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OPEN THE GIFT

January 2, 3, and 6, 2021

We noted last week that there are really two miracles in Christmas: that God has become man in the lowliness of the manger and that he has made it known to me, even to me. Why not to everyone else? Because so many are more interested in their own opinions than in Jesus' revealed Word. The real Jesus, the Savior and God-man, does not give himself apart from his Word. In the spiritual atmosphere of our world, we need to be committed to growing if we are going to survive.

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 51

I Am So Glad when Christmas Comes

**I am so glad when Christmas comes,
The night of Jesus' birth,
When Bethl'em's star shone as the sun,
And angels sang on earth.**

**The little child of Bethlehem,
He was a king indeed!
For he came down from heav'n above
To help a world in need.**

**He lives again in heaven's realm,
The Son of God today;
And still he loves his little ones
And hears them when they pray.**

INVOCATION

M The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
C **And also with you.**

CONFESSION OF SINS

M Brothers and sisters in Christ, we stand in awe of the Scripture's teaching that God chose us before the creation of the world to be adopted as his sons and daughters in Christ.

C **To make this adoption possible, Jesus took on our human flesh and blood and eventually took our place on the cross, where he paid the price for all our sins.**

M Confident that we have redemption through Christ's blood and forgiveness for all our sins, we approach our Father's throne and confess:

All **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C **Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE

**I, too, shall sing my Savior's praise,
My joy, my crown, my Lord;
For he has made me his own child
By water and the Word.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

M Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured into our hearts the true Light of your incarnate Word. Grant that this light may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



FIRST LESSON

Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah promises safety and security for those who enjoy a place in the Shepherd's flock.

²“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
though you are small among the clans of Judah,
out of you will come for me
one who will be ruler over Israel,
whose origins are from of old,
from ancient times.”

³Therefore Israel will be abandoned
until the time when she who is in labor bears a son,
and the rest of his brothers return
to join the Israelites.

⁴He will stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they will live securely, for then his greatness
will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he will be our peace.

PSALM OF THE DAY

Psalm 148

Forever let us sing the goodness of God's love.

M Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above.

C **Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts.**

M Praise the LORD from the earth, lightning and hail, stormy winds that do his bidding,

C **you mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, small creatures and flying birds,**

M kings of the earth and all rulers on earth, young men and maidens, old men and children.

C **Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his splendor is above the earth and the heavens.**

All **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

SECOND LESSON

Hebrews 2:10-18

Because Jesus shared our humanity, he was tempted like us in every way and is able to help us when we are tempted.

¹⁰In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. ¹¹Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. ¹²He says,

"I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the assembly I will sing your praises."

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again he says,

“Here am I, and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

The Apostles’ Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

HYMN OF THE DAY 65

O Little Town of Bethlehem

**O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep And dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears Of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary, And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, The angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing To God the King And peace to all the earth.**

O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin And enter in; Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels The great glad tidings tell;
Oh, come to us, Abide with us, Our Lord Immanuel!

SERMON

John 7:37-43

Pastor David Kuehl

³⁷ On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." ³⁹ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

⁴⁰ On hearing his words, some of the people said, "Surely this man is the Prophet."

⁴¹ Others said, "He is the Messiah."

Still others asked, "How can the Messiah come from Galilee? ⁴² Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David's descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?" ⁴³ Thus the people were divided because of Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Mary's son, in the fullness of time you came into our world to save us from sin and death.

C **You ushered in the day of grace so long foretold.**

M Beloved Son of the Father, revered by the Magi, baptized by John, you came preaching and teaching, healing and comforting, forgiving and encouraging.

C **You brought the light of life to those walking in darkness, and the joy of salvation to those doomed to death.**

M Prince of peace, shine like a beacon for us and the people of our world. Let the good news of salvation be heard in the remotest corners of the earth. Open our own lips to speak your name to those around us who still live without faith or hope.

C **Arouse us and our missionaries to flood the world with the light of your gospel.**

M Lord of the Church, let your peace rule our hearts that we may use our gifts to serve you and each other in willing gratitude and joy. Watch over our loved ones near and far, that they may remember your love and rejoice in your salvation. Strengthen the faith of the sick and the disheartened. Give hope to those in despair and comfort those who mourn.

C **Be gracious to all and lead us to reflect your love in everything we say and do.**

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

M Finally, bring us and all your believers to the heavenly home where we will stand in the full light of your glory and with all your saints and angels sing the everlasting song of triumph.

C **Amen.**

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.

CLOSING HYMN 64

Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

Let us all with gladsome voice
Praise the God of heaven,
Who, to bid our hearts rejoice,
His own Son has given.

To this vale of tears he comes,
Here to serve in sadness,
That with him in heav'n's fair homes
We may reign in gladness.

We are rich, for he was poor;
Is not this a wonder?
Therefore praise God evermore
Here on earth and yonder.

O Lord Christ, our Savior dear,
Bless us and be near us.
Grant us now a glad new year.
Amen, Jesus, hear us!

CLOSING PRAYER

M Lord Jesus, you are the Light of the world.
C **Thank you for shining your light into our hearts today.**
M May your light continue to change and shape us,
C **that we may serve as beacons of your love to the world around us.**
M We bless you now and always.
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.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEEKLY CALENDAR

For the week of January 4, 2021

MON	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
TUE	9:30 am	Ministry Growth Team Meeting
	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
	10:30 am	Ministerial Team Meeting
	6:00 pm	Divorce Care (School Classroom 8)
	7:00 pm	Following the Promise
WED	6:30 am	Sunrise Bible Study (Faith Room)
	7:00 pm	Traditional Worship Service
THURS	10:00 am	Walking Club (Main Church)
	6:30 pm	Pickleball (Trinity Gym)
SAT	8:00 am	Men's Breakfast Bible Study (Faith Room)
	5:00 pm	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
	6:00 pm	Small Group Communion
SUN	7:45 am	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:15 am	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion
	9:15 am	Kids Club
	9:45 am	The Bridge Holy Communion
	10:15 am	The Bridge
	10:45 am	Traditional Worship Service with Holy Communion

ST. PAUL'S NEWS

HOSPITALIZED

Lois Guhr (hospice care at Care-Age in Brookfield), Brittany Michaels (Duke Hospital in Durham, North Carolina), and Dorrette Probst (home hospice care). Pam O'Laughlin has been discharged from the hospital.

ATTENDANCE

The following attended last weekend's services: 62 on Saturday, 65 on Sunday 7:45 am, 88 on Sunday 9:15 am, 91 at The Bridge, and 31 on Sunday 10:45 am. 1039 were in attendance on Christmas Eve and 182 on Christmas Day.

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 8th 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.

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 1st – 8th 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) soon. We will have 3 families per 20 minutes. You may also contact me at 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” is 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	1 Corinthians 9:22
January 17	Love in Action	Galatians 6:2
January 24	Love among Friends	1 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	1 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



@ 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



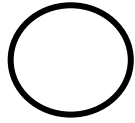
@ The Bridge Church Muskego



@ The Bridge at St. Paul's

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

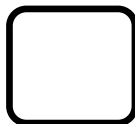
Pastor Jeffrey Bonack	Ext. 119	jbonack@stpaulmuskego.org	Worship and Counseling
Mr. Randy Fink	Ext. 120	rfink@stpaulmuskego.org	Church Administrator
Mr. Seth Fitzsimmons	Ext. 118	sfitzsimmons@stpmuskego.org	School Administrator/Principal
Pastor David Kuehl	Ext. 121	dkuehl@stpaulmuskego.org	Member Care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



GroupWork

Life application materials for use in Life Groups, home devotions, and other small groups.

1. Begin your time together with a New Year check-in. If you made New Year's resolutions, what were they? If you didn't, what are your hopes for 2021?
2. God is incredibly generous with us, blessing us beyond our wildest dreams. The Bible gives accounts of many of these gifts. How many different types of gifts can you come up with as a group that God mentions in the Bible? (i.e., his Spirit, his Word, specific spiritual gifts, etc.)
3. This week's message is about a special gift from God that Jesus referred to as *living water*. How would you describe this gift (and why it's called living water) to someone who doesn't believe in God?
4. Read John 4:1-26. What does this account teach us about living water?
5. Sadly, many view getting to know Jesus better as a burden, sort of like having to do homework and reading yet another book. What kinds of tips could you offer someone to help them change this perspective?
6. Read Isaiah 12:3-6. How do you daily thank God for his gift of living water?
7. Wrap up your time together in a prayer of thanksgiving. Give each person in your group the opportunity to thank God for something specific he's done in their life.



NoteSheet

Sermon Outline

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

Open God's Gift of the River of Life

John 7:37-43

Introduction: What is the world's greatest river?

I. The River of Life flows from Christ.

A. The Feast of Tabernacles...

—reminded God's people that this world is not p_____.

—reminded God's people of his miraculous c_____ for them.

B. Jesus told the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well that...

—he could give her water that would q_____ her t_____ for good.

—he had come to win the f_____ of s_____ for her.

C. God's law allows no w_____ room (Lev 19:2, Mt 5:48; Ja 2:10, Ga 4:5).

D. In love God sent Jesus to b_____ the g_____ between heaven and earth.

E. Apart from Jesus, there is no salvation (Ac 4:12).

—Getting to know Jesus better is not a b_____ but a b_____.

—Getting to know Jesus better is not a p_____ but a p_____.

II. The River of Life flows through every Christian.

A. After P_____ the Holy Spirit equipped believers in a special way.

B. The Holy Spirit has blessed each of us with at least o_____ spiritual gift.

C. We want to know what our spiritual gift(s) is (are) to carry out our m_____.

D. Jesus' promise of the River of Life is worth remembering when life seems

p_____.

Conclusion: Let's get some people wet with the water of the River of Life.

+ Next Steps +

Memorize Acts 4:12 – “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Commit to arranging a fixed time each day to grow in the grace and knowledge of your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (2 Pt 3:18).

Complete the *Discovering My Spiritual Gifts* tool (online or hardcopy) to learn what your spiritual gift(s) is (are), so you can carry out your mission in life as the Holy Spirit has personally equipped you.