

St. Paul Lutheran Church, LCMS

503 S. State Street, Caro, MI 48723

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Rev. Richard Boshoven, Interim Pastor

THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 14, 2025, 11:00 AM

Contemporary Service



AS WE GATHER

It is certainly easy to complain. We all do it. We look around and see all those things that are not what we think they should be. We look in the mirror and we see what we lack. When John sent his disciples to Jesus, Jesus called them to rejoice in what is already present. Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, had come. He brings healing and salvation to all who will receive Him. Quite literally, these miracles are still happening all around us. Those wounded by affliction and despair find healing in Christ. The dead in trespasses and sins are raised up to life. The weak are made strong, the poor are made rich, and those with only a past are given an eternal future. What do you see and hear? Look at the world, and you will find only complaint and fear; but look to Jesus, and you will find peace that surpasses all understanding and joy without end.



FOR THOSE DESIRING HOLY COMMUNION

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as He says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but His very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and with one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust in His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us, that they may show forth His death until He comes. Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the Sacrament, are asked first to speak with the Pastor. For further study, see Matthew 5:23ff; 10:32ff; 18:15-35; 1 Cor. 11:17-34.)

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

“Grace Alone”

(Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Chorus)

**Ev'ry promise we can make, ev'ry prayer and step of faith
Ev'ry diff'rence we will make is only by His grace.
Eve'ry mountain we will climb, ev'ry ray of hope we shine,
Ev'ry blessing left behind is only by His grace.**

Chorus:

**Grace alone which God supplies, strength unknown He will
provide.**

Christ in us, our cornerstone, we will go forth in grace alone.

**Ev'ry soul we long to reach, ev'ry heart we hope to teach,
Ev'ry-where we share His peace is only by His grace.
Ev'ry loving word we say, ev'ry tear we wipe away,
Ev'ry sorrow turned to praise is only by His grace.**

Chorus X2

WELCOME

INVOCATION *(Please stand)*

In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Blessed is he whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God.

The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind.

Holy and gracious God,

I confess that I have sinned against You this day. Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to You. In the name of Jesus Christ I ask forgiveness. Deliver and restore me that I may rest in peace.

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

INTROIT

Psalms 71:14–18; antiphon: Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.

**I will hope continually
and will praise you yet more and more.**

My mouth will tell of your righteous acts, of your deeds of salvation all the day, for their number is past my knowledge.

**With the mighty deeds of the Lord God I will come;
I will remind them of your righteousness, yours alone.**

O God, from my youth you have taught me,
and I still proclaim your wondrous deeds.

**So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me,
until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all
those to come.**

**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.**

Rejoice in the Lord always;
again I will say, Rejoice.

(Please be seated)

SONG OF PRAISE

“Hide Me in Your Holiness”

(Repeat once)

**Hide me, Lord, in Your holiness,
Ev’ry sin I now confess.
Praise to you, forgiving Lord,
Hide me in Your holiness, Hide me in your holiness.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

SERVICE OF THE WORD

OLD TESTAMENT READING: Isaiah 35:1–10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;

²it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

³Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.

⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart,
“Be strong; fear not!

Behold, your God will come with vengeance,
with the recompense of God.

He will come and save you.”

⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

For waters break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

⁷the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
⁸And a highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Way of Holiness;
the unclean shall not pass over it.
It shall belong to those who walk on the way;
even if they are fools, they shall not go astray.
⁹No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
¹⁰And the ransomed of the LORD shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain gladness and joy,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE: James 5:7–11

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 11:2–15

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

¹⁰This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.

¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES’ CREED

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

And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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.

(Please be seated)

CHILDREN'S SONG OF THE MONTH:

"In a Little Stable"

(4 verses)

**In a little stable far across the sea
Was a little Baby just like you and me.**

**Not a bed or cradle, not a pillow deep,
But a lowly manger was His place to sleep.**

**Shepherds stood around Him, angels watched with care,
For this Babe was Jesus, lying, smiling there.**

**Oh, I love this Jesus, who was little then.
For He surely loves me, little though I am.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel"

(Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus)

**Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

Chorus:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to Thee, O Israel!

**Oh, come, our Wisdom from on high, who ordered all things
mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.
Chorus**

**Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high and cheer us by your
drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows
put to flight.
Chorus**

MESSAGE

OFFERING *(Please fill out the fellowship pad beside you)*
(Please stand)

PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER

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.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

HOLY COMMUNION

(Visitors, please read the statement at the beginning of this service folder)

WORDS OF OUR LORD

PEACE OF CHRIST

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
Amen.

LAMB OF GOD *(AGNUS DEI)*

O Christ Lamb of God You take away the sin of the world.
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us
O Christ Lamb of God You take away the sin of the world.
Have mercy on us, have mercy on us.

(Please be seated)

RECEIVING THE LORD'S SUPPER

DISTRIBUTION SONG

"Once Again"

(Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus)

Jesus Christ, I think upon Your sacrifice;
You became nothing, poured out to death.
Many times I've wondered at Your gift of life,
And I'm in that place once again.
I'm in that place once again.

Chorus:

**Once again I look upon the cross where You died.
I'm humbled by Your mercy and I'm broken inside.
Once again I thank You, once again I pour out my life.**

**Now You are exalted to the highest place,
King of the heavens, where one day I'll bow.
But, for now, I marvel at this saving grace,
And I'm full of praise once again.
I'm full of praise once again.**

Chorus:

Bridge

**Thank You for the cross. Thank you for the cross.
Thank You for the cross, my Friend. (repeat)**

DISTRIBUTION SONG

"You Are My All in All"

(Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus)

Chorus:

**Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your name;
Jesus, Lamb of God, worthy is Your name.**

**You are my strength when I am weak,
You are the treasure that I seek,
You are my all in all;
Seeking You as a precious jewel,
Lord, to give up, I'd be a fool,
You are my all in all. Chorus**

**Taking my sin, my cross, my shame,
Rising again, I bless Your name,
You are my all in all;
When I fall down, You pick me up,
When I am dry, You fill my cup,
You are my all in all. Chorus**

PRAYER OF THANKS *(Please stand)*

Amen

BLESSING

SONG TO DEPART

“Jude’s Charge”

(Three Verses)

**You, my friends, build each other up.
You, my friends, build each other up.
In strong faith, pray: “Spirit, fill my cup.”
You, my friends, build each other up.**

**Keep yourselves in God’s love.
Keep yourselves in God’s love,
As you wait for mercy from above.
Keep yourselves in God’s love.**

**To God be glory, now and ever more!
To God be glory, now and ever more!
To stand before Him, Christ is the door.
To God be glory, now and ever more!
To God be glory, now and ever more!**

LEAVING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**St. Paul Lutheran Church LCMS, 503 S. State St., Caro, Michigan
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