pastor for us – a leader who will care for your people and prepare us for our ministries. We ask that you bless them with insight, faithfulness, patience, and joy, so that they may truly hear your voice during their decision-making. Open the hearts of those who feel called to embark on this journey to an unfamiliar place, and walk with us as we trust in this process together. For the wonder of your love, Amen

The Presider adds a concluding Collect.

Confession and Absolution

Deacon: Let us confess our sins to God.

Silence may be kept.

Presider and People: **God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.**

Presider speaks an Absolution.

The Peace / La Paz

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you. / La paz del Señor sea siempre con ustedes.

People: And also with you. / Y con tu espíritu.

If you are worshiping with us virtually, use the chat function to "say" peace to your fellow parishioners, or text/email someone with whom you would like to share the peace of Christ.

Offertory ..... The Hills of Judea Ring ..... St. Paul's Choir

Your gifts are much appreciated.
If you are joining this live stream, you may mail your offering/pledge to 415 S. 18th Street, Mount Vernon, WA 98274. You can also make payments online at www.stpaulsmv.org

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.

The Holy Communion - Eucharistic Prayer B

All who seek God and a deeper life in Christ are welcome. All are invited to come forward for communion or a blessing. Gluten-free wafers are available. We stand (as able) as a reminder that we are a resurrection people – made alive by God, through Christ, empowered by the Spirit.

The "Inquirer" stands on behalf of the congregation and asks the one presiding at the Altar a series of questions, each of which is answered by the liturgy itself. It reminds us that "communion" is an ongoing conversation we have between God and the community of faith.

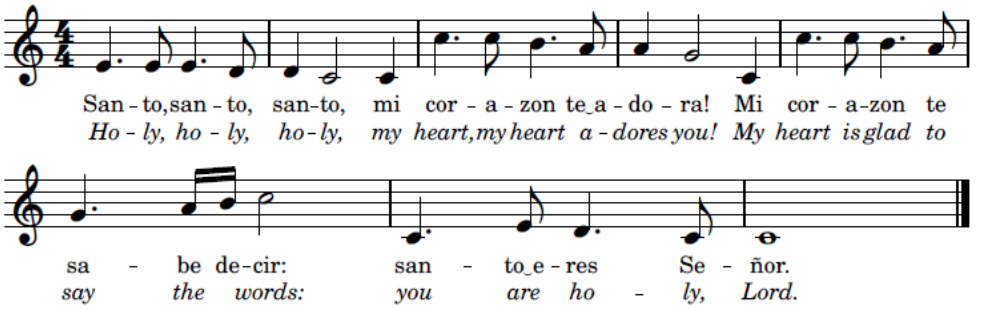
Presider: God be with you.
People: And also with you.
Presider: Lift up your hearts.
People: We lift our hearts to God.
Presider: Let us give thanks to the One who created us.
People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Inquirer: O Friend, why are we here tonight?

Presider: Because, it is a good and joyful thing, always to give thanks to God, the Maker of heaven and earth.

God gave his Son, Jesus Christ, to be born for us. By the power of God's Holy Spirit, Jesus became a human being – just like us, and had a wonderful human Mother, whose name was Mary. When God asked Mary to be Savior's mother, she said, "Yes, I will."

And so we praise God, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of God's Name:



Inquirer: So, we are here to give thanks to God?

Presider: We give thanks to God, for the Divine's goodness and love which was made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be God's people; in his Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus.

Inquirer: What did God do?

Presider: In these last days God sent us Jesus, who was made human through the Virgin Mary, his mother. God sent Jesus to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

Inquirer: Does that mean that God has made things right, that God has made us worthy to stand before him?

Presider: Yes! God has brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, and out of death into life.

Inquirer: My Friend, the table is set. What is the bread for?

Presider: on the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; gave thanks to God for it, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, and said "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Inquirer: And what is the wine for?

Presider: After supper Jesus took the cup of wine; and gave thanks, then gave it to them, and said "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Presider and People
Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.

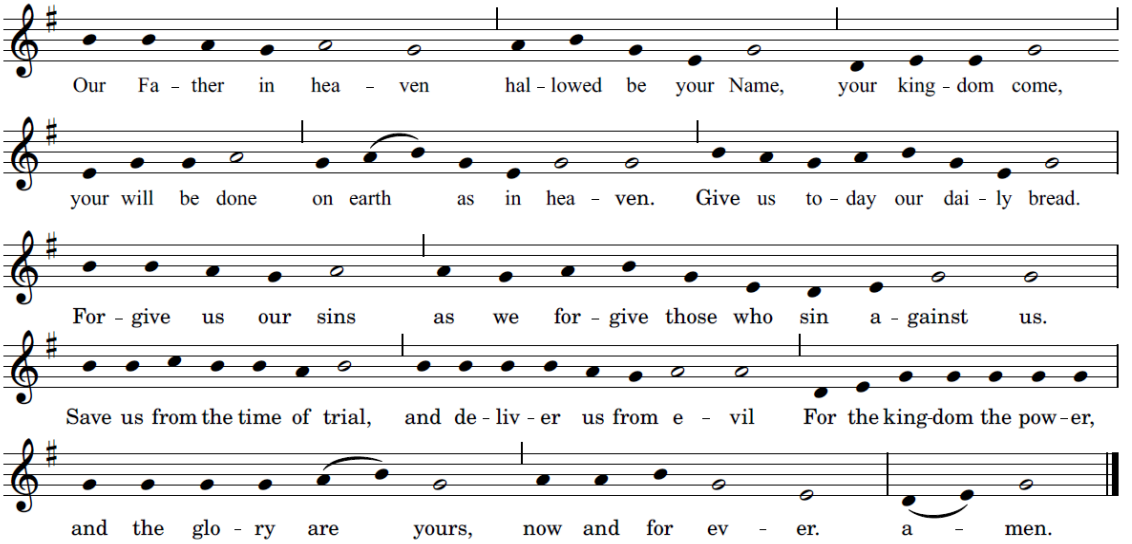
Inquirer: Friend, what shall we do? What does God ask of us?

Presider: We offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you God; presenting to the Divine, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, gather all things into the circle of Christ's love, and bring us to that heavenly country where with the blessed Virgin Mary, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of all your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, * the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Most Blessed One, now and forever. **Amen**.

Inquirer: ***Turning to the congregation*** And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to sing,



The Breaking of the Bread

Inquirer: Here are the Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them, and remember that Jesus came for YOU. So eat the Bread and drink the Wine – and be thankful. Immanuel: Through these Gifts, "God ***with*** us" becomes "God ***in*** us."

Please be seated.

Those present, are invited to receive Holy Communion. You can approach the altar at the direction of the usher.

Those with us online, during these next moments of meditation, wherever you are, receive God's gifts to you. We share spiritual communion today.

Communion Hymns ..... In the Stillness – St. Paul's Choir, leading to
Silent Night ..... Hymn 111

Post Communion Prayer

Presider: Let us pray.

People and Presider: **Gracious and loving God, you have made us one in the body of Christ, and nourished us at your table with holy food and drink. Now send us forth to be your people in the world. Grant us strength to persevere in resisting evil, and to proclaim in all we say and do your Good News in Christ Jesus our Savior. Amen.**

Blessing

Presider: May God, who sent angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. And the blessing of God Almighty, Earth Maker, Pain Bearer, and Life Giver, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen**

Closing Hymn.....Joy to the World! .....Hymn 100

Dismissal

Deacon: Joy to the world! Go in God's Peace!
All: Thanks be to God!

Postlude: .....Rise Up Shepherd and Follow .....Elizabeth Mahoney, Piano

Serving Today:
8:30 pm. Holy Eucharist

Presider and Preacher:	The Reverend Rilla Barrett
Co-Presider:	The Reverend Keith Axberg
Deacon:	The Reverend Dennis Taylor
Acolyte:	Acacia McDermott
Organist and Music Director	J.J. Cully
Musician:	Elizabeth Mahoney, piano
Eucharistic Minister:	Mary Ann Taylor & Sharon Rader
Lector(s):	Jen McCabe & Michael Rader

St. Paul's Prayer Team prays daily for those on the prayer list.
Please email Penny Worrell at *penny.worrell@gmail.com*.

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