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**FOR ME**  
**REALLY? REALLY!**  
December 26 and 27, 2020

*There are two great miracles of Christmas: God becoming man for us and for our salvation and that he in grace reveals the first miracle to you (yes, even to you!) and blesses you with all its benefits.*

**FACE MASK PLEASE**

In humble service to all in our church community, we are asking all present from age 5 and up to wear a face mask during worship. Face masks are available from the ushers if you are without one. If you are unable to wear a face mask for medical reasons, please do all you can to maintain social distance from others. In Christian love, let us seek to protect the health of others.

**BELLS AND WELCOME**

**OPENING HYMN 78, vv. 1-3**

**O Light of Gentile Nations**

**O Light of Gentile nations, O Savior from above,  
Drawn by your Spirit's leading, We come with joy and love  
Into your holy temple And wait with rev'rent mind  
As Simeon once had waited His God and Lord to find.**

**Dear Lord, your servants meet you In ev'ry holy place  
Where your true Word has promised That we should see your face.  
Today you still allow us Who gather round you here  
In arms of faith to hold you As did that aged seer.**

**Lord, when life's troubles touch us, You seem to hide your face,  
And through our tears we often Can scarcely sense your grace.  
Then be our joy and brightness, Our cheer in pain and loss,  
Our sun in darkest terror, The glory round our cross.**

**INVOCATION**

**M** In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
**C** **Amen.**

## CONFESSION OF SINS

M Brothers and sisters in Christ, Jesus is the Light that shines into our darkness.

C **Yet we often choose darkness over the Light.**

M Acknowledging our weakness and our guilt, we come before our heavenly Father with humble hearts and confess our sin.

All **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.**

**For faithless worrying and selfish pride,**

**For sins of habit and sins of choice,**

**For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,**

**You should cast me away from your presence forever.**

**O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

M Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

## SONG OF PRAISE

**All glory be to God on high!  
Your name, O Lord, we glorify;  
We praise you for your peace and grace,  
Your favor toward our fallen race.**

**You, Christ, are holy—Lord alone;  
The Father's glory you made known.  
We by your Spirit sing again:  
"All glory be to God!" Amen.**

## SALUTATION

M The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

M Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, in mercy you sent your one and only Son into this world. He took on our human flesh and blood and, in our place, he perfectly fulfilled your law in every way.

C **By his gracious coming, deliver us from the corruption of our sin and transform us into the likeness of his glory.**

M We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now

C **and forever. Amen.**

*There is no God apart from the LORD, a righteous God and Savior.*

“Gather together and come;  
assemble, you fugitives from the nations.  
Ignorant are those who carry about idols of wood,  
who pray to gods that cannot save.  
<sup>21</sup> Declare what is to be, present it—  
let them take counsel together.  
Who foretold this long ago,  
who declared it from the distant past?  
Was it not I, the LORD?  
And there is no God apart from me,  
a righteous God and a Savior;  
there is none but me.  
<sup>22</sup> “Turn to me and be saved,  
all you ends of the earth;  
for I am God, and there is no other.  
<sup>23</sup> By myself I have sworn,  
my mouth has uttered in all integrity  
a word that will not be revoked:  
Before me every knee will bow;  
by me every tongue will swear.  
<sup>24</sup> They will say of me, ‘In the LORD alone  
are deliverance and strength.’”  
All who have raged against him  
will come to him and be put to shame.  
<sup>25</sup> But all the descendants of Israel  
will find deliverance in the LORD  
and will make their boast in him.

ANTHEM (*Sunday*)

**Simeon (I Can Depart in Peace)**

VERSE OF THE DAY (*Saturday*)

M Alleluia! Alleluia! Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. Alleluia! (Colossians 3:15a)

GOSPEL

**Luke 2:25-40**

*Simeon and Anna see their Savior. This is what they had waited their whole life to see.*

<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. <sup>27</sup> Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, <sup>28</sup> Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

<sup>29</sup> "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.  
<sup>30</sup> For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:  
<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup> The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. <sup>34</sup> Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, <sup>35</sup> so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

<sup>36</sup> There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, <sup>37</sup> and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. <sup>38</sup> Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. <sup>40</sup> And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

M This is the Gospel of the Lord.  
C Praise be to you, O Christ!

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

## The Nicene Creed

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

In his temple now behold him;  
See the long-expected Lord.  
Ancient prophets had foretold him;  
God has now fulfilled his Word.  
Now to praise him, his redeemed  
Shall break forth with one accord.

In the arms of her who bore him,  
Virgin pure, behold him lie,  
While his aged saints adore him  
Ere in faith and hope they die.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
See th' incarnate God most high!

Jesus, by your presentation,  
You who did for us endure,  
Let us see your great salvation,  
Seal us with your promise sure,  
And present us in your glory  
To your Father, cleansed and pure.

SERMON

Luke 2:25-40  
*Pastor Pete Panitzke*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

DISMISSAL OF ONLINE WORSHIPERS (*Sunday 9:15 am*)

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

PREFACE

M The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

M Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them up to the Lord.

M Let us give thanks to the Lord.

C **It is good and right so to do.**

M It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for in the wonder and mystery of his birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love. Therefore with all the saints on earth and host of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

*(Tune: "Away in a Manger")*

All **Holy is the Lord God, who's come to the earth,  
To be our Redeemer, Our Savior, from birth.  
Let all of creation join voices to sing,  
Praise to the Almighty, our heavenly King!**

**How blest he who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna, Lord!  
The angels adore you; as on bended knee  
We come to your table, your grace to receive.**

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

M Blessed are you, O Lord of heaven and earth. We praise and thank you for sending your Son, Jesus Christ, and we remember the great acts of love through which he has ransomed us from sin, death, and the devil's power.

By his incarnation, he became one with us.  
By his perfect life, he fulfilled your holy will.  
By his innocent death, he overcame hell.  
By his rising from the grave, he opened heaven.

Invited by your grace and instructed by your Word, we approach your table with repentant and joyful hearts. Strengthen us through Christ's body and blood, and preserve us in the true faith until we feast with him and all his ransomed people in glory everlasting.

C **Amen.**

#### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

M The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C **Amen.**

#### RESPONSE

*(Tune: "Where Shepherds Lately Knelt")*

**O Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy upon us!  
O Jesus, manger-born, have mercy upon us!  
Jesus, Redeemer of the world, our God.  
Show mercy to us; grant us here your peace.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMN 38

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

"From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bear good news to ev'ry home;  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,  
Whereof I now will say and sing:

"To you this night is born a child  
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;  
This little child of lowly birth  
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

"This is the Christ, our God most high,  
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;  
He will himself your Savior be  
From all your sins to set you free.

Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,  
And see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair?  
It is the Christchild lying there.

Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,  
Through whom the sinful world is blest!  
You came to share my misery,  
That you might share your joy with me.

And so it pleases you to see  
This simple truth revealed to me:  
That all the world's wealth, honor, might  
Are weak and worthless in your sight.

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled  
Within my heart, made clean and new,  
A quiet chamber kept for you.

My heart for very joy must leap;  
My lips no more can silence keep.  
I, too, must sing with joyful tongue  
That sweetest ancient cradle song:

Glory to God in highest heaven,  
Who unto us his Son has given!  
While angels sing with pious mirth  
A glad new year to all the earth.

## SONG OF SIMEON

### *Nunc Dimittis*

1 O Lord, now let your serv - ant De - part in peace,  
2 All glo - ry to the Fa - ther, All glo - ry to

as - sured: For I have seen your prom - ised In -  
the Son, All glo - ry to the Spir - it, For -

car - nate, sav - ing Word— A Light that will en -  
ev - er three in one; For as in the be -

light - en All gloom where Gen - tiles dwell; The bril - liant,  
gin - ning, Is now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une

crown - ing glo - ry Of those in Is - ra - el!  
name re - sound - ing Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

## CLOSING PRAYER

**M** We give you thanks, O Lord, for the foretaste of the heavenly banquet that you have given us to eat and to drink in this sacrament. Through this gift you have fed our faith, nourished our hope, and strengthened our love. By your Spirit help us to live as your holy people until that day when you will receive us as your guests at the wedding supper of the Lamb, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

## BLESSING

**M** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.

**C** **Amen.**



## COMMUNION PROCEDURE

*The church will be split in half. The two sections in front of the pulpit will receive Communion using the table in front of the pulpit. The two sections in front of the lectern will receive Communion using the table in front of the lectern.*

*Ushers will dismiss communicants from their pew; **however, no one will be dismissed to the center aisle.***

- *The **pulpit side** will go to their **left** and use the aisle to the left of their pew to walk forward.*
- *The **lectern side** will dismiss to their **right** and use the aisle to the right of their pew to walk forward.*

*Communicants will wait in the aisle, socially distanced as indicated by the carpet circles. They will approach the individual distributing the bread, receiving the bread in cupped hands. They will then move toward the center of the church to the wine trays, pick up their wine and drink it as the distributor speaks. All will return to their pew using the center aisle. Following the distribution, the pastor will pronounce the general blessing on the communicants.*

*Copies of the Personal Preparation for Holy Communion pages from the hymnal are at the Welcome Center in the lobby.*



Our vision is that by every possible means we bring every person in our area of influence closer to Christ through regular worship, small groups, and serving together.

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# WEEKLY CALENDAR

For the week of December 28, 2020

<b>MON</b>	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
<b>TUE</b>	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
<b>WED</b>	6:30 am	Sunrise Bible Study (Faith Room)
<b>THURS</b>	6:30 am	Sunrise Bible Study (Faith Room)
	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
	5:00 pm	<b>New Year's Eve Worship Service with Holy Communion</b>
<b>FRI</b>		<b>New Year's Day</b>
<b>SAT</b>	8:00 am	Men's Breakfast Bible Study (Grace Room)
	5:00 pm	Traditional Worship Service
<b>SUN</b>	7:45 am	Traditional Worship Service
	9:15 am	Traditional Worship Service
	9:15 am	Kids Club
	9:45 am	The Bridge Holy Communion
	10:15 am	The Bridge
	10:45 am	Traditional Worship Service

**Holiday Office Hours:** Monday-Thursday, 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. Closed News Year's Day.



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# ST. PAUL'S NEWS

## FUNERAL

Lois Stichmann, born April 7, 1931, entered eternal peace with her Savior on December 18, 2020. Visitation is Monday, December 28, 2020, 10:00 am – noon, with the funeral immediately following. May the God of all hope and comfort be with the loved ones of Lois.

## HOSPITALIZED

Lois Guhr (hospice care at Care-Age in Brookfield), Brittany Michaels (Duke Hospital in Durham, North Carolina), and Dorrette Probst (home hospice care). Lois Niermann has returned home.

## ATTENDANCE

The following attended last weekend's services: 82 on Saturday, 89 on Sunday 7:45 am, 116 on Sunday 9:15 am, 166 at The Bridge, and 70 on Sunday 10:45 am.

## SCHOOL OPEN ENROLLMENT BEGINS JANUARY 4

Have you considered a Christian education for your child? Registration for the 2021-2022 school year begins January 4 for our 3K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade Lutheran school. St. Paul's participates in the Milwaukee and Wisconsin Parental School Choice programs. Income eligibility information is listed below. Our congregation also provides over \$600,000 in tuition assistance each year. Don't let financial concerns keep you from exploring this opportunity to help your child grow in faith. Schedule a tour with School Administrator Seth Fitzsimmons at (414) 422-0320, ext. 118, or [sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org).

## LUTHERAN PREK AND ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE JANUARY 31

January and February are the months where many families are interested in learning more about a school for their child. Whether this is for 3K, 4K, Kindergarten or transferring into 1<sup>st</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade, all are welcome. Do you know someone like this? If so, invite them to our open house on Sunday, January 31, 1:00-3:00 pm. I would love to talk to them about our schools. For COVID precautions, a sign-up for a time slot will be posted to the school website ([www.stpmuskego.org](http://www.stpmuskego.org)) soon. We will have 3 families per 20 minutes. You may also contact me at [sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org](mailto:sfitzsimmons@stpaulmuskego.org) or (414) 422-0320, ext. 118, to set up a visit.

### 2021-2022 Income Limits for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program (WPCP)

Family Size	Single Parent Income Limit	Married Parents Income Limit
2	\$37,928	N/A
3	\$47,784	\$54,784
4	\$57,640	\$64,640
5	\$67,496	\$74,496
6	\$77,352	\$84,352
***Add \$9,856 for each additional family member		

### 2021-2022 Income Limits for the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program (MPCP)

Family Size	Single Parent Income Limit	Married Parents Income Limit
2	\$51,720	N/A
3	\$65,160	\$72,160
4	\$78,600	\$85,600
5	\$92,040	\$99,040
6	\$105,480	\$112,480
***Add \$13,440 for each additional family member		

# NEXT MESSAGE SERIES

## THE INTENTIONAL LIFE

Join us, beginning January 10, for a new message series *The Intentional Life*.

In the days of the old sailing ships, the greatest danger sailors faced was not piracy or storms at sea, but simply being “becalmed” hundreds of miles from land.

The word “becalmed” sounds peaceful, but with no wind, a sailing ship could drift aimlessly for days or weeks until the sailors perished from lack of food and water.

In our lives, our most dangerous enemy may be not some sudden temptation, demonic assault, or even the personal “storms” of life, but the danger of simply drifting. The author of the Book of Hebrews warned, “We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away” (Hebrews 2:1).

### Are you drifting?

As we begin the new year, we pray that the Holy Spirit (in both Hebrew and Greek the word for “spirit” and “wind” are the same) fill the sails of our lives so that we live with purpose and intention.

Join us as we seek *The Intentional Life of Love*.

January 10	Love Uncomfortably	I Corinthians 9:22
January 17	Love in Action	Galatians 6:2
January 24	Love among Friends	I Thessalonians 5:11
January 31	Love within Families	Joshua 25:15
February 7	Love Generously	Matthew 6:21
February 14	Love to God’s Glory	I Corinthians 10:31

## FOLLOWING THE PROMISE BIBLE CLASS BEGINS JANUARY 12

Twelve *Tuesdays* in a row with the option to miss a class and catch up on YouTube! This *online-only* class is offered from 7:00-8:15 pm and covers the main teachings of the Bible. Review or discover the *heart* of your Creator in the work of his Son *Jesus*. Jesus entered the world to save us from sin and bring us safely home to heaven. He lived perfectly in our place, died the death we deserve, and rose from the dead proving that *heaven is ours* through faith in him. A path to membership if you like or just touching base with the God of the Bible to hear what he has to say! Join Pastor Nate beginning in January.

# ONLINE WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

## Traditional Service

Our Sunday, 9:15 am, traditional service is livestreamed every Sunday. A video archive full-service replays are available on each platform below.



@ [www.StPaulMuskego.org/online-worship](http://www.StPaulMuskego.org/online-worship)



@ St. Paul's Muskego



@ St. Paul's Lutheran Church – Muskego, Wisconsin

## The Bridge Casual Contemporary Service

The Bridge is livestreamed every Sunday at 10:15 am on each of the following platforms. You can find an archive of full-service replays on each platform.



@ [www.StPaulMuskego.org/online-worship](http://www.StPaulMuskego.org/online-worship)



@ The Bridge Church Muskego



@ The Bridge at St. Paul's

## ST. PAUL'S MINISTERIAL STAFF *Office (414) 422-0320*

Pastor Jeffrey Bonack	Ext. 119	<a href="mailto:jbonack@stpaulmuskego.org">jbonack@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Worship and Counseling
Mr. Randy Fink	Ext. 120	<a href="mailto:rfink@stpaulmuskego.org">rfink@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Church Administrator
Mr. Seth Fitzsimmons	Ext. 118	<a href="mailto:sfitzsimmons@stpmuskego.org">sfitzsimmons@stpmuskego.org</a>	School Administrator/Principal
Pastor David Kuehl	Ext. 121	<a href="mailto:dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org">dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Member Care
Dr. Joel Nelson	Ext. 145	<a href="mailto:jnelson@stpaulmusekgo.org">jnelson@stpaulmusekgo.org</a>	Youth and Adult Discipleship
Pastor Peter Panitzke	Ext. 122	<a href="mailto:ppanitzke@stpaulmuskego.org">ppanitzke@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Ministerial Team Leader
Mrs. Heidi Schuh	Ext. 115	<a href="mailto:hschuh@stpmuskego.org">hschuh@stpmuskego.org</a>	Asst. Director of Worship Operations
Pastor Nate Strobel	Ext. 293	<a href="mailto:nstrobel@stpaulmuskego.org">nstrobel@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Resident Missionary
Mrs. Sally Wallner	Ext. 294	<a href="mailto:swallner@stpaulmuskego.org">swallner@stpaulmuskego.org</a>	Community Outreach Coordinator
Mr. Mike Westendorf	Ext. 295	<a href="mailto:mwestendorf@stpmuskego.org">mwestendorf@stpmuskego.org</a>	Director of Worship Operations

# ST. PAUL'S NEWS

## SPECIAL YEAR-END GIFTS

Often individuals ask about special year-end giving ideas for our ministry. Below is the current "Wish List." If you would like to give toward these items, clearly mark your offering, "Wish List," with a note, for example, "Centennial Gym Scoreboard."

Item	Est. Cost	Received	Still Needed
Church Family Room Furniture Updates	\$8,850	\$3,753	\$5,097
iPads for K-I	\$6,000	\$5,875	\$125
Centennial Gym Scoreboard	\$5,000	\$5,000	Fully Funded
Trinity Gym Resurfacing Special Graphics	\$4,000	\$100	\$3,900

## MISSION AND MINISTRY

Our Mission and Ministry Fund is our "general fund" that supports our St. Paul's Church and School ministry and the ministry of Wisconsin Lutheran High School and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

## MISSION PARTNERS

Mission Partners was a program begun by our synod over a decade ago to give members an opportunity to be more personally involved in mission support. Our Mission Partners are supported only by special gifts given by individuals and organizations within our congregation with no funds coming from our Mission and Ministry Fund. Our current mission partners are:

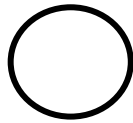
- Malawi Mission Partner – Pastor John Holtz is a son of our congregation serving in Malawi, Africa.
- Mexican Mission Partner – St. Paul's member, Dan Thiel, served at Costa Maya Ministries on the Yucatan Peninsula.
- Garden Homes Mission Partner – St. Paul's Staff Minister Dr. Joel Nelson served as principal at this church and school on Milwaukee's north side.

## MORTGAGE FUND

The mortgage on our 2010 Trinity Gym, Café and classrooms addition is paid by special gifts to the Mortgage Fund. Special gifts to this fund beyond our monthly payments can be used on additional principle payments.

## GIVING REMINDERS...

- The safest and most cost-effective way for St. Paul's to receive your one-time or recurring gift is through an online donation. Nearly 40% of our gifts are received in this way. Set up your online giving at [www.stpaulmuskego.org/give](http://www.stpaulmuskego.org/give) using our new PushPay giving platform.
- If you are 70 ½ or older, giving a gift from your IRA could reduce your tax payment.
- Giving a gift of appreciated stock can also provide tax advantages.
- Our Gift Trust Fund and Legacy Funds have been established to receive estate gifts. Find more information at <https://stpaulmuskego.org/estate-planning/>.



## Open Your Christmas Gift

This study is written for personal and family reflection on the gift of the Christ Child.

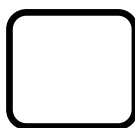
### Background on Paul's Letter to the Colossians

Colossians was written while Paul was in prison in the early 60s AD. The city of Colossae was in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). False teachers were saying that Jesus was not enough. That is also our constant temptation as Christians. "God loves me, if..." Paul combats this temptation by opening God's Christmas Gift, allowing us to see the full divine nature of Jesus. In Jesus, we have all that we need. **Read Colossians 1:1-23.**

1. In Colossians 1:12 we are told the Father has "qualified you" or said that you are "good enough" to share in the inheritance of God's saints. What causes you to feel "not good enough"? What are you tempted to add to Jesus to be "good enough? Consider this list:
  - a. Jesus and my achievements
  - b. Jesus and my strengths
  - c. Jesus and my reputation
  - d. Jesus and my relationships
  - e. Jesus and my ambitions, goals, and dreams
2. In Colossians 1:13-14, Paul writes "has rescued," "brought in the kingdom," "have redemption." These verb forms tell us this work is done. Why is that important for us to remember as we struggle with the fear of not being "good enough"?
3. In Colossians 1:15-20, Paul opens God's Christmas Gift to assure you that Jesus is fully God, "enough" to save you. Which phrases are especially comforting to you?
4. In Colossians 1:21, we are described as "alienated from God," "enemies" with "evil" behavior. Explain why a person could say that the sin of thinking "Jesus and..." in Question 1 is the greatest evil.
5. In Colossians 1:22-23, in whose sight are you "holy" and "free from accusation"? Why? How does this answer the nagging fear, "I'm not good enough"?
6. Give yourself a present for the New Year. Purchase *Jesus + Nothing = Everything* by Tullian Tchividjian to better understand God's Christmas gift to you.

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<sup>1</sup> From *Jesus + Nothing = Everything* by Tullian Tchividjian, page 33.



## NoteSheet

Sermon Outline

Take notes during the sermon to help you remember the main points.

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# The Longings of Christmas

Luke 2:25-40

1. The longings of Christmas past
  - a. Longing for consolation implies I \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Longing for redemption implies s \_\_\_\_\_.
  
2. The longings of Christmas present
  - a. Longing to f \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Longing to r \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. The longings of Christmas future
  - a. Longing to be h \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Longing to be h \_\_\_\_\_ (John 14:2-3)

## My Next Steps

- **Remember Christmases Past:** Ask a family member or friend to share with you some of their favorite memories of Christmases past. You will bless them by asking and you will be blessed by listening.
- **Celebrate Christmas Present:** Do GroupWork which this week is designed for personal reflection on the Gift that the Father is giving to you.
- **Imagine Christmas Future:** Read Isaiah 65:17-25, where the LORD describes the new heavens and new earth. Remember that “Jerusalem” was the name of God’s Church in the Old Testament. The LORD promised that the tragedies and pain the Israelites experienced would be gone. Imagine your current tragedy and pain are gone. That is the Christmas Future Jesus has prepared for you.



