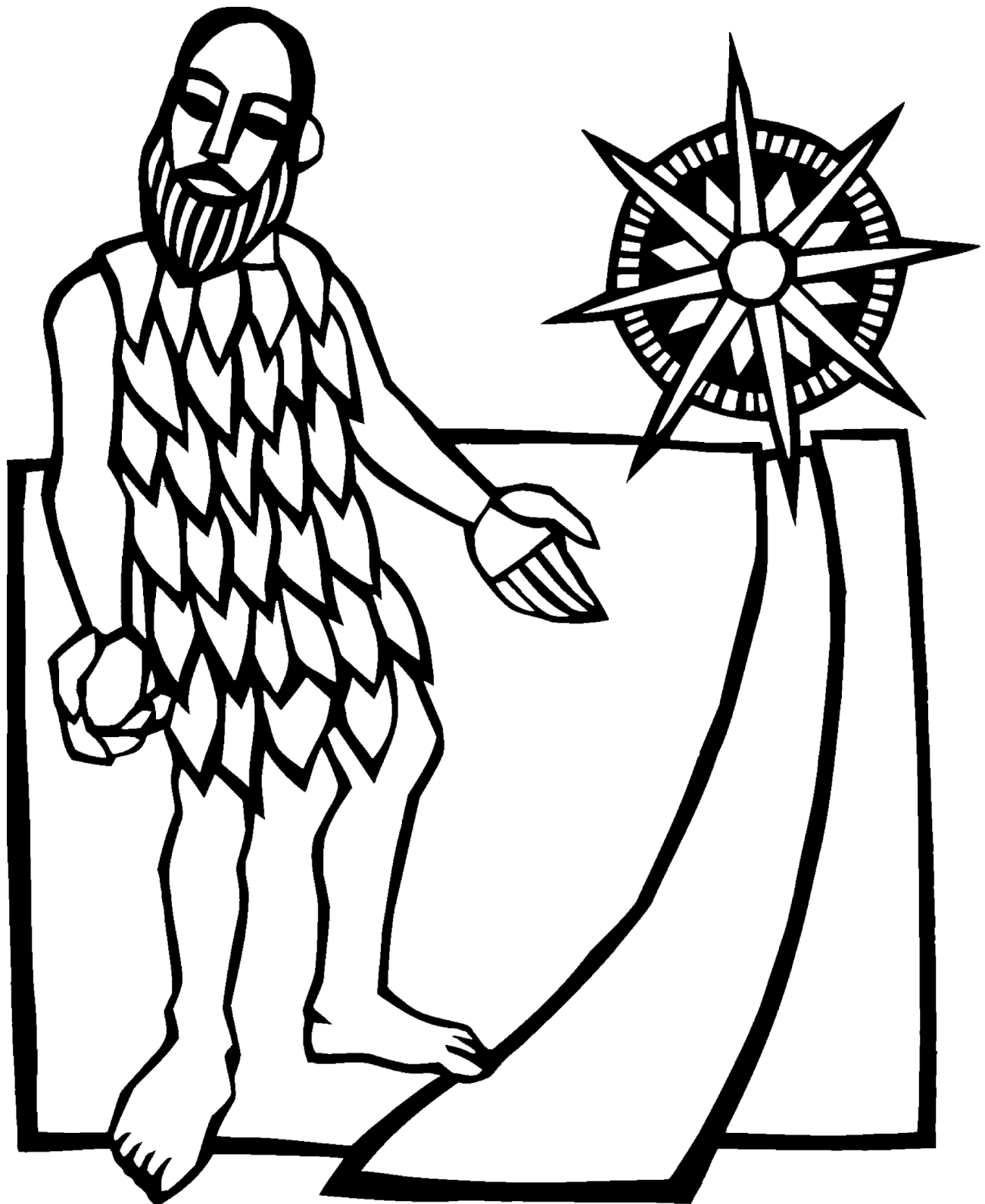


St. Paul Lutheran Church

9:00 am Worship Service

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025



Some notes to help you this morning...

As an act of hospitality, we invite everyone to wear a **nametag**. Nametags are available in the west entry to the sanctuary. If you are visiting for the first time, please use a blank nametag and marker to make one. Please place your nametag on the appropriate board by last name when leaving the service. (*IMPORTANT NOTE: The nametags are magnetic. If you have a pacemaker, please place your nametag at least 6 inches away from your pacemaker.*)

(*) Indicates the congregation is invited to stand as they are able.

Bold print indicates when everyone speaks in unison.

Hark, the Glad Sound!

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God in three persons,
God the Father,
God the Son,
God the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Almighty God, to 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 your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most merciful God,
we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace we have been saved. In the name of † Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. May Almighty God strengthen us with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in our hearts through faith.

Amen.

*PEACE

Having reconciled ourselves to God, we now reconcile ourselves to one another.

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a sign of God's peace with one another.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

D Em A D

Come thou long-__ ex- pec - ted Je- sus, Born to set thy
Born thy peo - ple to de- liv- er, Born a child, and

A D Em A D

peo - ple free; From our fears__ and sins re- lease us; Let us
yet__ a king. Born to reign__ in us for ev - er, Now thy

A D F#m Bm Em A7

find our rest__ in thee. Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion
gra - cious king - dom bring. By thine own__ e - ter - nal Spir - it

D Bm F#m A D Em

Hope of all the earth thou art, Dear de- sire__ of
Rule in all our hearts a - lone. By__ thine all - suf -

D A D G D A7 D

ev - 'ry na - tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
fi - cient mer - it Raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

*GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

On the First Sunday of Advent, we began with the candle of hope. Last Sunday, we lit a candle for peace. This Sunday, we light the candle of love. One verse that many memorize and remember on this day is John 3:16, **“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”**

When we look at the third candle, we remember God’s love. When we read the words of John 3:16, we know of God’s great love for each one of us and the whole world, too. We remember God’s love during Advent when we look ahead to God sending His Son in the birth of the baby Jesus to help us know that God is more than just a cosmic Creator. He is also a loving Father.

Light the candle.

Praise to you, O God, our salvation who is near. You hold us in our waiting and keep us awake to the world. You show up in our lives at unexpected times.

Bless us as we light this candle to keep vigil for your arrival. We trust that even though we do not know the day or the hour, you hurry to gather all people to your peace. Amen.

HYMN

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

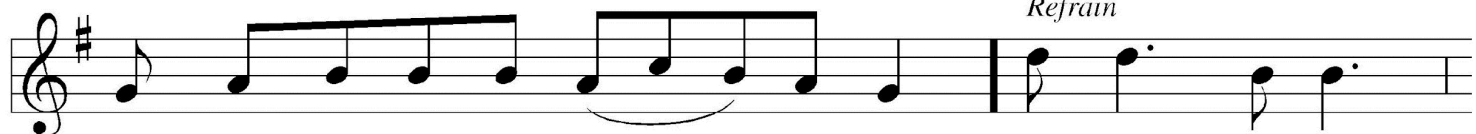
Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 Oh, come, oh, come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on
3 Oh, come, strong Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
Si - nai's height in an - cient times once gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe. Re - joice! Re - joice!
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

READING – Isaiah 35:1-10

A reading from 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 shouting.
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 shall be opened;
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.

PSALM – Psalm 146:5-10 (*Read responsively.*)

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;
who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who
hunger.

The Lord sets the captive free.

**The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are
bowed down;**

the Lord loves the righteous.

The Lord cares for the stranger;
the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the
wicked.

The Lord shall reign forever,

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

READING – James 5:7-10

A reading from James.

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, 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. Brothers and sisters, 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, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (*sung*)

**Alleluia, Alleluia, opening our hearts to Him, singing
Alleluia, Alleluia, Jesus is our King.**

*GOSPEL – Matthew 11:2-11

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the 11th chapter.

Glory to you, 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, those with a skin disease 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 to you, O Christ.

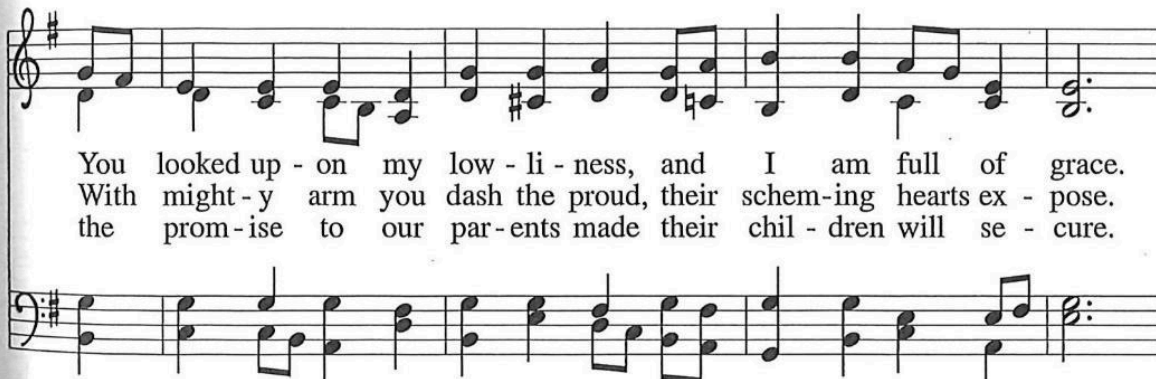
SERMON

My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness

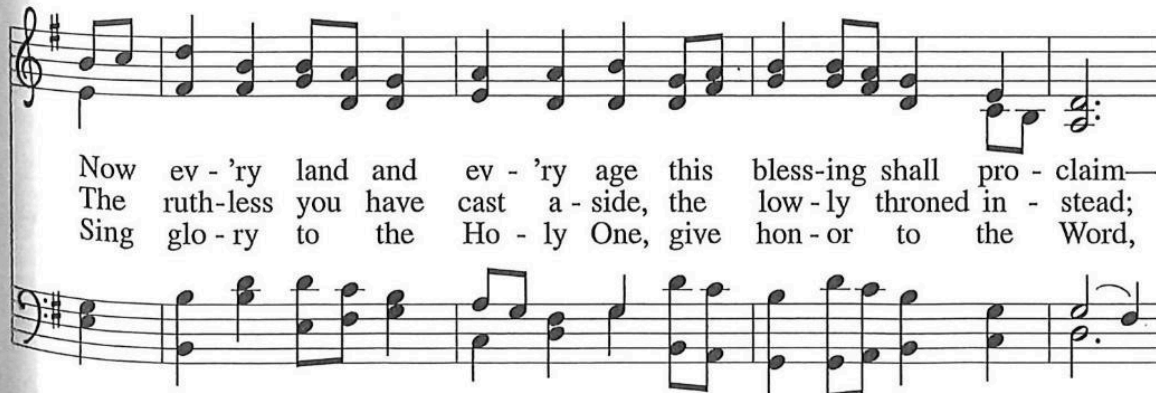
251



1 My soul pro-claims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav-ior's praise!
 2 To all who live in ho-ly fear your mer-cy ev-er flows.
 3 To Is-ra-el, your ser-vant blest, your help is ev-er sure;



You looked up - on my low - li - ness, and I am full of grace.
 With might - y arm you dash the proud, their schem - ing hearts ex - pose.
 the prom - ise to our par - ents made their chil - dren will se - cure.



Now ev - 'ry land and ev - 'ry age this bless - ing shall pro - claim—
 The ruth - less you have cast a - side, the low - ly throned in - stead;
 Sing glo - ry to the Ho - ly One, give hon - or to the Word,



great won - ders you have done for me, and ho - ly is your name.
 the hun - gry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un - fed.
 and praise the Pow'r of the Most High, one God, by all a - dored.

*APOSTLES' CREED

We confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father;

he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS

Each petition ends: God of grace, hear our prayer.

OFFERTORY

Offering plates are brought to the altar as a musical gift is offered.

Offerings may be placed in the offering plates by the entrance doors of the sanctuary before or after worship, or you may scan to give here. Offering plates are not passed during the service.



OFFERING SONG

Little Bitty Baby

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of abundance, we bring before you the precious fruits of your creation, and with them our very lives. Teach us patience and hope as we care for all those in need until the coming of your Son, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

***THE 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.**

***BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor, and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

***SENDING SONG** (*next page*)

***SENDING**

We leave this service renewed in Spirit and called to go out into the world...

Living and Sharing God's Love!

Come Jesus Come

Verse 1

Sometimes I fall to my knees and pray
Come Jesus come let today be the day
Sometimes I feel like I'm gonna break
But I'm holding on to a hope that won't fade

Chorus

Come Jesus come
We've been waiting so long
For the day You return to heal every hurt
And right every wrong
We need You right now
Come and turn this around
Deep down I know this world isn't home
Come Jesus come
Come Jesus come

Verse 2

There'll be no war and there'll be no chains
When Jesus comes let today be the day
He'll come for the weak
And the strong just the same
And all will believe in the power of His name

Verse 3

One day He'll come and we'll stand face to face
Come and lay it all down 'cause it might be today
The time is right now there's no need to wait
Your past will be washed by rivers of grace

*POSTLUDE

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY:

Deacon – Nancy Wagner
Advent Family – Deb Ruckman and Val Washburn
Reader – Mike Bing
Greeters – Sharon Gunder, Eileen Miller
Ushers – Judy Harding, Helen Turner
Communion Assistants – Pam Hartley, Carol Laser, Linda Lull
Sound Booth – Don Harding
Technology – John Harsch, Luke Stuftt, Cara Marhenke

POINSETTIAS are given by Judy & John Coppersmith, “in memory of Bob Coppersmith” and “in honor of Jim Coppersmith’s family” and by the Frontz family, “in memory of Paul & Janet’s Anniversary.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

<i>Church office hours: Monday – Thursday</i>		<i>9:00 am – 3:00 pm</i>
Sunday, December 14 th	9:00 am	Worship Service
	10:15 am	Education Classes
	11:00 am	Hand Chime Practice – Social Room
Monday, December 15 th	8:00 pm	AA Meeting – Library
Tuesday, December 16 th	1:00 – 6:00 pm	American Red Cross Blood Drive – Community Room
Wednesday, December 17 th	6:30 pm	Praise Team Practice – Sanctuary
	7:30 pm	Choir Practice – Community Room

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CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

President	Chris Laux	419-564-8900
Vice-President	Mike Bing	419-571-8119
Secretary	Bonnie Brenneman	740-504-0841
Members	Larry Fenton	419-883-3353
	Tammie Saddler	407-319-3591
	Deb Ruckman	419-688-1456



St. Paul Lutheran Church

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Free Wi-Fi: SPLC Guest

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church@stpaulbellville.org

Pastor Jonathan Stufft
614-560-3736

pastor@stpaulbellville.org

Administrative Assistant:
Contemporary Music Director:
Traditional Music Director:
Treasurer:
Custodian:
McLaughlin

Laura Constance
Cheryl Lantz
Denise Lang
Beth Fry
Jeannie McLaughlin



POINSETTIAS

Marge Armstrong "in honor of my family"

Dave & Bette Backus "in memory of Monica Backus and
Betty Horton"

Mike Badger "in memory of mother and father"

Nancy Barr "in memory of Tom Barr" and "in honor of the
Barr family"

Cindy Beckel "in memory of Arnie Beckel"

Lynn Berry "in memory of Madge & Loren, David Peters"

Dick & Bonnie Brenneman "in memory of our parents"

Judy & John Coppersmith "in memory of Bob Coppersmith"
and "in honor of Jim Coppersmith's family"

Pam Hartley "in honor of Emma, Amanda, Grant & Darren"

Gary & Cheryl Lantz "in honor of The Christ Child"

Sabrina Pugh "in memory of Caitlin Pugh"

Deb Ruckman & Val Washburn "in memory of Robert
Trautner and Marilyn Baker"

Rob & Juanita Shenberger "in memory of Robert & Janet
Shenberger"

Helen Turner "in memory of my mom and dad"

Bill & Paula Worner "in memory of Richard & Lucille"

