

Welcome to St. Paul's Episcopal Church

1528 Oakdale Road, Modesto, CA 95355 - (209) 522-3267

www.saintpaulsmodesto.org

***The First Sunday After Christmas
December 28, 2025***



Mission Statement

We are a worshipping, inquiring and inclusive community united in Jesus' name to change the world.

Welcoming Statement

We invite everyone to join in the communal life of the body of Christ, through participation and leadership in this congregation, and by fully sharing in the life and sacraments of this church. We affirm that each person is a child of God, and that those of every race, ethnicity, creed, age, gender, marital status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation and gender identity are called to be one with us.

Prelude

Chuck Sheaffer

Opening Hymn #109 "The First Noel"

Blessed be God: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit

Glory to God for ever and ever.

Gloria

1. Glo - ry to God in the high - est, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly
King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we
give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you
take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy

on us; 5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -
 ceive our prayer. 6. For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One,
 you a - lone are the Lord, 7. you a - lone are the Most
 High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the
 glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Setting: Robert Powell (b. 1932)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

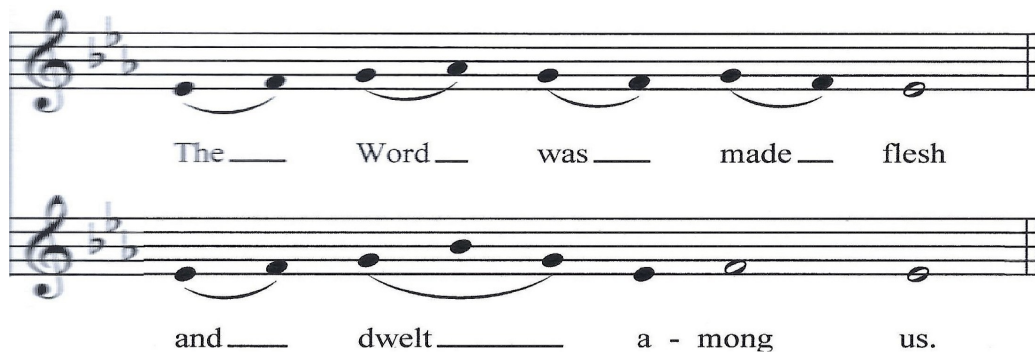
The first lesson is from Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the LORD will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147:13-21



- 13 Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; *
praise your God, O Zion;
- 14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *
he has blessed your children within you.
- 15 He has established peace on your borders; *
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
- 16 He sends out his command to the earth, *
and his word runs very swiftly.
- 17 He gives snow like wool; *
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
- 18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
who can stand against his cold?
- 19 He sends forth his word and melts them; *
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
- 20 He declares his word to Jacob, *
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
- 21 He has not done so to any other nation; *
to them he has not revealed his judgments.
Hallelujah!

The second reading is from Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn #84 "Love came down at Christmas"

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John 1:1-18

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was com-

ing into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon: Deacon Greg Masztal

Stillness - the prayer bowl rings to take us in and out of a time of stillness and reflection.

The Prayers of the People

Reconciliation

The Deacon calls us to confession.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole

heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Priest proclaims God's forgiveness.

Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

Lord make us instruments of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is discord, union;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;

to be understood as to understand;

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Blessings and Celebrations

Birthday Prayer

God of joy and celebration, we thank you for the precious gift of life and for the unique journey that each day brings. As this(ese) your servant(s) celebrate(s) another year of life, we pray for your abundant blessings to be upon them. May your grace continue to guide and shape their paths, filling their days with love, purpose, and joy. Amen

Anniversary Prayer

Blessed are you, O God, for in the good and the bad times of our life you have stood lovingly by our sides.

Bless those whose anniversaries we acknowledge this day.

May they remain faithful and loving so that we may be true witnesses to the covenant you have made with us all. Amen.

Prayer for Those We Love

Gracious God, we entrust all who are dear to us to your never-failing care and love, for this life and the life to come, knowing that you want for us all better things than we can desire or pray for; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Offertory Hymn #102 “Once in royal David’s city”

Doxology

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.

Holy God, our Source and Ending, Alpha and Omega, we give thanks to you! You have called all creation into being, setting the earth on its foundations.

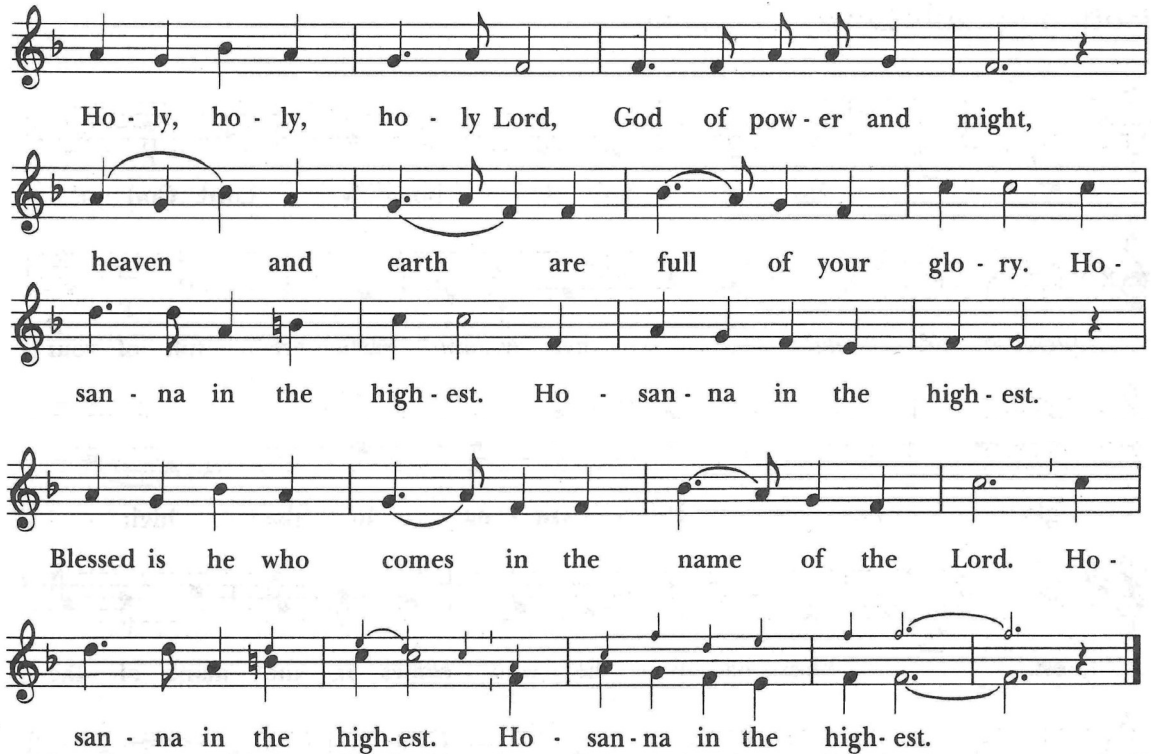
You have spread out the heavens like a tent, and set a boundary to the seas,

you have filled the world with your creatures and called all things good.

The heavenly beings are your messengers night and day,

and with them we sing and give glory to you:

Sanctus



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Setting: From *A Community Mass*; Richard Proulx (b. 1937)

In these latter days, God leaned toward the earth
and spoke to us by a Son, Jesus the Beloved.
Born of our sister Mary and the Holy Spirit,
guarded by our brother Joseph with fatherly care,
Jesus came among us as a baby, humbly born,
cradled beside the beasts and warmed by their breath,
human as we are, in need of human love.
Yet kings bowed down before him, bringing gifts
and emperors were troubled by his reign –
this Child in whom all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

This Word of God made flesh and full of grace
was sent to deliver us from our sin,
from the power of evil and the fear of death.
As a servant, Jesus emptied himself of might upon the cross,
and as the risen Anointed One is enthroned at God's right hand
to bring mercy and justice to all the earth at the end of days.

And so, rejoicing in all God has done for us,
we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again!

Holy God, as you visited us in the birth of Jesus,
visit us now by the power of your Spirit
in these creatures of bread and wine,
making them for us the Body and Blood of Christ,
the banquet of heaven here on earth,
as we remember how Jesus took bread and blessed and broke it
and gave it to his friends, saying, "Take, eat, This is my body, given
for you.
Do this to remember me."

And after supper, took a cup of wine
and blessed and gave it to them, saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this to remember me."

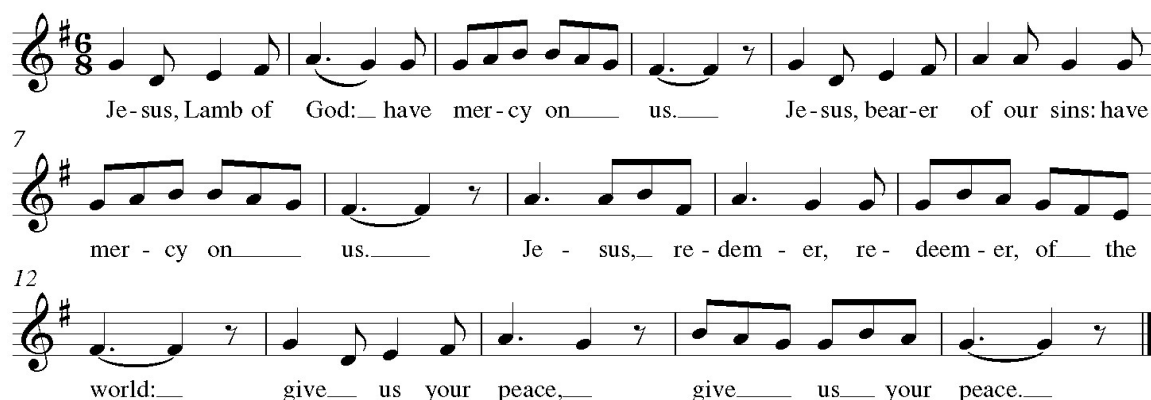
Blessed God, shed your grace brighter than starlight on us
 that we may bear your good tidings to all
 and renew the weary world in your name:
 the name of Emmanuel – God-With-Us,
 to whom we give honor and glory in joy, now and for ever.

Amen.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to sing,

Our Fa-ther who art in hea-ven, Hal-lowed be thy Name, Thy king-dom
 come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in hea-ven. Give us this day our
 dai-ly bread. For-give us our tres-pas-es, As we for-give those who tres-pass a-gainst us,
 as we for-give. And lead us not in-to temp-ta-tion, but de-li-ver us from
 e-vil. Thine is the king-dom and the pow-er and the
 glo-ry for-ev-er. A-men

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast, Alleluia.



The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

Gluten free wafers are available. If you want just a blessing, please come to the altar rail and cross your arms over your body.

Communion Hymn #82 “Of the Father’s love begotten”

Extending Our Eucharistic Gathering

A representative of the parish’s Eucharistic Visitors comes forward to receive the bread and wine reserved for those who are sick or otherwise unable to join us in person.

In the name of us all at St Paul’s Episcopal Church, we send our Eucharistic Visitors forth bearing these holy gifts that those to whom they go may share with us in this Holy Communion of Christ’s body and blood. May they with whom these gifts are shared remain bound to us, and we to them.

We who are many are one body, for we all share one bread, one cup.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom.

And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

Blessing

Closing Hymn #92 “On this day earth shall ring”

Go now to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!

We go in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.

Postlude

Chuck Sheaffer

All music used with permission, CCLI #1374105

Notice of Parish Meeting

As required in the diocesan canons I hereby give notice of the **Annual Meeting of the Parish of St Paul's Episcopal Church, Modesto**, to take place following the 10.00am service on **Sunday January 25th 2026**. This meeting is called to receive reports and a parish budget, discuss matters of parish business as required and to elect members of the Parish Vestry and Delegates and Alternates to Diocesan Convention. **Nomination forms** can be obtained from the Parish Office and should be returned no later than 5.00pm, Wednesday January 14th.

The Rev'd Brian Dawson, Rector

COMING UP AT ST PAUL'S

Tuesday January 6th – 10.00am Epiphany Day Service

A brief (30 min) Eucharist for the Feast of the Epiphany.
Held in the Guadalupe Memorial Chapel in the hall complex.

Wednesday January 7th – 5.00pm Interfaith Council Dinner & Meeting

In 2026 the Stanislaus Interfaith Council is planning to meet at different worship and faith centres each month, beginning with St Paul's. The first part of the event will include a light meal and opportunity for local faith members to share about their worship centre and events. If you can assist with soup please see Fr Brian.

Saturday January 17th – 9.00am-3.00pm Winter Retreat Day – Merton Meets Baxter

A one-day retreat to be held at St Paul's and led by Fr Brian. Focused on the poetry of Thomas Merton and James K. Baxter, this retreat will look at the themes of God and Faith through the works of these two very different but intersecting men. The day is free but all are invited to register with Fr Brian and bring something to share for lunch.

Sunday January 25th – 11.30am Parish Annual Meeting

Our annual receiving of reports and election of new vestry members and representatives.

The meeting will include updates on both the proposed sale of the vacant church land and ongoing maintenance requirements of the campus.

Saturday January 31st – Vestry Retreat

A day long retreat and planning day for Vestry members confirmed at the Annual Meeting.



Prayer and Praise

Remember those who have asked for our prayers

Paige, Bonnie, Susan, Ishmael, Mary, Bob, Howard, Cherie, Annamary, Ginny, Keith, Bill, Mike, Jose, Rex S., Lora, Hennie, Kevin, Dorothy, Murray, Gina, James, Brandi, Darlene, Theresa, Tony, Ellen, Sandy, Claudine, Tony, Mindy, Ivy, Diane, Christine, Karen, Clare, Jim, Matt, Deborah, Arnold, Lindsay, Wendy, Maureen, Ivonne, Lonnie

Those who have passed away:

Priscella Abercrombie

Those in the Military:

CPT Sam Birch, USA

CPT Fred Campbell, USAF

CPT Jenavieve Campbell, USAF

PO1st Class Johnny Olmos, US Coast Guard

SGT Carson Repan, USAF

LTC Nathaniel P. Wallace, USAFR

Leaders and Ministries of St. Paul's:

The Clergy, Vestry & Wardens, Eucharistic Visitors



The poinsettias at the altar today
are given to
The Glory of God by
Lynelle Hains and Bob & Clare Jensen in Memory of
John Hains
Loved Ones

COMING EVENTS (Continued)

Friday February 13th (evening) – Saturday February 14th – Building Church Leaders

This Diocesan Vestry Training Event is held at ECCO in Oakhurst and is a requirement for Wardens and Treasurers and strongly encouraged for new vestry members (or those who haven't attended before).

Tuesday February 17th – Shrove Tuesday

Details on our annual pancake event coming soon.

Wednesday February 18th – Ash Wednesday

There will be services in both the morning and early evening as well as 'Ashes to Go' at the entrance to the church between noon and 1.00pm.

Lenten Studies 2026

Our main Lenten Studies series will focus on liturgy and worship. Details coming soon.

2026 Episcopal Liturgical Calendars

Episcopal Liturgical Calendars are available in the Narthex.

December 2025 Ministry Schedule

Dates	Dec 7 th	Dec 14 th	Dec 21 st	Dec 28 th
Clergy	Fr. Brian Dn. Greg	Fr. Brian Dn. Greg	Fr. Brian Dn. Greg	Fr. Brian Dn. Greg
Acolytes	Alex S. Judy T.	Jim P. Judy T.	Nancy S. Gabe T. Evelyn B.	Nancy S. Carlos I.
Eucharistic Minister	Stephanie G.	Joyce B.	Sarah H.	Linda L. Joyce B.
Lectors	Stephanie H-W. Barbara V.	Ann M. Alex S.	Judy T. Nancy S.	Linda L. Joyce B.
Intercessor	Jose C.	Alex S.	Luis M.	Nancy S.
Ushers	David L. Carolyn L.	Alex S. Carolyn L.	Luis M. Claudine R.	David L. Claudine R.
Greeters	David L. Carolyn L.	Alex S. Lynelle H.	Luis M. Claudine R.	David L. Lynelle H.
Vestry Rep.	Jose C.	Alex S.	Luis M.	Nancy S.
Coffee Hour Host	Stephanie G.			Jose C. Peter K.
Sunday School	Sarah H.	Evelyn B.	Ann M.	Sarah H.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Pastoral Team

Fr. Brian Dawson.....209-897-1612.....FrBrianDawson@gmail.com
Deacon Greg Masztal.....deacongreg66@outlook.com
Stephanie Gilmer, Pastoral Care Coordinator.....mzgilmer@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

Linda Lowe: 209-522-3267stpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com

Other Important Contacts

Music Director, Chuck Sheaffercbshea@pacbell.net
Hand Bells, Judy Teterjlpt@sbcglobal.net
Prayer Chainstpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com
St. Paul's Epistle, Barbara Vassellstpaulsmodestoca@gmail.com
Social Media, Deacon Greg Masztaldeacongreg66@outlook.com
Finance Committee, Carolyn Listcarolynlist@sbcglobal.net
Stewardship Campaign, Courtney Smith.....courtneyvsmith@gmail.com

Vestry

Senior Warden: Joyce Bell -(215) 275-6502bellj1@charter.net
Junior Warden: Peter Krewko (707) 853-3604pmkjfc@att.net

Joyce Bell, Jose Cruz, Sarah Hartmann, Peter Krewko, Luis Martinez, Ann Mootz, Chuck Sheaffer, Nancy Silva, and Courtney Smith.

Treasurer: Greg Burnett

Vestry Clerk: Carolyn List



Livestreamed Sundays @ 10am

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Pauls-Episcopal-Church-of-Modesto-CA-106952012668211/>

Then click on videos.

Please note that today's service is being livestreamed on Facebook. If you prefer not to appear on camera, we kindly ask that you sit on the side of the church behind the camera.



Visit St. Paul's website to give online

[www.https://www.saintpaulsmodesto.org/](https://www.saintpaulsmodesto.org/)

