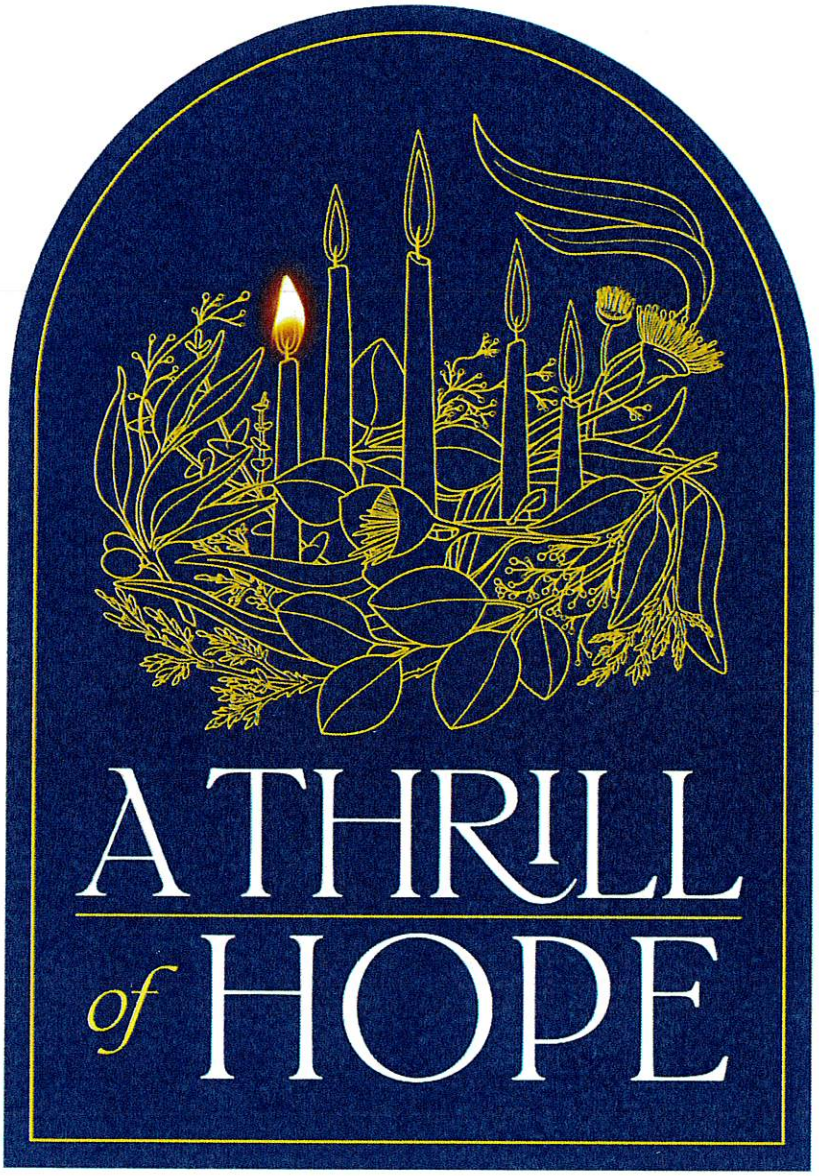
St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

Holstein, IA *November 29, 2026* *9:00 a.m.*

First Sunday of Advent



Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

GATHER

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship

Come, listen.
A thrill of hope is calling.
Come, rejoice.
A weary world is healing.
Come, watch.
A bright star is shining.
Come, worship.
The Messiah is coming.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel v.1 #257

We are people of faith, guided by the light of the world. Listen for words of hope on this first Sunday of Advent.

It is difficult to gather in this place without acknowledging the hurt all around us.
There are unjust systems and harmful powers in place that diminish life.
What can we do? Where is our hope?
Be alert. Pay attention. There are whispers of hope all around you.
In a meal delivered, a hand extended, forgiveness granted.
As we live between already and not yet, we remember salvation doesn't happen when all is right in the world.
The Messiah draws near now, breaking into the present through moments of compassion and flourishing.
In this season of holy waiting and wholly longing, we light the candle of hope.

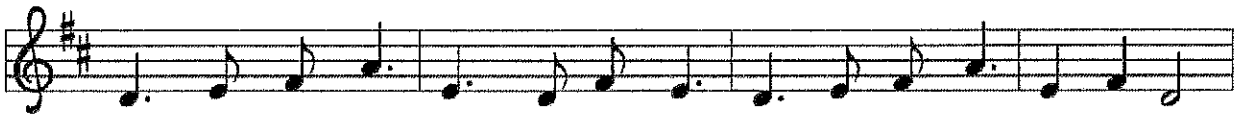
(The first candle is lit)

Saying goodbye to the powers that harm, and welcoming the coming of Christ,
May the hope of God-with-us thrill and inspire.

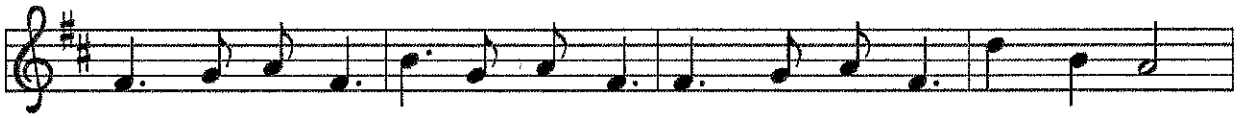
Opening Hymn ***Now the Heavens Start to Whisper***



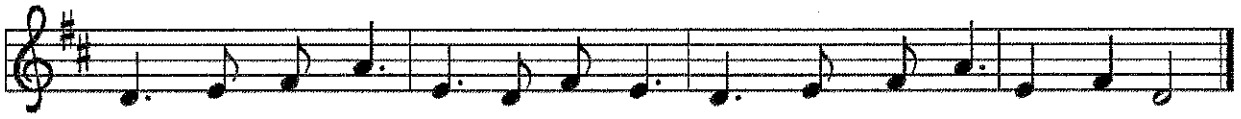
1 Now the heav - ens start to whis - per, as the veil is grow-ing thin.
2 Heav - y clouds that block the moon-light now be - gin to drift a - way.
3 Christ, e - ter - nal Sun of jus - tice, Christ, the rose of wis-dom's seed,



Earth from slum - ber wakes to lis - ten to the stir - ring, faint with-in:
Dia - mond bril-liance through the dark - ness shines the hope of com-ing day.
come to bless with fire and fra-grance hours of yearn-ing, hurt, and need.



seed of prom-ise, deep-ly plant - ed, child to spring from Jes - se's stem!
Christ, the morn-ing star of splen-dor, gleams with - in a world grown dim.
In the lone - ly, in the strang - er, in the out - cast, hid from view;



Like the soil be - neath the frost-line, hearts grow soft to wel - come him.
Heav-en's em - ber fans to full-ness; hearts grow warm to wel - come him.
Child who comes to grace the man - ger, teach our hearts to wel - come you.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
Music: SUO GÂN, Welsh melody
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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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

Isaiah 64:1-9

1 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the
mountains would quake at your presence—2 as when fire kindles brushwood and
the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries, so
that the nations might tremble at your presence! 3 When you did awesome deeds
that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains quaked at your
presence. 4 From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has
seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. 5 You meet
those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were
angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. 6 We have all
become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy
cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
7 There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you,
for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of
our iniquity. 8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our
potter; we are all the work of your hand. 9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD,
and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.

3 Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

[4] O Lord God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

[5] You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

[6] You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

[7] Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

[17] Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.

[18] And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

[19] Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

[3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
[4] I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, [5] for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—[6] just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—[7] so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. [8] He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Children's Message

Song to Greet the Gospel ***Keep Your Lamps***

Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.
keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for the time is drawing nigh.

Children don't get weary; children don't get weary.
Children don't get weary, for the time is drawing nigh.

Lo, the morning soon is breaking...

Lyrics, Public Domain

Mark 13:24-37

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the 13th chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] 24 "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be
darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from
heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
26 "Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power
and glory. 27 Then he will send out the angels and gather the elect from the four
winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. 28 "From the fig tree
learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves,
you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking
place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this
generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven
and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven
nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert, for you do not know
when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves
home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the
doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know
when the master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or at
cockcrow or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.
37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Message Vicar Millie Anderson

Hymn of the Day ***Kneeling in the Dust to Form Us***

(tune: Come, Thou Fount)

Kneeling in the dust to form us, molding with a potter's care,
God blows breath of life and Spirit—prelude in the morning air.
We become God's living vessels: we, the flutes and pipes and reeds,
echoing the Spirit's music through the witness of our deeds.

Shaped of flesh and bone and sinew, sounding chambers for the Word,
we are tuned by daily practice, seasoned by each lesson heard.
Skillfully, the Spirit plays us, fingers deft on fret and string,
plucking melodies of yearning as our hearts respond and sing.

Tempered bells resound more clearly, forged of metals bright and pure.
So our lives, refined by Wisdom, sound in accents that endure.
God's own hand rings out the changes, striking chords as yet unknown,
till a new earth fills with music rich and sweet as heaven's own.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, b. 1953
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Confession & Forgiveness

A voice cries out in the wilderness,
"Make straight the way of the Lord!"
We are called to confess our sin and turn back toward God's love.

Silence is kept for reflection

Comforting God,
we are your people, but we have neglected to call on your name.
We are your people, but we have not remembered your ways.
We are your people, but we have forgotten your hold on us.
We are your people, but now we fade like a leaf,
and our sins, like the wind, take us away.
Restore us as your people.
Cleanse us from our sin, and clothe us in your righteousness.
Amen.

"Comfort, comfort my people!" says your God,
who has clothed you with the garments of salvation
and wrapped you in the robe of righteousness.
God has given you a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
In the name of ✝ Christ, your sins are forgiven:
Rejoice in the Lord! Rejoice in the Lord!
Amen. Thanks be to God!

Affirmation of Hope

Clinging to God's promises, let us affirm the hope that is in our hearts.

We believe in a God who creates:
We believe God shows up in clouds, stars, and budding trees. We believe God has named all things good. We believe God's grace appears in the wonders of nature – life, growth, diversity, dependence, and decay. We believe God is still creative and active among us and in our world.

We believe in a God who sustains:
We believe in the promise of Christ, whose advent we await. We believe that good will prevail over evil, and all will be healed and restored. We believe in a future with hope. We believe Christ is transforming the world, here and now.

We believe in a God of surprises:
We believe the Spirit is moving. We believe we will witness the inbreaking of mercy and justice. We believe in unexpected grace. We believe we are called to keep awake. We believe the Spirit works through us to renew the world.

In this season and always, we live with faith.
The thrill of hope persists.

RESPONSE

Sharing the Peace

The one for whom we wait is our prince of peace and reconciler of the world. We share the peace to a weary world. We share the peace to offer God's grace. We share the peace to anticipate and recognize God's salvation in our world.

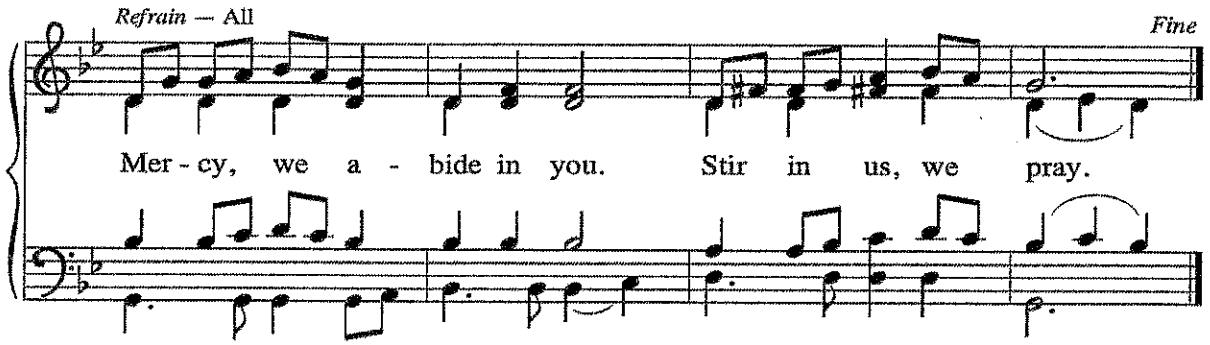
The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

Children's Offering / Offering

Offering Prayer

Gracious God, in this season of Advent, as we wait for the Messiah, we offer not only ourselves but our tithes and gifts as well. May these offerings work to bring about healing, justice, belonging, and the thrill of hope to a weary world.
Amen.

Prayers of the People



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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.**

SENDING

Blessing

God our provider, God our feast, God our companion,
☩ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

Closing Song ***Messiah***

Someone's shouting from the desert. Someone's shouting from the sea.
Someone's shouting from the mountain.
Someone's shouting from the valley.

Refrain: Messiah, Come and be our King!
Messiah, Come and be our King!

Someone's shouting from the city, "I am young and I am cold."
Someone's shouting from the country, "I am lonely I am old."
Refrain

Someone's shouting I am broken. Someone's shouting make me whole.
Someone's shouting come and change me. Someone's shouting save my soul
Refrain

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Bring good news to the brokenhearted.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Holiday Tour of Churches

December 13th, 2026

2–5 p.m.

Tour all four community churches decked out for Christmas!

Faith Lutheran Church
113 N. Main Street
Quilt Show and Live Nativity

Holstein United Methodist Church
208 S. Kiel
Festival of Trees, Cookie Decorating & Photo Booth

Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church
517 Mueller Street
Nativity Collections and Stained Glass Windows

St. Paul Lutheran Church
310 E. 2nd Street
Apple Cider and Ornament Craft

Monetary donations accepted for the Holstein Ministerial Association or non-perishable food item for the HUMC Food Pantry

Worship Participants

Ministers:	All the members
Vicar:	Emily Anderson
DYME:	Jim & Kris Kistenmacher
Organist:	Sharen Borchers
Pianist:	Kris Kistenmacher
Lector:	Brock Bisenius
Deacons:	Reuben De La O and Marvin Todd
Greeter:	Susan Endrulat
Acolytes:	Lincoln Rasmus and Brayden Bisenius
Sound & Video:	Kyle Krager and Tyler Gebers
Coffee Hosts:	Cheryl & Kurt Meyer
	Laura Peuse

St. Paul Church Calendar

SUNDAY, November 29 ~ 1st Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM	Worship
10:00 AM	Sunday School – Christmas Program Practice
10:00 AM	Coffee & Fellowship

MONDAY, November 30

3:45 – 5:00 PM	6th Grade Christmas Program Practice

WEDNESDAY, December 2

5:00 PM	LOGOS ~ *"Candy Cane Lane"*

THURSDAY, December 3

3:45 – 5:00 PM	3rd – 6th Grade Christmas Program Practice

SATURDAY, December 5

9:00 – 10:00 AM	K – 6th Grade Christmas Program Practice

SUNDAY, December 6 ~ 2nd Sunday of Advent

9:00 AM	Worship with Holy Communion
10:00 AM	Sunday School – Christmas Program Practice
10:00 AM	Coffee & Fellowship