

**St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church
Lakewood, Colorado**

– Church of the Lutheran Confession –
Lakewood, Colorado



**NEW YEAR'S EVE WORSHIP
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2017, 9:30 AM**

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

2470 WADSWORTH BLVD., LAKEWOOD, CO 80214
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Member congregation of the
Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC)

Thomas Schuetze, pastor (303-428-5524)
Larry Reed, president – Mike Sprengeler, SS Superintendent
Ruth Greening, Suzannah Miller, Lisa Sprengeler, organists

Pre-Service Devotion

Psalm 91 (pew bible, p.530)

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ORDER OF WORSHIP

The structure in this morning's service suggests a pattern which may be followed in the private prayers of any individual. It may be summarized with the word "ACTS": Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication

Opening Hymn 902

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now

Welcome and Trinitarian Invocation

— AN ACT OF ADORATION —

P Let us adore our heavenly Father, who created us, who sustains us, who loves us with and everlasting love, and gives us the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

C We praise You, O God; we acknowledge You to be the Lord.

P Let us glory in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; who in every respect was tempted as we are, yet without sinning; who went about doing good and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom; who became obedient unto death, even death on a cross; who died and is alive forever; who has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers; who is seated at God's right hand in the glory of the Father; who will come again, as Judge and King.

C You are the King of glory, O Christ.

P Let us rejoice in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, by whom we are born into the family of God, and made members of the body of Christ; whose witness confirms us, whose wisdom teaches us, whose power enables us to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think.

C All praise to You, O Holy Spirit.

— AN ACT OF CONFESSION —

P O God our Father, since You have set forth the way of life for us in Your beloved Son, we confess with shame our slowness to learn of Him, our failure to follow Him, our reluctance to bear the cross.

C Have mercy on us and forgive us, O Lord.

P Forgive us the poverty of our worship, our neglect of fellowship and of the Means of Grace, our hesitating witness for Christ, our evasion of responsibility in Your service, our imperfect stewardship of Your gifts.

C Have mercy on us and forgive us, O God.

P Forgive us that so little of Your love has reached others through us, that we have been thoughtless in our judgments, hasty in condemnation grudging in forgiveness, slow to seek reconciliation, unwilling to help our neighbors as we ought.

C Have mercy on us and forgive us, O Lord.

P/C Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your steadfast love; according to Your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us.

Hymn 814

O Bless the Lord, My Soul

First Lesson – Lamentations 3:22-25

Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

Second Lesson – 1 John 2:1-6,12-17

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did ... I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one. Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

Third Lesson – Luke 12:22-31

Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider

the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

Confession of Faith

Martin Luther's Explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed

I believe that God has created me and all creatures. He has given me my body and life, eyes, ears, and all my bodily members, my mind, and all my senses and still keeps them for me.

God also preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all my property and all I need to support this body and life. He protects me from all danger. He guards and defends me from every evil.

God does this because He is my good and gracious Father in heaven, not because of anything I have done to earn or deserve it. For all of this it is my duty to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Hymn 732 (1-2,5)

All Depends on Our Possessing

A CLUSTER OF NEW YEAR'S EVE DEVOTIONS*

based on selected verses from Psalm 103

1 – "MANY NAMES"

Psalm 103:1 – Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!

Hymn 790:1-2

2 – "THE SOURCE"

Psalm 103:2 – Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Hymn 790:3

3 – "HINDSIGHT"

Psalm 103:2-5 – Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, who satisfies your mouth with good things.

Hymn 790:4

4 – "CELEBRATE"

Psalm 103:20 – Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word.

Hymn 790:5

*Adapted from the devotional *At Home with the Psalm*, Edited by Kenneth Kremer

Offering of Thankful Hearts

— AN ACT OF THANKSGIVING —

P Almighty God, we lift up our hearts in gratitude to You, and for all Your lovingkindness we bless Your holy name. For life and health, for love and friendship, and for the goodness and mercy that follow us all the days of our life:

C We praise You, O God.

P For the wonder and beauty of the world; and for all things true and honorable, just and pure, lovely and gracious:

C We praise You, O God.

P For the gift of Jesus Christ, Your only-begotten Son; for the grace and truth which came by Him; and for His obedience unto death, even death on a cross:

C We praise You, O God.

P For His glorious resurrection and ascension to Your right hand, and for His kingdom and glory and everlasting domain:

C We praise You, O God.

P For the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, the Lord and Giver of life; for Your holy Church throughout the world; for all the Means of Grace; and for the fellowship of the redeemed in heaven and on earth:

C We praise You, O God.

P/C Glory, thanksgiving, and praise be to You, O Father almighty, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

— AN ACT OF SUPPLICATION —

P Almighty God, because You have committed to Your people the ministry of intercession, hear us as we pray for others, and grant that our hearts may be filled with Your peace and love. For Your Church through all the world, that You would bestow on the ministers of Your Word and Sacraments the abundance of Your grace and truth and confirm Your people in the faith of the Gospel, that Christ may be exalted as Head over all:

C We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

P For Your people here and everywhere, that You would inspire them with love for Your house, zeal in Your service, and joy in the advancement of Your kingdom.

C We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

P For the nations, that You would breathe on them the spirit of peace and understanding; and for those in authority, that You would inspire in them a true desire for peace and love of concord:

C We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

P For all the schools of our church and those who teach in them and all who learn, that in humility of heart they may ever look to You, the fountain of all wisdom:

C We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

P For all who are in sickness and distress, that You would give strength to the weary, relief to the suffering, and comfort to the dying:

C We beseech You to hear us, good Lord.

P For all Your servants who have departed this life in Your faith and fear we give You hearty thanks, and we pray You to give us grace to follow them as they followed Christ. Bring us, with them, to those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.

C Amen.

COMMUNION LITURGY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them up to the Lord.

P Let us give thank to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P Praise to the God and Father our Lord Jesus Christ! In love He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. When the time had fully come, He sent His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ. To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Words of Institution / Distribution of the Sacrament

Post-Communion Prayer

Psalm 23 (read in unison)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Benediction

C (sings): Amen, Amen, Amen.

Closing Hymn 733

O God, Our Help in Age Past

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today (12/31) 9:30 am Worship Service with Holy Communion
Sunday (1/7) 9:30 am Worship Service

UPCOMING JANUARY EVENTS

- Church Council Meeting: Sunday, January 14, 8:30 am
- Mary and Martha Ladies' Meeting: Sunday, January 14, 10:45 am
- Annual Voters' Meeting of the Congregation: Sunday, January 21, 10:45 am
- Colorado Springs Worship Service: Sunday, January 28, 2:30 pm

SERVING US AT GOD'S HOUSE DURING DECEMBER

- Ushers: Mike Sprengeler
- Elder: Don Claeys
- Communion assistant: Wayne Ruegge

DURING JANUARY

- Ushers: Wayne Ruegge, Joshua Ruegge
- Elder: Larry Reed
- Communion assistant: Mike Sprengeler

IN OUR PRAYERS: Lance Clark, who was recently diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. May the Lord grant him patience and strength according to His gracious will.

JANUARY BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS TO . . .

Lauren Clark, Jan 3	Jim Wamboldt, Jan 16
Krista Morrison-Smeiles, Jan 7	Bryan Garvin, Jan 18
Tristan Christopher, Jan 7	Landon Scow, Jan 18
Julie Whitmer-Wright, Jan 11	Crystal Ruegge, Jan 19
James Wright, Jan 14	Louise Rutherford, Jan 24
Jaydin Peters, Jan 14	

THE PASTOR WILL BE OUT OF TOWN January 2-8, taking vacation days with family in Minnesota. In an emergency you may reach him at 720-465-4809 or through an elder (phone numbers listed on page one of the St. Paul Directory).

DEAR PARISHIONERS OF ST. PAUL: *I would like to express my thanks to you for the cards and gifts you shared with me during this Christmas season, as well as for your many expressions of Christian love and kindness through the year. It is a blessing to serve as your pastor. God bless and keep you all in the coming new year of His grace! Pastor Schuetze*

HOLY COMMUNION WILL BE CELEBRATED in January one week later than is customary, on Sunday, January 14.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR HOME DEVOTIONS

JANUARY 1-6

Mon Isaiah 43:16-21 The cynic says that there is no God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, who rules all forces of nature (16-17) and who changes the natural into the super-natural (19). Truth is that even dumb beasts will enjoy the miracle that God bestows on His people (20), for God fashioned them/us as His pipeline to deliver His *water of life* to the world (20-21). That's the truth for 2018, too!

Tues John 6:41-46 Jews understood picture language well enough but balked when Jesus claimed divinity (42), for that was no picture language. Why were they so dead-set against Jesus? Because their spiritual capillaries were so dried up that they couldn't absorb God's Word (45), and so they couldn't identify Jesus as God (46).

Wed Colossians 1:15-17 Bible students realize who Jesus IS: the visible image of the invisible God, co-creator of the Universe with all its phyla and species (15-16), who holds everything together so that the cosmos doesn't fly apart (17). He's also like the *head* of a body and the Creator of life who trumped *death*. Added up, Jesus stands supreme in every which way imaginable (18). Praise the Lord Jesus!

Thurs Psalm 150:1-6 *Praise the LORD, you angels in heaven; praise Him, you saints on Earth.* Let the brass section, the string section, and percussionists all do their best (1-5), as we use our lungs too (6), to *praise the LORD*. Who can join this orchestra? Everyone who has been blessed with His Spirit in their lives during 2017. Sign up today!

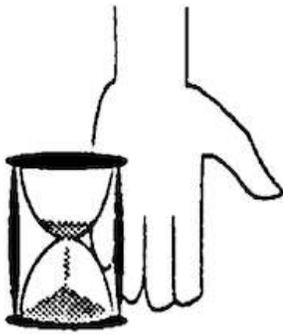
Fri John 6:65-69 Conversion is in God's hands, and God's hands alone (65). Those who stick close to Jesus don't have a problem with that, for they are happy to be in God's hands, for thus they have come to believe that Jesus IS the Christ/Messiah the Son of the living God. We are rooted in the Bible, where Jesus stands with open arms to accompany us through the new year, the year of our Lord 2018.

Sat Revelation 21:1-6 Do you see what John saw? The wasted earth, sky, and oceans were displaced by God's renewal—and *the holy city New Jerusalem, beautifully adorned, came down out of heaven from God*. Did you hear what John heard? The voice from heaven saying that *God was about to dwell with His people, to erase all pain and all sorrow* from their lives, *for the former things have passed away*. John recorded the scene for us to enjoy through his eyes and his ears – until we see and hear first-hand. Until that day arrives, God gives us His fountain of the water of life (His Word) freely and generously. May He keep us and sustain us throughout the new year via His Word! Amen.

A year of life has glided by
I trace its course with thoughtful eye;
For rich in blessings from above
It shines with marks of heav'nly love.

From day to day by Him were giv'n
Each earthly good, each hope of heaven;
Nor did His hand correction spare,
But ev'n His chast'nings proved His care.

And now a year before me stands,
The future hidden in its hands.
I know not what it may disclose;
But One who loves me sees and knows.



Upheld by Him, I will not fear
To meet the secrets of the year;
Its changes follow His command;
I know my times are in His hand.

My foes are strong, and I am weak,
But help divine I still may seek;
Look up, my heart, and fear no harm,
Almighty strength is in His arm.

For us His love has wonders done,
For us He spared not His own Son;
O Christ, my unbelief remove!
Nor ever let me doubt that love.

And when my days and years are past,
And all life's training ends at last,
May I, accepted through His grace,
Behold forevermore His face.

Author Unknown