



Interior of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Lake Ave and 2nd Street Christmas late 1800's

**THE EPISCOPAL PARISH OF ST. PAUL, DULUTH**  
**REMEMBRANCE OF THE FIRST SERVICE**  
**HELD ON CHRISTMAS DAY, 1869**

*Note: This booklet was created using original documents and newspaper clippings which does not include the inclusive language and pronouns we would use today but rather the words that would have been used in the past.*

“The building was completed and the dedication of the edifice took place on Christmas Day; the church bell pealed forth it’s triumphant call to worship; the new rector mounted his pulpit to carry the message to his flock in the pews below; and the organ sang out its paen of praise. There was a church, a rector, an organ, and a congregation. But it still didn’t have a name. It was known only as “Jay Cooke’s Church.” Duluth newspaper 1869



“Christmas Day was spent in Duluth appropriately but soberly. The Episcopal Church was the principal scene of attraction in the morning- a good audience attending the first formal services of worship in the new structure. The exercises were those usual in Episcopal churches on Christmas and were conducted by the Pastor, Rev. Mason Gallagher, in an impressive manner. The next day, the first Sabbath of the new church, there was also a numerous attendance, and at the evening worship the church was full. We congratulate all our citizens upon having already one completed church in Duluth- and it is a real gem- and we congratulate the congregation on having secured so able, liberal and genial clergyman to fill it’s sacred desk.”  
January 1, 1870

# The Christmas Tree

The earliest recording of a Christmas Tree being in the church was in 1870 when it was announced that *“The Christmas Tree festivities of the Sabbath School in connection with St. Paul’s Episcopal Church have been unavoidably postponed until this evening at 7 o’clock when the presents will be distributed at the Church. We know of some special features which will render the exercise very interesting to those who attend.”* Note by Christmas of 1870, one year after the church opened, it now had a name; St. Paul’s. There are several accounts in later years of “goodies” being placed on the tree for the children to receive.

**2019-** This year, we are pleased to have a Christmas Tree in the church laden with “goodies” for all children to receive. We remember the children of 150 years ago and how happy they must have been to receive a satchel of candy; much like the candy in the bags this year. Candy was a special treat that was purchased for a penny at the store; hence it’s name “penny candy.” A penny would get them a scoop of candy from one of the glass jars in the store window. In honor of children all over the world; the children of St. Paul’s this year collected money and have purchased Gifts For Life from Episcopal Relief and Development.

“ At the Episcopal Church a fine Christmas tree welcomed the sparkling eyes and happy hearts of the Sunday School scholars. The exercise were interesting and all present enjoyed them hugely.” 1874

“The Protestant Episcopal Sunday School had their exercises on Wednesday evening, having a most beautiful tree well decorated and hung with goodies and presents.” 1876

Tree and Entertainment Plan for St. Paul’s Church  
“This will be a rich year in the holiday observance at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. A great tree has been provided for 4 o’clock Christmas eve and a story will be told by Mrs. George Relfsteck. Christmas day there will be a service of Holy Communion at 8 o’clock and the full musical service and sermon at 11 am. Friday, Holy Innocents Day, there will be another entertainment for the children of the Sunday school and their elders at 7:30pm There will be a play appropriate for the occasion, music, bell ringing and another story, all free for all the little ones. 1871

“In the center aisle near the chancel was a large Christmas tree that was laden down with gifts for the children.” 1897

## Christmas Decorations



1896- a star donated by Mrs. Willoughby

From the records found, beginning in 1895 the decorating of the church with greens seemed to increase; "The Christmas season passed off very happily in our city. From the steady preparation made by the younger portion of the several congregations it was evident that much adornment would be bestowed upon several of the church upon the arrive of Christmas eve; much to the surprise of the older members they found the church edifices much more profusely garnered with evergreens then heretofore - especially the Congregational, Episcopal and Catholic churches." 1895

"Saint Paul's Episcopal church was elaborately decorated with greens, holly and bowers for the Christmas exercises of the Sunday school which were held there last night. Festoons of evergreen extended from the chandeliers to the supporting pillars, and were looped gracefully on the walls. The front of the church was a green bower, and the altar and chancel were heavy with greens and holly. The decorations are not only elaborate, but are extremely tasteful and well arranged. Several pretty carols were sung by the choir and there were songs by the members of the infant class. A short address by Dr. Ryan upon "the Origin of Christmas, Christmas Customs and the Spirit that Should Mark It's Observance" was followed by the distribution of presents to the children. Each member of the Sunday school received a book, a toy or some Christmas gift and all were happy." 1896

**From December 25, 1913 Duluth Newspaper:**

### **Star flashes on St. Paul's Church**

Like unto the Night in Bethlehem Nineteen Hundred Years Ago. Seen from afar was the star on St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal church last night. Affixed at the peak of the roof or the topmost point on the Superior Street wall, just above where the cross is graven in stone. It shone as did the beacon that flamed out of Bethlehem 1,900 years ago. Nothing like it has ever before been seen in Duluth. It took a place for the nonce with the illuminated cross on the Judson Memorial church in Washington square New York which for years has given that church a distinction unique among building devoted to religious uses.

In front of St. Paul's was a Christmas tree 30 feet high. Studded with lights, it served as an auxiliary emblem of the Christmas season. The star was put in place, as was the tree, after the Christmas program for the Sunday school members in the afternoon. Naturally enough, many of those who saw at a distance the gleaming star did not wholly understand its significance. Those whose fortune it was to behold it near enough to know the altus keenly appreciated what St. Paul's was doing toward bringing the greatest event since the reaction to the minds of the people. And many of these regretted that the church was not open. It is understood that tonight the star will again shine and the tree again will be illuminated."

### **Other Christmas Activities at St. Paul's:**

1903- **Women of St. Paul's Church Make Glad Hearts of Many** Mrs. A W. Ryan entertained the women of St. Paul's church yesterday afternoon. A Dainty tea was served by the hostess and the packing of two missionary boxes was accomplished. These boxes are to go to the Indian missions, one at Cannonball N D and the other to Big Bend, MN. The contents have been gathered by the missionary societies of the Episcopal churches fo the city and form an interesting collection. There is warm underwear in abundance and many other things which twill appeal to the needy and to the practical. There are also tools for a boy's workshop, dressed dolls and many trifles for the mission Christmas trees.

1910- **St. Paul's Church Sale**—Tomorrow the ladies of St. Paul's episcopal church will have their annual sale at Seekins' store. Fancy articles for Christmas gifts, candles, cakes etc may be purchased.

1915- **St. Paul's Guild has Christmas Sale** The members of the Ladies guild of St. Paul's Episcopal church will hold their annual Christmas sale, Saturday in the guildroom of the church. There will be all manner of useful and pretty things suitable for the holiday season. Circle 6 will have a table of appetizing things to eat. Circle 5, a most attractive table for babies. There will be dresses, slips, shoes, afghans, bibs and many other things. The other circles will have a combination of practical and pretty articles and food, maids aprons, ironing board covers, and refrigerator bags will be for sale. Afternoon tea will be served.

December 24, 1919- "A remembrance of the 50th anniversary of the first service was held with a collection taken and split between the children of Fergus Falls ruined by the cyclone and the Starving Armenian children fund."

**2019-** This year we attempted to recreate some of the original Christmas decorations by adding swags of garland and boughs throughout the church and a Christmas tree filled with "goodies" for children. Special thanks to parishioners Bryan Sederberg and Bruce Sederberg of Duluth Nets for their generous donations of greens and a tree and to Carrie Miller and the Altar Guild for the lights and other beautiful decorations.

## Christmas Carols



The choir of St. Paul's Episcopal church, pictured here, will present it's annual Christmas carol service at 4:30pm today in the church. Left to right first row, Donald Pass, John Moerke, Russell Amendson, Thomas Cole and William Howliet, second row, the Rev. Lloyd R Lockhart, Betty Egan, Genevieve Carter, Jane Miller, Mrs. H A Gilkey, Annie Bothwell, Einora Larson and Carol Borgwald, organist. Third row Ruther Christianson, Jackqualyn Adams, Jean Spoyal, Mrs. L H Mylander, Mrs. Marian Pass, Elizabeth Terry, Mrs. BB Wood and Mrs. William Wilson. Fourth row P E Coolbaugh, Fred Fuller, Jack Fuller, Wells Smith, Duane Killam, Kenneth Field and Earl Brooks; fifth row, Jack Butcher, Donald Swift, Robert Miller, Trevor Pollack, Robert Johnson, James Wood and David Roberts.

**December 1894- Novel Service with the Holiday Hymns of Tradition Held at St. Paul's Church Last Evening** A very pretty carol service was given at St. Paul's Episcopal Church last night, taking the place of the regular service with sermon. Rev. Albert W Ryan made a few remarks from a text in Psalms on the joy of the season and the benefits that mankind has reaped from Christianity. The opening hymn was While Shepherds watched. This was followed by the anthem; There Were Shepherds, sung by organist AFM Custance. The carols were six in number, and were sung by the choir, which is partly composed of young boys. Their sweet, clear voices gave the songs a most pleasing, pathetic effect. The carols were... Come, Ye Lofty, Good Kind Wenceslas, Listen Lordings, In Excelsis Gloria, Twas in the Winter Cold, Cradle Song of the Virgin. The recessional hymn was O Come All Ye Faithful.

### December 1915- **St. Paul's Has Christmas Music**

Christmas Day and Sunday will be the last opportunity to hear Miss Alice Sjoselius in church music before her departure for Germany. She will sing at St. Paul's church on both days. In addition to solo parts in the anthem and communion service she will sing Gounod's beautiful song, "Adore and Be Still" on Christmas morning. The musical program of the service is interesting and attractive, comprising some of the best of the traditional carols from many lands. Selections include: "Vox Matutina, Christians Awake, Joy Fills Our Inmost Heart, O come, All Ye Faithful, Adeste Fidelis, God From On High Hath Heard, Peace I leave with You, Pax, and Hark the Herald Angels Sing."

### December 1916- **To Repeat Carol Service at St. Paul's**

In response to numerous requests the special Christmas carol service will be repeated at St. Paul's Episcopal church at 5 o'clock tomorrow. The program will include many of the favorite traditional English, Scotch and German carols. One of the most attractive numbers is a carol set to a traditional Christmas lullaby air from the Island of Haiti. Mrs. Leland Duxbury will sing Barnby's "Cradle Song of the Virgin." Mr. Custance will play appropriate selections from 4 to 5 o'clock.

**In the early years, it was the dedicated members of St. Paul's that kept the church going; and they had to be flexible and change the services to when a priest was available or lead services on their own. Here are a couple examples:**

1873- In the absence of a minister the usual Christmas services were conducted by a lay member on Christmas day. The singing by the choir is said to have been about the best vocal music ever listened to in Duluth. The Sabbath School exercises took place on Thursday afternoon and consisted of Singing Christmas Carols and distribution of presents to the scholars. Total number of scholars; 80; average attendance during the year, 45.

1875- Commencing with the first Church built in Duluth, the Episcopal, we understand that the Christmas exercises will be postponed until Holy Innocent's Day, Tuesday afternoon next, December 28, at half past four o'clock when their Pastor, the Rev. Mr. Milapaugh, will be able to be present. They are having a number of illuminated mottoes and what with the evergreens and the loaded Christmas Tree, we have no doubt will look lovely.

1876- At the Episcopal Church the Rev. J A Gilfillan will officiate at the morning service, also at 11:30pm Sunday Night or early morning service at 6 o'clock on Christmas morning as he leaves on Monday morning on the train, and also holds service at Superior during his stay.

December 1894- A special service will be held on December 31, 1894 at St. Paul's church at 11:15pm. There will be addresses by Rev. Dr Ryan and Rev. Mr. Starkweather, and a full choral program has been arranged. The service will be over about 12:30am and arrangements have been made for street car service after that hour on all lines.

December 5, 1919- Churchmen Agree to Cut Services to the Minimum. (due to shortage of coal) The Men's Interchurch council of Duluth yesterday pledged the churches represented to reduce church services to a minimum and to adopt any other plan which will definitely conserve the use of coal. The resolutions will be turned over to the city coal committee.

# GUILD FASHIONS CHRISTMAS GIFTS



Crinoline Christmas trees and handmade doll wardrobes are among articles being fashioned by members of St. Paul's Episcopal church Guild auxiliary for a Christmas sale. Left to right are Mrs. William J. TenBrook and Mrs. H. E. Westmoreland, members of Group 8, and Mrs. R. W. Meierhoff and Mrs. J. W. Mahood, members of the newly-formed business and professional women's group.—(Herald staff photo.)

## All-Day Program Planned

# Auxiliary at St. Paul's Holds Event on Saturday

Preparations are nearing completion for the Christmas sale which St. Paul's Episcopal church Guild auxiliary will hold from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. Saturday in St. Paul's parish house. Members of Groups 3 and 6, under the leadership of Mmes. B. B. Wood, John Gillam, Florence Cook and J. P. Harbison

boxes, College Age group. St. John's Episcopal church and St. Andrew's-by-the-Lake will also have variety tables. Group 8 will have a fishpond to entertain the children and will serve coffee during the morning.

12-3-1938

## CHURCH GUILD MEMBERS SEWING FOR BAZAR

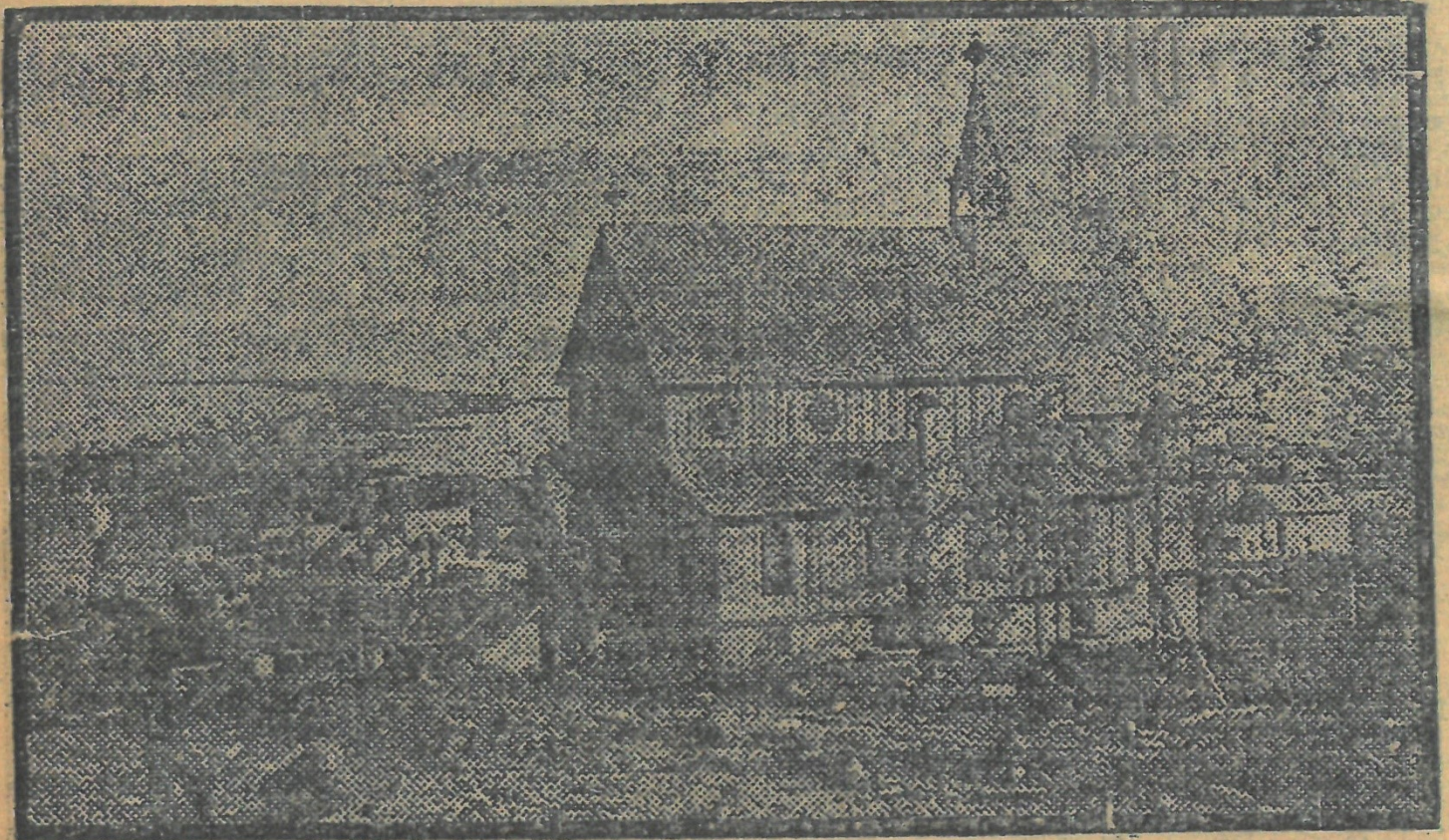


Members of Group No. 8 of the St. Paul's Episcopal church guild are sewing for the annual bazar which will be held Dec. 3 at the church hall, Seventeenth avenue east and Superior street. Included are, first row, Mrs. L. K. Cornwell, left, and Mrs. Lloyd Gilmett; second row, Mrs. P. B. Byrne, left, Miss Caroline Claypool, Mrs. Robert G. White, Mrs. George D. Irwin, Mrs. Stanley Smith, Mrs. R. E. Chabot and Mrs. T. D. Armstrong; third row, Mrs. Donald Swift, left, Miss Alice King and Mrs. William Stevenson.



December 25, 1919.

## FIRST CHRISTMAS SERVICES IN CHURCH IN DULUTH JUST HALF CENTURY AGO



OLD ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AS IT APPEARED WHEN FIRST BUILT.

Fifty years ago this morning the first church services for Christmas at least and probably for any occasion, of which there is any record in Duluth were held in the old St. Paul's Episcopal church, which now stands abandoned so far as church uses are concerned at the corner of Lake avenue and Second street.

"So far as our knowledge goes we had the first church building, and so the earliest service in a church proper of any body of Christians here," said

Thomas S. Wood today. "Now half a century has passed, we have a wonderful building, a noble service, and St. Paul's is known far and wide for its good works."

Old St. Paul's was built by Jay Cooke. H. M. Peyton, president of the American Exchange National bank, is said to have driven across the ice to Superior to bring to Duluth the clergymen who conducted the first services. The preacher was Rev. Mason B. Galagher.

# Give Praise for Birth of Christ

Duluth Churches Filled With Worshippers, in Observance of Day.

"Peace on Earth, and Good Will Toward Men" is Theme.

"The Angel's Song" was the topic of the Christmas sermon at St. Paul's Episcopal church at 10:30 this morning, by the rector, Rev. A. W. Ryan. He took for his text St. Luke II, 8, 13-14: "There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, and, suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying 'Glory to God on the highest and on earth, good will to men.'"

Dr. Ryan said, in part: "There are days so full of intoxication of the senses that we seem changed, uplifted, clairvoyant in comparison with what we are ordinarily. The very air is toxic and exhilarating, the blue of the heavens is deeper than ordinarily the whole world takes on new and most exquisite hues, and it seems as if from above there sang to us a song of good cheer and joy unspeakable. The blood courses through our veins as it never does in the ordinary, thought is above the customary, and imagination and faith then seem able to cope with any difficulties and undertakings. It is a time of exaltation, but after all, we should realize that it is more the realization, not of impossible things, but of our real selves, as we might be, may be will be after a time.

"So there are days in the passing of human life, which do not depend on the atmosphere, or the glowing light of the day, but on ideas, on spiritual truths, illuminations, invitations and suggestions. Then it seems as if heaven and the heaven of heavens spoke to us and we receive as it were, the message of angels. Such a day is All Saints' for those who can see and hear the spiritual. Such a day is Easter with its comforting message, that all people yearn for, and such a day pre-eminently is Christmas. A genial warmth has come to even the hardened hearts of men. A new interest in their fellows is developed and where ordinarily men care little for greetings and good wishes, now hearts warm up enough to speak in friendly fashion to our brothers, and that alone is sweet when we once get accustomed to it, that we are made glad

ourselves with the friendly joys of the day.

"But beside that, too, there must be some sense of a heavenly message sent to us, some nation that the portals of eternity have opened to us and we hear dimly the angelic song of peace on earth and good-will toward men. It is a day differing from all other days. It takes the most hardened and for a season changes him. It makes us long for the heavenly voice even when we have not cared for so long to hear it. And hearing it, how it changes life and makes it sweet for the day, at least, where kindness shall take the place of ruthless warfare, the bitter contest of the hostile and cynic criticisms of men for their fellows, as life is ordinarily lived. Surely this Christmas spirit is better and surely we should try to carry it into our lives."

St. Paul's choir sang a complete musical program, with a number of beautiful solos.

Christmas Sermon during World War I by Rector Dr. Ryan— printed in the newspaper; and typed in part below.

"...Dr. Ryan said, in part: There are days so full of intoxication of the senses that we seem changed, uplifted, clairvoyant in comparison with what we are ordinarily. The very air is toxic and exhilarating, the blue of the heavens is deeper than ordinarily; the whole world takes on new and most exquisite hues, and it seems as if from above there sang to us a song of good cheer and joy unspeakable. The blood courses through our veins as it never does in the ordinary, thought is above the customary, and imagination and faith then seems able to cope with any difficulties and undertakings. It is a time of exaltation but after all, we should realize that it is more the realization, not of impossible things, but of our real selves, as we might be, may be will be after a time.

So there are days in the passing of human life, which do not depend on the atmosphere, or the glowing light of the day, but on ideas, on spiritual truths, illuminations, invitations and suggestions. Then it seems as if heaven and the heaven of heavens spoke to use and we receive as it were, the message of angels. Such a day is All Saints for those who can see and hear the spiritual. Such a day is Easter with its comforting message, tha all people yearn after, and such a day preeminently is Christmas. A genial warmth has come to even the hardened hearts of men. A new interest in their fellows is developed and where ordinarily men care little for greetings and good wishes, now hearts warm up enough to speak in friendly fashion to our brothers, and that alone is sweet when we once get accustomed to it, that we are made glad ourselves with the friendly joys of the day.

But beside that, too, there must be some sense of a heavenly message sent to us, some nation that the portals of eternity have opened to use and we hear dimly the angelic song of peace on earth and good will toward men. It is a day differing form all other days. It takes the most hardened and for a season changes him. It makes us long for the heavenly voice even when we have not cared for so long to hear it. And hearing it, how it changes life and makes it sweet for the day, at least. And we can dream of a republic of men where kindness shall take the place of ruthless warfare, the bitter contest, the hostile and cynic criticism of men for their fellows, as life is ordinarily lived. Surely this Christmas spirit is better and surely we should try to carry it into our lives."

## 1928- First Candlelight Service

### Gloria in Excelsis—(Old Chant)

Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### Prayer and Benediction—

#### Anthem—Silent Night

Gruber

Silent night, holy night,  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,  
Holy Infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace!

Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-la;  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night,  
Shepherds quake at the sight,  
Glories stream from heaven afar,

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light,  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

#### Recessional—Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Hark, the herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!

Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
Join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time behold Him come,  
Offspring of the Virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail the Incarnate Deity,  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell;  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Mild He lays His glory by,  
Born that man no more may die,  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
Born to give them second birth.

Risen with healing in His wings,  
Light and life to all He brings,  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!



#### INVITATION

All are cordially welcome at all the services of the Christmas season. May it be a time of spiritual refreshing to all, and bring to us a glad acknowledgement of our love and gratitude to God for the gift of His Son.

#### CHRISTMAS DAY

8:00 A. M.—Holy Communion. 10:00 A. M.—Holy Communion and Sermon.

#### THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Will be held Wednesday evening, Jan. 16th, at 7:45 in the Parish House. Will members of St. Paul's kindly keep this date open and attend the meeting.

*A Service of Adoration and Praise for the Babe of Bethlehem, Who is Jesus the Christ God's Great Christmas Gift to the World.*



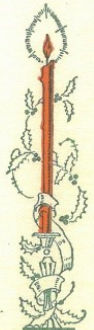
## Christmas Carols by Candle-Light

Christmas Eve., 1928

### St. Paul's Church

Rev. B. T. Kemerer  
Rector

Carl Bergwald  
Organist and Choirmaster



The congregation is cordially invited to sing whatever of the following program is familiar. Standing for the Hymns, and remaining seated for the Carols.

#### Processional—It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth  
To touch their harps of gold;  
Peace on the earth, good-will to men,  
From heaven's all-gracious King;  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

O ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way  
With painful steps and slow!  
Look now, for glad and golden hours  
Come swiftly on the wing;  
Oh, rest beside the weary road,  
And hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come,  
With peaceful wings unfurled;  
And still their heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lonely plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on,  
By prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever-circling years,  
Shall come the time foretold,  
When the new heaven and earth shall own  
The Prince of Peace their King,  
And the whole world send back the song  
Which now the angels sing.

#### Creed—Versicles for Evening Prayer

The Lord be with you.  
Answer. And with thy spirit.

Minister. Let us pray.  
O Lord, show thy mercy upon us.  
Answer. And grant us thy salvation.

Minister. O Lord, save the State.  
Answer. And mercifully hear us when we call upon thee.

Minister. Endue thy Ministers with righteousness,  
Answer. And make thy chosen people joyful.

Minister. O Lord, save thy people.  
Answer. And bless thine inheritance.

Minister. Give peace in our time, O Lord.  
Answer. For it is thou, Lord, only, that makest us dwell in safety.

Minister. O God, make clean our hearts within us.  
Answer. And take not thy Holy Spirit from us.

#### The Lord's Prayer and Collects—

*First Candle-light Service*

From the 100th Anniversary Booklet of St. Paul's Church:

"A church is a building, an edifice, a monument. And it is something more, a church is people. A church is the changing sea of faces in the congregation to whom the rector ministers in their hours of need and their moments of triumph. A church is the rector in his pulpit, hoping and praying that he can lead his flock to salvation. A church is the organist and the choir, performing their ministry in music and song, as they lift voices in praise of man's Savior. A church is the tireless workers, who labor Sunday after Sunday, to lead the children in paths of right living. And a church is the vestry, struggling in its ministry to meet the secular obligations of the congregation and keep the church solvent. And when all of these are combined for good works, then you have a church, and a House of God. St. Paul's is a church and it is people. And just as the faces in the pulpit, in the choir, in the congregation and in the vestry have changed over the years, so has the edifice changed. It was born on a hillside in the then frontier village of Duluth out of the needs of the people for a place of worship which they could call their own. And so a House of God came into being, and it came to be called St. Paul's."

All quotes and pictures have been taken from archival records and newspaper clippings lovingly organized by our archivist, Bob Silverness. Special thanks to Bob for his many months working on organizing the archives, researching the history, filling in missing pieces and creating displays that will ensure the history of St. Paul's will be preserved for generations to come.

Booklet created by Sue Van Oss, Director of Christian Formation



In 1928, after ten years of raising funds, the Women's Guild of St. Paul's unveiled their efforts; a Nativity triptych painted by Austin Purves of New York. The mahogany panels were treated with over 10 layers of gesso, dried for several weeks, then the halos of gold leaf placed and painting proceeded. Yolk of eggs instead of oil was used for mixing the color pigments to give a brilliant color that would not change. Brush strokes could not be painted out with this technique; once the brush touches the canvas it's mark is there forever, so the artist had to be sure of each of the thousands of strokes.

More than a year was required for painting the picture. The two motives were to show the story of the Nativity and to intimate through the lines of the composition the dynamic spirit of Jesus Christ. To effect an even distribution of persons, the artist brought both magi and shepherds to the Nativity; suggesting the power of Christ to draw all unto Him. The magi and shepherds are representative of the widest social distinctions, but as they draw near to Christ these distinctions vanish. They become brethren in a common interest, adoration and worship. In the left panel a shepherd looks through the window in an attitude of watchful curiosity....It is too much for him; his processes of thought are at a standstill.

The Child is asleep wrapped in swaddling clothes that suggest a chrysalis- mighty promise of the dynamic life within. The Virgin is relaxed; in a pose of natural lassitude, being supported by Joseph. The ass is curious, the ox is attracted by the radiance of the star which shines through the wall of the house- fit symbol of the Guiding Star of life which nothing can obscure for those who wish to see it. The dove perched in a window above the star anticipates the moment when the Holy Spirit descended like a dove at the baptism of Jesus.

The artist studied an astronomical chart and found that looking from a certain center these constellations by a curious coincidence almost exactly fitted into the openings previously provided in the background, and their names symbolically identify the subject. The constellations therefore are not taken at random from various parts of the heavens but are actually what one would see by a proper orientation. In the left panel there is the constellation of Hercules, called the Kneeler. Above Joseph's head is Bootes the Herdsman. In the center is Virgo, the Virgin. Under the star and dove is Corvus, the Crow and at the right is Crater, the constellation of the holy Grail.

The remarkable line scheme of the entire composition has its own purpose and message. The figures all curve in a symmetrical relation to the Child. While everything leans toward the Child indicating His attractive power, the real purpose of the curves is to indicate the dynamic of the Divine life. This is not merely a child, "He is declared to be the Son of God with power." The lines are concentric; as ripples caused by dropped a pebble into still waters flow outward from the center and reach the farthest shores, so the Child is to send out revelations of God into the widest reaches of human life. But this is to be done through people. His is the voice of God to human life through human lives. His mission is to the world. ... With the voice of stillness the painting speaks of the love of God, of the Savior of the world, of a reasonable, religious and holy hope. From its place behind the cross it seems to say; "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." anonymous writer of booklet from 1928