



THE 24<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
NOVEMBER 12, 2023

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***SAINT PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH***

4660 West 94<sup>th</sup> Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois 60453

(708) 423-1040  
Pastor John Moeller

[www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org)  
Director of Music Ruth Sievers

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## As We Gather

It's not a big surprise that no one has accurately predicted the end of the world—not that it hasn't been attempted. From religious sects to cult leaders to apocalyptic predictions made when we entered a new millennium, a fascination grows around those who claim they have it all figured out. But we are wise to take the Lord at His word concerning the Last Day. From Amos in the Old Testament proclaiming the day of the Lord, to Paul writing the Thessalonians about Christ's return, to Jesus' parable of the ten virgins, the Lord does not give us a date or a time of the end of this world. What He continues to give us, though, are promises of His faithfulness, His continued care and providence, and His assurance that when that day comes, it will usher in a glorious blessedness in His perfect presence that will last forever.

## Prelude

### Opening Hymn

“O Bless the Lord, My Soul”

#814

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | O bless the Lord, my soul!<br>Let all within me join<br>And aid my tongue to bless His name<br>Whose favors are divine.      | 4 | He crowns thy life with love<br>When ransomed from the grave;<br>He that redeemed my soul from hell<br>Hath sov'reign pow'r to save.  |
| 2 | O bless the Lord, my soul,<br>Nor let His mercies lie<br>Forgotten in unthankfulness<br>And without praises die!             | 5 | He fills the poor with good;<br>He gives the suff'ers rest.<br>The Lord hath judgments for the proud<br>And justice for th'oppressed. |
| 3 | 'Tis He forgives thy sins;<br>'Tis He relieves thy pain;<br>'Tis He that heals thy sicknesses<br>And makes thee young again. | 6 | His wondrous works and ways<br>He made by Moses known,<br>But sent the world His truth and grace<br>By His beloved Son.               |

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## Invocation

**P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** Amen.

**P** Make haste, O God, to deliver us!

**C** Make haste to help us O Lord!

**P** May all who seek the Lord rejoice and be glad in Him!

**C** May we say evermore, “God is great!”

**P** For Christ is coming soon.

**C** Soon, He will descend from the heavens.

**P** Soon, He will raise the dead.

**C** And we will always be with the Lord.

**P** He is our help and our deliverer.

**C** O Lord, do not delay!

## Confession and Absolution

**P** Indeed, Christ is coming soon to raise the dead and bring us into everlasting life with Him. Yet there are times when we have lived as if Christ's return was not important and not imminent. Yet, our heavenly Father invites us to return to Him and ask for His forgiveness.

*Silence for reflection on our sins and our need for our Savior...*

**P** Heavenly Father,

**C** **we confess that we have ignored You and our neighbors who are in need. We have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions even as we have failed by our inactivity. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, O Lord, that we might be encouraged by Your presence and forgiven of our sin.**

**P** God hears your confession and has promised to always be with you. Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son, Jesus Christ, to die and rise for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen. By God's grace we are forgiven and we look for the return of Jesus!**

## ✠ WORD ✠

### Introit

*Psalm 84:1, 9–12; antiphon: v. 3*

**P** Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

**C** **How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!**

**P** Behold our shield, O God; look on the face of your anointed!

**C** **For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere.**

**I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**

**P** For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor.

No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly.

**C** **O Lord of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!**

**P** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;

**C** **as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

**Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, at your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.**

### Prayer of the Day

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray.

Lord God, we do not know the day nor the hour of the coming in glory of the Bridegroom, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**C** **As we wait, continue to nourish and strengthen our faith until we enter the eternal wedding feast to be with Him forever,**

**P** through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

**Old Testament Reading**

✠ Let Justice Roll Down ✠

*Amos 5:18–24*

<sup>18</sup>Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light, <sup>19</sup>as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. <sup>20</sup>Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? <sup>21</sup>“I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. <sup>22</sup>Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. <sup>23</sup>Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. <sup>24</sup>But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Anthem of Praise**

“Christ Is Surely Coming”

#509

1 Christ is surely coming  
Bringing His reward,  
Alpha and Omega,  
First and Last and Lord:  
Root and Stem of David,  
Brilliant Morning Star;  
Meet your Judge and Savior,  
Nations near and far!

2 See the holy city!  
There they enter in,  
All by Christ made holy,  
Washed from ev’ry sin:  
Thirsty ones, desiring

All He loves to give,  
Come for living water,  
Freely drink, and live!

3 Grace be with God’s people!  
Praise His holy name!  
Father, Son and Spirit,  
Evermore the same;  
Hear the certain promise  
From the\_ eternal home:  
“Surely I come quickly!  
Come, Lord Jesus, come!”

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**Epistle**

✠ The Coming of the Lord ✠

*1 Thessalonians 4:13–18*

<sup>13</sup>But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. <sup>15</sup>For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

**Holy Gospel**

✠ The Parable of the Ten Virgins ✠

*Matthew 25:1–13*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

**C** Glory to You, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup>[Jesus said:] “The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. <sup>2</sup>Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. <sup>3</sup>For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, <sup>4</sup>but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. <sup>5</sup>As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept.

<sup>6</sup>But at midnight there was a cry, ‘Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ <sup>7</sup>Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. <sup>8</sup>And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ <sup>9</sup>But the wise answered, saying, ‘Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.’ <sup>10</sup>And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. <sup>11</sup>Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open to us.’ <sup>12</sup>But he answered, ‘Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ <sup>13</sup>Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** Praise to You, O Christ.

## ✠ Confession of Faith ✠

*Nicene Creed*

I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came  
down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the  
virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius  
Pilate. He suffered and was buried.

And the third day He rose again according  
to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge  
both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and  
apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the  
remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.

### Sermon Hymn

“Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

#515

1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,  
And let your lights appear;  
The evening is advancing,  
And darker night is near.  
The Bridegroom is arising  
And soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;  
At midnight comes the cry.

2 The watchers on the mountain  
Proclaim the Bridegroom near;  
Go forth as He approaches  
With alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting;  
The gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory;  
The Bridegroom is at hand.

3 The saints, who here in patience  
Their cross and sufferings bore,  
Shall live and reign forever  
When sorrow is no more.  
Around the throne of glory  
The Lamb they shall behold;  
In triumph cast before Him  
Their diadems of gold.

4 Our hope and expectation,  
O Jesus, now appear;  
Arise, O Sun so longed for,  
O'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted,  
We plead, O Lord, to see  
The day of earth's redemption  
That sets Your people free!

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## Sermon

## Prayer of the Church

**Offering**—*may be left in the offering plates near the doors as you leave. Those worshipping at home may continue to mail or drop off offerings at the church office, and on-line giving is available to everyone on our website at [www.stpauloaklawn.org](http://www.stpauloaklawn.org). For information about regular electronic giving, please contact the church office.*

## Offertory Meditation

### A word about the Sacrament of the Altar...

We believe Jesus' own words that the bread and wine we receive in Holy Communion is indeed His true Body and Blood and not just a representation of it. We also acknowledge St. Paul's instruction to the Church at Corinth that it is harmful for anyone to receive the Sacrament without recognizing the real presence of His Body and Blood. Because of this, in Christian love we ask anyone who does not understand these truths to please refrain from receiving the Sacrament until you've spoken with the pastor. (*Matt. 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11:23-30*)

## ✠ The Sacrament of the Altar ✠

### Preface

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

### Proper Preface

### The Lord's Prayer

### Words of Our Lord

### Pax Domini

**P** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C** Amen.

## ✠ Distribution of the Sacrament ✠

### “How Great Thou Art”

#801

1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome  
wonder  
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
Thy pow’r throughout the universe  
displayed; Refrain

And hear the brook and feel the gentle  
breeze; Refrain

3 But when I think that God, His Son not  
sparing,  
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in—  
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
He bled and died to take away my sin;  
Refrain

#### *Refrain:*

Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

4 When Christ shall come with shout of  
acclamation  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my  
heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
And there proclaim: “My God, how great  
Thou art!” Refrain

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2 When through the woods and forest glades  
I wander,  
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
When I look down from lofty mountain  
grandeur

### “Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness”

#636 sts. 1-4

1 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness,  
Leave the gloomy haunts of sadness,  
Come into the daylight’s splendor,  
There with joy your praises render.  
Bless the One whose grace unbounded  
This amazing banquet founded;  
He, though heav’nly, high, and holy,  
Deigns to dwell with you most lowly.

But the priceless gifts of heaven  
God to us has freely given.  
Though the wealth of earth were proffered,  
None could buy the gifts here offered:  
Christ’s true body, for you riven,  
And His blood, for you once given.

2 Hasten as a bride to meet Him,  
And with loving rev’rence greet Him.  
For with words of life immortal  
He is knocking at your portal.  
Open wide the gates before Him,  
Saying, as you there adore Him:  
Grant, Lord, that I now receive You,  
That I nevermore will leave You.

4 Now in faith I humbly ponder  
Over this surpassing wonder  
That the bread of life is boundless  
Though the souls it feeds are countless:  
With the choicest wine of heaven  
Christ’s own blood to us is given.  
Oh, most glorious consolation,  
Pledge and seal of my salvation!

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3 He who craves a precious treasure  
Neither cost nor pain will measure;

- 1 Lord, whose love through humble service  
Bore the weight of human need,  
Who upon the cross, forsaken,  
Offered mercy's perfect deed,  
We, Your servants, bring the worship  
Not of voice alone, but heart,  
Consecrating to Your purpose  
Ev'ry gift that You impart.
- 2 Still Your children wander homeless;  
Still the hungry cry for bread;  
Still the captives long for freedom;  
Still in grief we mourn our dead.  
As, O Lord, Your deep compassion  
Healed the sick and freed the soul,  
Use the love Your Spirit kindles  
Still to save and make us whole.
- 3 As we worship, grant us vision,  
Till Your love's revealing light  
In its height and depth and greatness,  
Dawns upon our quickened sight,  
Making known the needs and burdens  
Your compassion bids us bear,  
Stirring us to tireless striving,  
Your abundant life to share.
- 4 Called by worship to Your service,  
Forth in Your dear name we go,  
To the child, the youth, the aged,  
Love in living deeds to show;  
Hope and health, goodwill and comfort,  
Counsel, aid, and peace we give,  
That Your servants, Lord, in freedom  
May Your mercy know and live.

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### Communion Blessing

- P** The true Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart ✠ in peace.

### Closing Prayer

- P** Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good,  
**C** **for His steadfast love endures forever.**  
**P** We praise You, gracious Father, that as we wait for Your Son's return, You have gathered us together in fellowship at Your Table, and now send us from here with sins forgiven faith nourished. We thank You for this foretaste of the feast to come, when we will live forever in heaven with You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.  
**C** **Amen.**

### Benediction

- P** Go in peace as you serve the Lord.  
**C** **Thanks be to God!**  
**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.  
**C** **Amen.**



**Closing Hymn**

“Almighty Father, Bless the Word”

#923

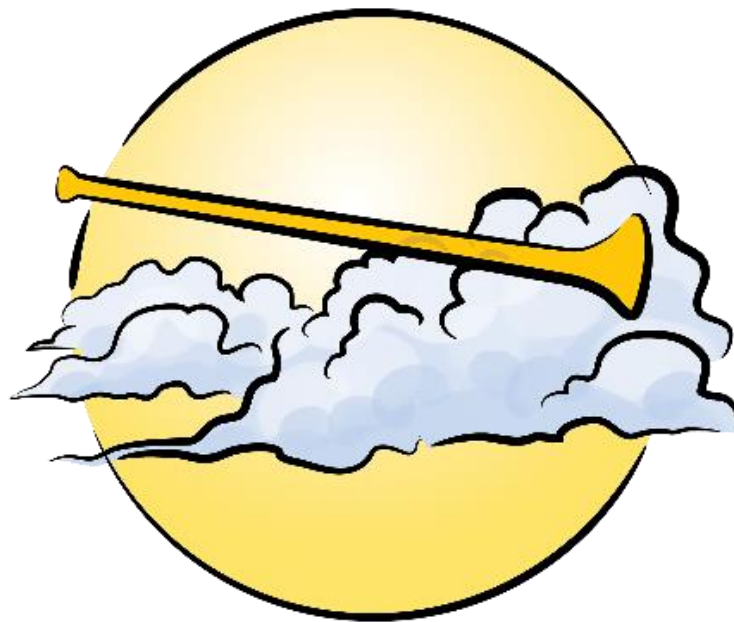
- 1 Almighty Father, bless the Word  
Which through Your grace we now have  
heard.  
Oh, may the precious seed take root,  
Spring up, and bear abundant fruit!
- 2 We praise You for the means of grace  
As homeward now our steps we trace.

Grant, Lord, that we who worshiped here  
May all at last in heav’n appear.

- △ 3 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav’nly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

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**Postlude**



**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS & THANKS**

- Guest Organist:** Sherrie Smith
- Vocalist:** Sue Marcinkowski
- Lector:** Sandy Barry
- Altar Care:** Sunday: Cheryl Horan; Wednesday: Sandy Barry

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### **Announcements & Notes:**

**Bible Classes continue each Sunday Morning** in the Timothy Room after our worship service. Currently we are doing a video-based study based on Martin Luther. Grab a cup of coffee and something to eat and join us!

**This Tuesday, November 14, our congregation will host the regular Circuit 13 Pastors' meeting.** Only about 10 pastors will be attending, but if someone would like to help by providing a few baked goods or snacks, it would be greatly appreciated!

**The Ladies Guild** will meet for its regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> at 1pm in the Timothy Room. After devotions, a short meeting and refreshments, we will collate the Advent Devotion Booklets which will be available for all St. Paul members and friends on the first Sunday in Advent, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please come for an afternoon of service and fellowship!

**The Ladies Guild** will be selling Christmas Cards in the narthex after services today through December 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Thanksgiving Eve Communion Service** is November 22 at 7pm. Thankoffering donations of non-perishable food items will be received at the altar during the service, which will then be distributed by our Faith in Action team to families in need. **There is NO Thanksgiving Day service.**

**Faith in Action's Food Pantry** is preparing for their Thanksgiving and Christmas food distributions. If you'd like to help with donations to the pantry, there's a flyer on the table in the narthex and on the counters that details what they need to prepare for holiday bags for families in need.

**As we help support the work of Missionaries Rev. Dave and Joyce Erber in Ghana,** Gloria Dei Lutheran in Chicago supports Pastor James and Angela Sharp, serving as missionaries in Uruguay. If you'd like to hear about their work, they'll be at Gloria Dei (5259 South Major Avenue, Chicago) on Wednesday, 11-29-2023 at 2:00PM. Please RSVP at (773) 767-2771.

**Worth Township** is collecting NEW toys and clothing for children ages newborn through 14 years old for their Christmas Care Program until **December 7<sup>th</sup>**. A box for your donations will be out in the narthex on Sunday mornings. For more information, call (708) 972-7835 or email [youthcommission@worthtownship.com](mailto:youthcommission@worthtownship.com).

**The next Voters' Meeting** is Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. Information Packets will be available in the narthex on Sunday, November 26<sup>th</sup> for your review before the meeting.

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED** to cook and serve the supper before our Midweek Advent Service on Wednesday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. If interested, please call the church office.

**Remembering our homebound friends** is a caring ministry of St. Paul meant to help us stay in touch with our members who aren't able to be with us for worship. Please remember them in your prayers. You may also like to send a note or a card. This week our homebound friend is Warren Miller, 8708 S. Oak Park Avenue, Oak Lawn, IL 60453.



**Please pray for these  
members of our St.  
Paul family**

George Oberg  
Rev. George Mrochen  
Rich & Jan Przybycien  
Rev. Paul and Judy  
Anderson  
Sue & Bill Volk  
Arthur Gerth  
Ingrid Lesko  
Jan Briede  
Roy Hodgeman  
Katherine Hice  
Kurt Seehofer  
Flora Jones  
Graham Jackson  
Kevin Hickey  
Gloria Meyer  
Elaine Lebron  
Melva Smith  
Delores Stegemann  
Carol Small  
Mike Degidio  
Norma Silinski  
Beverly Sellers  
Betty Beegle  
Warren Miller  
Delphine Cherry  
Ron Klingensmith  
Louis Frank  
Betty Kruckow  
Herta Iversen  
Loretta Frank  
George Dodaro, Sr.

Barbara Prendergast  
Nancy Bundley  
Rosa Richardson  
Carl Hoppe

**Please pray for these  
friends and family of  
our members:**

*Roberta & Carlos Owens*  
Roy Strassner  
Dorothy Kroll  
Emily Feehan  
LeRoy Bitner  
Georgiana Easton  
Jackie Plichta  
Patricia Paulsen  
Ken Kruckow  
Janet Trierweiler  
Vicki Warren  
Rhonda Scott  
Michelle Mitchell  
Al Silinski  
Pam Palhegyi  
Carol Milazzo  
Rich Huscher  
The Lamberth Family  
Jerry Gross  
Louise Hrynkow  
Gloria Folsom  
Mary Beth Pasqua  
Shirley Fairchild  
Simeon Hoppe  
Ron Lunt  
Christopher Kosary

Sandy Plath  
Iris McCoy  
Shirley Demyres  
Raquel Rameriz  
Nick & Bridget DeAngelo  
Henry Bonder  
*Kim & Shawn Skelton, Sr.*  
Kyle Hughes  
Elaine Hoffstetter  
Fred Raddatz  
Allyson Seehofer  
Selma Carmichael  
Bernadette & Rich Trusk  
Dana Kahn  
Donald Hakanson  
Guillermo Ramirez  
Paul Noffke  
Vern Howe  
Shawn Harland  
Ann Herold  
Barb Potter  
Wayne Volk  
Lance Barrientos  
Linda Shuman  
Doris Potts  
Doreen Holford  
Judy Collins  
Luke Pajowski  
Phyllis Hicks  
Jimmy Kennedy, Jr.  
Monica Iversen  
Cathy Becker  
Ken Matz  
Jean & Al Zirbel

Carol Loecherbach  
Charley Heitz  
Sophia Salus  
Justin & Ashley Fasel  
Frank Cogliase  
Gene Wawrzynkowski  
Kimberly Rooney  
Helena Hoffman  
Evelyn & Ron Konieski  
Audrey Metes  
Richard DeSaga  
Ken Wentz  
Margaret Lundgreen  
Julie King  
Sharon Bryant  
Anika Seger  
Monica Kato  
Herb Kleeman  
Debra Kleeman  
Sarah Skelton  
Barbara Apt  
Bob & Gloria Freeman  
Carrie Aspan  
Lisa Anglin  
Devon Apt  
Tristan Ferry  
LaNell Mauler Koenig  
Todd, Sofia & Grace Lynam  
Hillary Pittelko  
Marge Schmidt  
Sue Berg  
Carol Jean McPhillips  
Donna Santi

***We pray:***

*For Evelyn and Ron Koniczki (daughter and son-in-law of Charles Fitzgerald)*

***For those celebrating birthdays:***

- *Kathy Hughes celebrating a birthday on 11/12*
- *Pastor John celebrating a birthday on 11/12*
- *Beth Hopp celebrating a birthday on 11/15*

*We also give thanks to God and pray for our nation's Veterans.*

**Please let the church office know when your need for our congregational prayers is over.  
(708) 423-1040**