

# ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

(1135 12th St.)  
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Sparks, Nevada  
89432-0737



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[www.StPaulsSparks.org](http://www.StPaulsSparks.org)

## Blended Holy Eucharist Service 10:00 a.m.

**Third Sunday of Advent**

**December 15, 2024**

On ZOOM: Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3FcKREH>

Meeting ID: 824 1236 4013

Password: 308693

Dial by your location +1 669 900 6833

The Rt. Rev. Elizabeth Gardner  
Bishop of Nevada

The Very Rev. Kirk A. Woodliff  
Rector

### Kid's Area

Located on the south side of the church is a special area where there are some coloring materials which can be used there or at other places in the church. Please return these supplies to their baskets following worship.

### **TODAY**

#### **"Greening" the Church: Dec 15th**

We will need some extra help following the 10:00 Service. If you are able to stick around and set up the Christmas Trees, etc., it would be much appreciated.

#### **"Blue" Christmas Service: Saturday, Dec. 21st 6:00 p.m.**

Is Christmas time hard for you? There are numerous reasons why so many people struggle during this time of year. If you are someone that experiences more pain than joy around the holidays, you are not alone. Come and worship the Christ Child with others in the struggle. Come to our Blue Christmas service and invite those you know who might want to join you.

A contribution to the  
**Ambry Light and Bread & Wine**  
is given to the glory of God  
for God's blessings, hope, and joy  
on James Stufflebeam's birthday  
by  
Dick and Dottie Stufflebeam

### Welcome to All

St. Paul's is a theologically diverse community seeking to embrace their diversity in order to live through the Gospel of Jesus Christ and be a place of learning and belonging for all people.

### Wine, Grape Juice, and Gluten Free

We offer both wine and grape juice during Communion as well as a gluten free wafer option. The chalice with the grape juice will be identified.

All chalices are intinction only.

If you are in need of a gluten free Communion wafer, there is a small basket as you enter the north side of the worship space. In it you will find a stone. When it is time for you to receive Communion, hold the stone in the palm of your hand and the clergy will exchange it with a gluten free wafer.

### Prayers for Healing and Laying on of Hands

On Sundays when a Healing Minister is present, they will offer special prayers for healing immediately after receiving Communion. They will be located at the stools on the south wall in the back of the church. All prayers are kept confidential.

### Guests and Visitors

We are especially pleased to have you here with us today.

Please take the time to sign the guest book located on the Welcome Wagon near the south entrance.

If you have any questions about St. Paul's or the Episcopal Church, please don't hesitate to visit with one of our clergy, either today or during the week.

### Helpful Hints for Receiving Holy Communion

- Everyone is invited to receive Holy Communion. Everyone!
- The usher will let you know when it is time for your row to go up.
- Watch the people in front of you to get the flow of things.
- To receive the bread and if you want to Intinct ("dipping" the wafer into the cup of wine/grape juice) the minister will place the wafer between your thumb & pointer fingers (pinch it) then you can Intinct (dip) the wafer into the chalice.
- Please do not drink from the cup. Intinction only.
- There is a designated chalice on the north side, that has **grape juice**.
- If you would like a **gluten free** wafer, either say gluten free to the clergy distributing the bread, or you can get a small black stone from the basket in the back of the worship space on the north side. Present it in the palm of your hand to the clergy and they will exchange it for a gluten free wafer.
- If you desire Holy Communion but are unable to walk up to receive it, please notify an usher. They will inform the clergy of your request, and the clergy will gladly bring Holy Communion to you in your seat.

## PRELUDE "Soon and Very Soon"

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*The Presider invites the children to come to the Advent Wreath.*

#### The Third Sunday of Advent

*Presider:* God's Word calls us to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ, the Light of the world. The candles of the season herald that light, brightening these days of preparation.

*Presider:* The wilderness will dance and the dry places will sing praises to God.

**People: When we see the glory of the Lord revealed, we will be strengthened and saved!**

*Presider:* God's gift of hope opens our eyes.  
God's gift of love opens our hearts.

**People: With joy, we will praise the promised Savior of the world!**

*Presider:* Let us with joy, kindle the light of the Lord.  
(Three candles are lit)

### MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

*Presider:* Let us share in a moment of silence, reflecting on our need for peace.

*A bell, singing bowl, or chime, may be used*

*Presider:* Gracious God, you call all nations to walk in your light and to seek your presence among us. Bless us as we share in these candles of Hope, Peace, and Joy that we may have the courage to share their light beyond the safety of these walls. **Amen.**

*The children are invited to Sunday School.*

*Presider:* Let us all stand in body or spirit as we sing.

### PROCESSIONAL HYMN

*"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Verses 4-6*

### THE GREETING

*Presider:* Blessed are you, holy and living One.

**People: You come to your people  
and set them free.**

*Presider:* As we prepare for the coming of the Lord,

**People: Let joy be our guide.**

### KYRIE S-91 Located on Service Music Card

### THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*Presider:* The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

*Presider:* Let us pray.

*Presider:* Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### THE FIRST LESSON Zephaniah 3:14-20

*Lector:* A reading from the Book of Zephaniah.

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

### THE RESPONSE Canticle 9 Isaiah 12:2-6

*The First Song of Isaiah*

*To be read responsively by whole verse.*

*Lector:* Surely, it is God who saves me; \*

I will trust in him and not be afraid.

**People: For the Lord is my stronghold  
and my sure defense, \*  
and he will be my Savior.**

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing \*  
from the springs of salvation.

**And on that day you shall say, \***

**Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;**

Make his deeds known among the peoples; \*  
see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

**Sing the praises of the Lord,  
for he has done great things, \*  
and this is known in all the world.**

Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, \*  
for the great one in the midst of you  
is the Holy One of Israel.

**All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.**

### THE SECOND LESSON Philippians 4:4-7

*Lector:* A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is

near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

*Lector:* The Word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

*All stand in body or spirit*

**SEQUENCE HYMN: #75**

*"There's a voice in the wilderness crying"*

1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a  
2 O - Zi - on, that bring - est good tid - ings, get thee  
3 but the word of our God en - du - reth, the

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a  
up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late  
arm of the Lord is strong; he stands in the midst of

high - way, a high - way for our God! The  
peo - ple the com - ing of their King. Like the  
na - tions, and he will right the wrong. He shall

val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the  
flowers of the field they per - ish, like  
feed his flock like a shep - herd, the

lof - ty hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed  
grass our works de - cay; the power and pomp of  
lambs he'll gent - ly hold; to pas - tures of peace he'll

pla - ces where the Lord our God may go!  
na - tions shall pass like a dream a - way;  
lead them, and bring them safe to his fold.

## THE GOSPEL Luke 3:7-18

*Presider:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

***People:* Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever

has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with

the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

*Presider:* The Gospel of the Lord.

***People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**THE SERMON:** The Very Rev. Kirk Woodliff  
*A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.*

**THE NICENE CREED** *(All in unison)*

*Presider:* Let us all stand in body or spirit  
and affirm our faith in God.

**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:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**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.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped  
and glorified.  
He 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.**

## **SPECIAL BLESSINGS**

### **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Leader:* O Lord, as we move through the shadows of Advent, we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, some of us are lost within our broken hearts. Comfort us in our own darkness, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, we are stuck in a world of false promises, easy fixes, cheap merchandise and unhealthy relationships. We long to see through this fog and embrace your truth and divine goodness. We need your help to let go of distractions and to find trust in one another, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, as a people we are hungry. We live as if there is not enough healthy food among us and we deny nourishment for our souls. We humbly reach out for your helping hand, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, some of us are weary and we struggle to go on. In our tired hands is more than we could possibly carry alone. We need your strength and support, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, some of us are afraid. We are overwhelmed and are in denial of forces that twist us and break us. We need confidence and the reassurance of your grace, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, we pray for those who are angry, for those who have turned to violence, and for those who are filled with hatred. Grant us with knowledge and wisdom as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

*Leader:* O Lord, help us feel secure in your world and we ask for protection for Mark, Sean, Aden, Bradley, Alex, Suzanne, and all the men and woman, both locally and abroad, who risk their lives for us, as we cling to your light of hope.

***People:* Come Lord, and refresh us.**

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

## **BLESSING OF THE QUILTS**

*(If there are Quilts to bless, they are done at this time.)*

## **CONCLUDING COLLECT**

*Presider:* O Lord, in the growing light of your hope, we lift our prayers to you; and as the Star of Bethlehem begins rising in the East, keep us watchful of your abiding presence and prepare our hearts to be filled with your mighty wonder. **Amen.**

## **CONFESSION OF SIN**

*Presider:* Sins are things that cause separation in our relationships with God and each other.

Let us reflect on and confess our sins to God.

*(Silence is kept for personal reflection.)*

*Presider:* Merciful God,

***People and Presider:***

**we confess that we have tried to separate ourselves from you, rejecting your Spirit in our lives.**

**We have ignored you, our neighbors, and the world we were entrusted to protect.**

**We are sorry for the selfishness that drives us, for the wrongs we have brought on others, and for the darkness of our chosen silence.**

**Wipe away all fear and shame, and heal us from our brokenness.**

**Restore our sacred vision, so we may rightly see Christ in our own reflection and respond to the world in his name. Amen.**

### **THE ABSOLUTION**

*Presider:* Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

**THE PEACE** *All stand in body or spirit*

*Presider:* The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

***People:* And also with you.**

*Offer one another some sign of Christ's peace.*

### **THE OFFERTORY**

*During this time we make an offering to the church to help maintain its mission in creation.*

*It is also a time in which we fully offer ourselves to be Christ in the world around us.*

If mailing in an offering, please remit to:

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

P.O. Box 737, Sparks, NV 89432

Or online at [www.StPaulssparks.org](http://www.StPaulssparks.org).



**Scan with your smart phone camera to give secure and "contact free" donations.**

### **THE OFFERTORY SENTENCE**

*Presider:* Let us make an offering of the gifts we have been given and make an offering of ourselves to God.

### **OFFERTORY ANTHEM**

*All Stand in body or spirit*

### **PRESENTATION SONG "Better Days"**

### **THE PRESENTATION**

*Presider:* All things come of thee O Lord.

***People:* And of thine own have we given thee.**

### **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: Prayer B**

*The Great Thanksgiving begins with the Sursum Corda located on the Service Music Card.*

*Following the Sursum Corda, the Presider Continues:*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to

make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, 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 your Name:

### **SANCTUS S-125 Located on Service Music Card**

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

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

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he 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, according to his command, O Father,

***Presider and People:***

**We remember his death,**

**We proclaim his resurrection,**

**We await his coming in glory;**

*Presider:* And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, 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, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever...

**THE GREAT AMEN** *Located on Service Music Card*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Presider:* As our Savior Christ has taught us,  
we now pray,

*People and Presider*

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

*A period of silence is kept.*

*Presider:* We break this bread  
to share in the Body of Christ.

*People:* **We who are many are one body,  
for we all share in the one bread.**

## THE INVITATION

*Presider:* This meal before us is not a reward for  
being good. It is the perfect food and drink of the  
real presence of Jesus; a gift of grace and wholeness  
within the imperfections of our lives.

You are all welcome and belong at this table,

for it is Christ who invites us to meet him here,  
and these sacred gifts are for you.

## COMMUNION TO THE PEOPLE

**COMMUNION SONG** *"Mary Did You Know"*  
*"Breathe"*

## THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

*Presider:* Let us all stand in body or spirit  
as we pray together.

*People and Presider:*

**Strengthen our hands for your service, O Lord,  
that they may be used for acts of love and  
kindness;**

**Open our ears which have heard your word,  
that they may have clarity and not listen to  
hurtful and demeaning things.**

**May our tongues which have sung your praise,  
be free from deceit and judgment;**

**May our eyes which have seen your light,  
be ever focused on your image in one another;  
and may our souls which have been fed with  
your spiritual food, be refreshed and filled with  
gratitude. Amen.**

## THE BLESSING

*The Presider offers this or other blessing*

**Live without fear: your Creator has made you holy,  
has always protected you, and loves you as a mother.  
Go in peace to follow the good road  
and may God's blessing be with you always. Amen.**

*(source: from Saint Clare)*

## THE RECESSIONAL HYMN

*"Prepare the way"*

# 65

### THE DISMISSAL

*The Presider offers this or  
some other dismissal*

*Presider:*

Let us bless the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE** *"Put a Little  
Love in your Heart"*

### Christmas Flowers:

The special envelope for the  
Christmas Altar Flowers are  
in the Narthex. A donation  
to the **Christmas Altar  
Flowers** is a wonderful way  
to remember loved ones and  
to give thanks for God's  
blessings. **Deadline for  
flower dedications is noon  
on Dec. 20th.**

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems of music. The first system is for the hymn 'Prepare the way' and includes three verses of lyrics. The second system is for the postlude 'Put a Little Love in your Heart' and includes three verses of lyrics. The third system is a refrain for the same postlude. The lyrics are as follows:

1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!  
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.  
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.  
His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.  
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.

Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.  
Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.  
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.

*Refrain*  
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.