



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We follow Jesus, nurture ministries and welcome all.

Third Sunday of Advent

Year A

December 15, 2019 8 a.m.



Online Bulletin

Welcome to St. Paul's Episcopal Church.

Whether this is your first visit or you have been a member for years, we're glad you're here! This bulletin is designed to guide you through the service. Hymnals, Bibles and the Book of Common Prayer are in the pews and available for your use as well. Please let us know if there's anything we can do to make your time with us more enriching and enjoyable.

Holy Eucharist *Liturgy of the Word*

Prelude

Veni Emmanuel

arr. Robert J. Powell

Please stand as you are able at the sound of the bell.

Processional Hymn

On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry

Hymnal 76

Opening Salutation

Book of Common Prayer (BCP) p. 323

Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

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

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The Trisagion, "Holy God" may be said three times.

Celebrant Holy God,
Holy and Mighty,
Holy Immortal One,

People **Have mercy upon us.**

Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

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.

Please be seated for the reading of Scripture.

As Episcopalians, our custom is to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest Holy Scripture. You are invited to do so right here in your bulletin.

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it 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. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No 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. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

Canticle 15, The Song of Mary *Magnificat*

BCP p.91
Luke 1:46-55

1. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
2. From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
3. He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
4. He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
5. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
6. He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
7. He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

8. The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.
9. 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.*

Second Reading

James 5:7-10

A Reading from the Letter of James.

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 11:2-11

Please stand as you are able and face the Gospel.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew
Glory be to thee, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to thee, O Christ.

Sermon

The Reverend Susan Bek

A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.

Nicene Creed

BCP p. 326

All stand as able and say together.

Prayers of the People

Please stand, sit or kneel as is your custom.

BCP p. 328

Celebrant

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Intercessor

Almighty and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all people: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Teach us, O God, to treasure the differences that distinguish one person from another. Help us to overcome fear and hatred. Open our hearts to see thy radiance in every human soul. Give us the courage to combat prejudice and intolerance, and bless us with compassion, with kindness, and with peace.¹

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers *especially our presiding bishop, Michael; our bishops John and Diane; our clergy Susan, Liz, and Dick*, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land *especially Donald, our President; the congress and courts; Gavin, our Governor*, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor **Onofre, Christopher, Paulette, Adele, Babs, Brenda, James, Jacob, Carolyn, Teresa, Duncan, Steven, Frank, Julie, Bruce, Briana, Charly, Paul, Diane, Kathie, Tom, William, and those enduring a long term illness especially Virginia, Wayne, Margery, Sheila, Carrie, Brian, Linda, Judy, Liz, Michelle, Kevin, Mary, Kathy, Amelia, Doug, Carol, Stacie, Rachel, Mary, Kim and those others on our hearts** and all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, especially those affected by recent violence or recovering from fires and floods.

(See page 8 for other parish petitions and prayers of thanksgiving.)

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear *especially Thomas Honeyman, Kathleen Craven, Doris Darby and those whose names we bring before God*, beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of Paul and of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

Peace

All stand as they are able.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And with thy spirit.

Announcements

Prayers for Birthdays, Anniversaries and Other Special Occasions

Liturgy of the Table

Offertory Sentence

Thank you for your donation. Your generosity is appreciated. We look forward to doing great things in the name of Christ with whatever you are able to give.

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:2

Offertory

The Transept

Gilbert Martin

Presentation Hymn

Rejoice, rejoice, believers

Hymnal 68

Please stand as you are able.

Great Thanksgiving (Eucharistic Prayer I)

BCP p. 333

The Lord's Prayer

BCP p. 336

Breaking of the Bread

BCP p. 337

A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Prayer of Humble Access

BCP p. 337

Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All are welcome to come forward. The table we set is the Lord's. Our custom is to receive the bread in your open palm. Please tell the priest if you prefer a gluten-free wafer. Sip the wine, if you wish it, from the common cup, guiding the chalice gently with your hand or the Eucharistic Minister will dip the bread for you. Otherwise, cross your arms over your chest as a sign you wish to receive a blessing.

Suggestion for before or after Communion: Open your Book of Common Prayer (BCP) to pages 833-834. You'll find some wonderful prayers there.

Highlights of This Week at St. Paul's

Today 12/15	8:00 am	Rite I Sunday Service
	9:30 am	Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)
	10:00 am	Advent Wreath Lighting (Sanctuary)
	10:30 am	Rite II Sunday Service
	11:30 am	Parish Christmas Party & Sing Along (Kahler Hall)
	8:00 pm	AA Meeting (Kahler Hall)
Monday 12/16	9:30 am	Family to Family (303 N. Ventura Ave.)
	8:00 pm	AA Meeting (Kahler Hall)
Tues. 12/17	10:00 am	Sack Lunch Distribution (Office)
	6:30 pm	Boy Scout Troop #179 (Community Room, Kahler Hall)
Wed. 12/18	9:00 am	Healing Service (Chapel)
	10:30 am	Bible Study (Library)
	8:00 pm	AA Meeting (Community Room)
Thurs. 12/19	10:00 am	Sack Lunch Distribution (Office)
	7:00pm	Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)
Fri. 12/20	6:30 am	Men's Bible Study (Location to be determined)
Sat 12/21	6:45 pm	AA Meeting (Community Room)
Sun. 12/22	8:00 am	Rite I Sunday Service
	9:30 am	Choir Rehearsal (Music Room)
	10:00 am	Advent Wreath Lighting (Sanctuary)
	10:15 am	Rite II Sunday Service
	11:30 am	Fellowship & Formation (Kahler Hall)
	11:45 am	Newcomer Coffee with Our Clergy (Community Room)
	8:00 pm	AA Meeting (Kahler Hall)



Prayer Intentions for the Week of December 15, 2019

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury
Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop
John Taylor, Bishop Diocesan
Diane Jardine Bruce, Bishop Suffragan

Our Clergy: Susan Bek, Liz Williams, Dick Swanson
President Donald Trump, Congress, Federal Courts
Governor Gavin Newsom, Legislature, State Courts

HEALING IN BODY, MIND & SPIRIT:

Onofre, Christopher, Paulette, Adele, Babs, Brenda, James, Jacob, Carolyn, Teresa, Duncan,
Steven, Frank, Julie, Bruce, Briana, Charly, Paul, Diane, Kathie, Tom, William

THOSE ENDURING A LONG TERM ILLNESS:

Virginia, Wayne, Margery, Sheila, Carrie, Brian, Linda, Judy, Liz, Michelle, Kevin, Mary, Kathy,
Amelia, Doug, Carol, Stacie, Rachel, Mary, Kim

FOR GOD'S BLESSING ON:

- + The ministry of Family to Family; all who volunteer and/or give financially to feed Ventura's hungry
- + U.S. Armed services personnel serving around the world and wounded warriors cared for in medical centers and those returned home

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- + Our partners in the Diocese of Los Angeles Deanery One in Ventura County: *St. Columba's*, Camarillo; *Trinity*, Fillmore; *St. Andrew's*, Ojai; *All Saints'*, Oxnard; *St. Paul's/Emmanuel*, Santa Paula; *St. Francis'*, Simi Valley; *St. Patrick's*, Thousand Oaks
- + Our World Mission Companions: *the Cathedral Church of the Ascension, in the Diocese of Wiaaso*, Ghana
- + The Ventura Interfaith Ministerial Assoc.: *First United Methodist, Trinity Lutheran, Our Lady of the Assumption churches and the Salvation Army*

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas Honeyman, Kathleen Craven, Doris Darby

Parish prayers for healing are listed for one calendar month. Contact the office with your request which may be added at any time. They may be requested and/or renewed by using the prayer cards in the pews.



St. Paul's Episcopal Church Staff

The Rev. Susan Bek, Rector
The Rev. Liz Williams, Associate Rector
The Rev. Dr. Richard Swanson, Assisting
Dr. Felix Eisenhauer, Music Minister
Tara Eisenhauer, Assistant Music Minister
Sara Edwards, Organist
Nadia Talley, ASL Interpreter
Bonnie Rubrecht, Parish Administrator
Kathleen Jensen, Administrative Assistant
Wendy Olivier, Nursery Caregiver

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Announcements December 15, 2019

Thank you for joining us today! We'll continue to hold you in our prayers.

Please contact the church office for more information. God bless you!

We invite you to join us again next Sunday!



Please help us thank the following people for our refreshments this morning:

8:00 am-Richard Goodman

10:15 am-Bruce & Judy Kelly, Nate & Anne Alday, Greg & Karyn Jackson

(Next week for hospitality: 8:00-Peter & Sharon Bowers

10:15-Bill & Kathleen Crookston, Woody & Louise Bretz, Paul & Marilyn Angelo)

If you would like to serve on our hospitality team, please let us know.

The Vestry Greeter today is Sarah Lamola come by and say hello



We are faithful people waiting for the coming of light, the coming of Christ...

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD – Sunday, 12/15 Services at 8 & 10:15am

Be with us as we light the first, second, and third candles on our Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, and the third candle is JOY.



Come and join in the fun!

PARISH CHRISTMAS PARTY – Sunday, 12/15 at 11:45am

Bring your friends and neighbors and join us in Kahler Hall for our annual Christmas Carol Sing Along and Cookie Decorating Party.

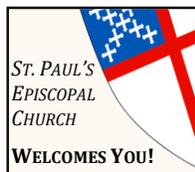
All are welcome!



We are faithful people waiting for the coming of light, the coming of Christ...

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD – Sunday, 12/22 Services at 8 & 10:15am

Be with us as we light the first, second, third and fourth candles on our Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, the third candle is JOY, and the fourth candle is LOVE. Let's come together as we worship and wait, holding on to the hope that Christ has instilled in us, enjoying the peace that is beyond understanding, delighting in the joy that comes as we lift our thanks and praise, and celebrating the incredible gift of love offered to us through Jesus. Join us as we prepare the way of the Lord, lift our prayers and receive the bread and wine made holy. Come get inspired! Invite a friend and join us. We look forward to seeing you there!



Grab a cup of coffee and come join us!

NEWCOMER COFFEE WITH OUR CLERGY – Sunday, 12/22 at 11:45am

Join us in the Community Room (the meeting room behind the kitchen in Kahler Hall). Our topic this month is: *Getting to know each other and the Episcopal Church*. Come meet people, ask questions and explore the faith. *All are welcome!*



Are you new to St. Paul's or visiting us?

A warm welcome to you! We are so glad you came. We are a friendly and welcoming congregation. Our ushers and greeters will be happy to do anything they can to make your time with us more comfortable and meaningful. Please introduce yourself to our clergy, they're looking forward to meeting you. We invite you to come back soon.

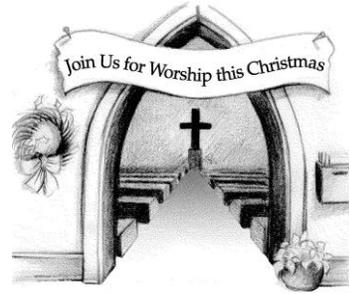
	<p><i>Want to help feed the hungry?</i> IT'S OUR TURN TO SERVE LUNCH – Monday, December 16 Come help us serve lunch tomorrow at 303 N. Ventura Avenue. Preparation and set up begins at 9:30 am; servers are needed between 11:30 and 12:30 pm. Clean-up 12:30 – 1:00pm.</p>
	<p><i>Join in the fun, perform in our Epiphany Pageant. Who knows, you could be the STAR!</i> REHEARSALS FOR THE EPIPHANY PAGEANT – Sun. 12/29 & Sun. 1/5 The Epiphany pageant is an annual favorite for our Sunday School children, and they could use your help. We need a team of adults and teens to come act, sing, help with costumes, cue lines, help with staging, and be sure the camel gets his cue. Please let us know if you can help. Thanks!</p>
	<p>BAPTISM OPPORTUNITY – January 19 The next baptism opportunity will be on the Sunday we remember the Baptism of our Lord. <i>We become members of the body of Christ through the sacrament of baptism. If you have not been baptized, and would like to be, or would like to arrange baptism for a child, please speak with Rev. Susan or Rev. Liz to make arrangements. We look forward to it!</i></p>
	<p><i>Want to help our warm the hearts and bodies of our neighbors in need?</i> COATS FOR ALL - We are collecting new or gently used coats and jackets of all sizes now through the end of the year! The drive is sponsored by the Downtown Chapter of the Rotary Club. The donation box is located in the church lobby. SOCK DRIVE - Socks are also in high demand at this time of year for the men and women served by the Sack Lunch Program and Family to Family ministries. Drop of your sock donations in the basket on the REACH table. (Please no dress socks or children’s sizes.)</p>
	<p><i>Come learn how you can help make a difference</i> WOULD YOU CONSIDER GOING ON A MEDICAL MISSION TRIP TO JAMAICA? LEARN ALL ABOUT IT – Tuesday, December 17 at 7pm Dr. Steve Jones is going on another medical mission trip – this time to Jamaica. Would you be interested in going too? You don’t have to be a medical professional to go; most are not. We need lots of support staff too! If you’re interested, join us at 7pm on 12/17 at 10660 Candytuft St., Ventura to learn all about it.</p>
	<p><i>The Daughters of the King invite you to join us...</i> FIRST MONDAY BOOK CLUB – Monday, January 6, 5:30-7pm at Panera Bread. All are welcome! This month's selection is Life Undercover: Coming of Age in the CIA by Amaryllis Fox.</p>
	<p><i>Once a year we gather to do the business of the church. Please mark your calendar and join us.</i> ST. PAUL’S ANNUAL MEETING – January 26 at 11:30am All members of the church are encouraged to attend. We need enough members in attendance so that we will have a quorum. At this important meeting we will elect new Vestry members and Diocesan Convention. We receive reports from the groups and committees of the church and review our finances and the budget for the coming year. Please mark it on your calendar and arrange to be with us. Thank you!</p>
 <p>This QR Code takes you straight to our Giving Page</p>	<p><i>“God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7</i> Thank you for your generosity! Donations may be made by cash, check, PayPal, or Text StPaulsVentura to 73256. You can also arrange online payments, click the “Give” button at www.saintpaulsventura.org or use this QR code. Members give of their time through many ministries and share their talents through lots of volunteer opportunities. Please contact our clergy if you’d like to get involved in something new. Generosity involves the giving of time, talent and treasure. Thank you for all the ways you give of yourself! We look forward to doing great things with whatever you are able to share. Thank you so much! It is great to be with you on this journey of faith.</p>



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS & MUSIC

We'd love to have especially beautiful flowers and music this Christmas. If you'd like to contribute, please mark your donation "Flowers & Music" and place in offering plate, send in offering envelope, or donate via the website, PayPal, or Text. Be sure to note whether the donation is in memory or honor of a loved one and whether you would like it included in the service bulletins. Donations accepted any time. Deadline is to be listed in the bulletin is 12/15.

Thank You!



GREENING OF THE CHURCH Monday, December 23 at 9am

Help us transform the church in preparation for Christmas. Bring your friends and join us. Many hands make light work. Childcare available.



THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS EVE December 23 at 7pm

Come and enjoy the peace and beauty of the church on the night before Christmas Eve. Quiet music, bedtime stories and prayers. Children are invited to come in their jammies. Come get centered and connect with the spirit of Christmas before the festivities begin.



Christmas Eve at St. Paul's

4:00 p.m. Family Service

This is a friendly service that is especially appropriate for families and children of all ages.

10:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

Carols begin at 10 p.m.

Service begins at 10:30 p.m.

This service includes: traditional Christmas lessons, candlelight, choir and Eucharist.

Christmas Day

9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Join us for a beautiful service on this holy day.



St Paul's, Ventura Your Church Home for the Holidays

We invite you to bring your family, friends and neighbors and join us this Christmas for inspiring worship, beautiful music, friendly fellowship, and the opportunity to be filled with the true message of Christmas.

3290 Loma Vista Road, Ventura
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(805) 643-5033
www.saintpaulsventura.org

Sunday Services at 8am & 10:15am
Wednesday Healing Service at 9am



EPIPHANY PAGEANT

Sunday, Jan. 12 at 10:15am

All are welcome! Come enjoy the service or participate in it. Rehearsals on Sun. 12/28 and Sun. 1/5. Contact the church office for details.