

**CANDLE LIGHT
COMMUNION
SERVICE**

December 24, 2011
5:00 p.m.

Bishop

Mary Virginia Taylor

District Superintendent

Dr. Charles Johnson

Pastor

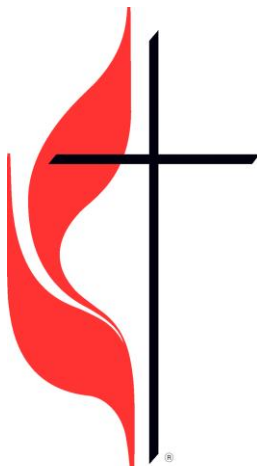
Rev. Murray A. Snow
murray.snow@gmail.com
cell: 864-414-8864

Director of Music

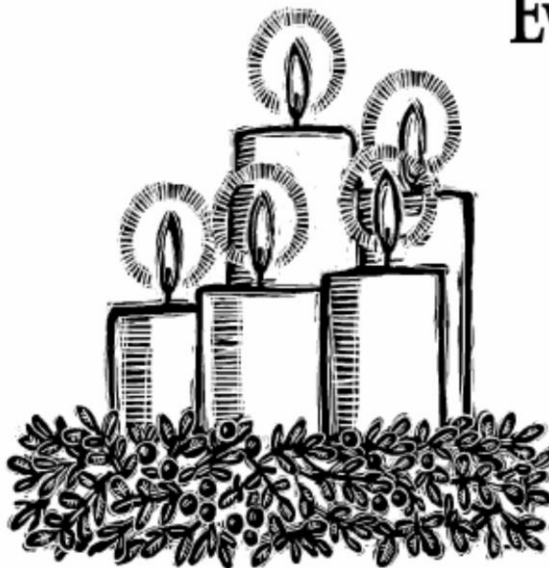
William H. Searcy, Jr.

Pianist

Eleanor Cunningham



Christmas Eve



MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of Saint Paul United Methodist Church is to be the people of God who praise God in worship, celebrating God's love and healing presence in Jesus Christ.

We are called to be signs of hope and healing to all people in our community and the world, reaching out in ministries of love, compassion and care as we seek to follow the example of Jesus

Saint Paul United Methodist Church

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He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love.

***LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

***INVOCATION**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us pray . . .

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

We light the candle of hope to remind us of the promises made by all the
prophets that God would raise up a savior for his people Israel and
through Him bless all the nations.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

- light the first candle -

We light the candle of peace to remind us that the Prince of Peace comes to
enlighten those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

- light the second candle -

We light the candle of joy to remind us that the Lord has made known his
salvation and that grace is poured out upon us.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

- light the third candle -

We light the candle of love to remind us that God so loved the world that he
sent his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him might have
eternal life.

Let the heavens and the earth rejoice. Our Lord has come.

- light the fourth candle -

We light the Christ candle to celebrate and rejoice that the Light of the
World is born this night....

- light the Christ candle -

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness - on them a light has shined. You, O Lord, have multiplied the nation. You have increased its joy. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder.

He is called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

**Glory be to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to all people of good will. Alleluia!²**

*HYMN “Angels We Have Heard on High” (stanza 1 & 2)

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heavenly song?
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

ANTHEM “Sing Alleluia, Christ is Born” ... John Purifoy

*GOSPEL LESSON LUKE 2:1-20

The Word of God for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!

CHRISTMAS REFLECTIONS.....

*HYMN “Angels We Have Heard on High” (stanza 3 & 4)

Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

See him in a manger laid, whom the choirs of angels praise;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

SOLO “O Holy Night” ... Cappeau, Adam, Dwight William Searcy, Tenor

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND PARDON

... therefore, let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Merciful God, we confess that often we find darkness more comfortable than light.

We confess that we find your good news frightening and unsettling, especially when we consider its demands as well as its promises.

We confess that Christmas has become more to us than the birthday of the Christ, partly because we do not want a Christ-Child in our lives or in our world.

Forgive us, break us, bend us, remake us.

Give us the courage to lay ourselves open to the wonder and healing of your coming.

Be born again into our world, be born again into our hearts and lives.

Hear now our silent and personal confessions as we prepare ourselves for your nativity,³ through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(All pray in silence.)

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners, that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Glory to God. Amen.⁴

THE PEACE

Let us offer one another signs of reconciliation and love by exchanging signs and words of God's peace toward one another.

**The Passing of the Peace:*

Reverently offer one another signs of reconciliation and love, such as:

"The peace of Christ be with you," *and the other respond,*

"And also with you."

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. As Mary and Joseph went from Galilee to Bethlehem And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**⁵

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. Amen.**

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

You are invited to come forward as we share in the gifts of God for the people of God. In the United Methodist tradition all are invited to the table who hunger for Christ. You will be given a piece of bread. Very lightly dip the bread into the cup and partake of the communion. We will sing the following carols during communion:

HYMN NO. 219 “What Child Is This”

HYMN NO. 218 “It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

HYMN NO. 217 “Away In the Manger”

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SERVICE OF THE LIGHT

*LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

Go in Christmas joy to love and serve the Lord!

Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

A light no darkness can overcome! Alleluia!

*RECESSIONAL HYMN “Silent Night”

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

(Please extinguish your candles as you enter the narthex and place them in a box as you leave.)

¹ clipart

² Rev. Richard J. Fairchild, Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service for Year B,
<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/b-ch00sn.php>

³ Copyright © 2009 Kathie Wilkinson. Published with permission by The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church. <http://www.umcworship.org>.

⁴ The United Methodist Book of Worship Copyright © 1992

⁵ ibid