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Holiday Activities: Fun events for the family

By Jodi Wallin



Get out and celebrate the holidays this year. Here are some ideas for a variety of things to do this holiday season in the metro area. Many of the activities are free, some have fees, others are free to access and have additional activities or items for sale.

Sledding. Free if you own a sled or even a large piece of cardboard. For sledding around Saint Paul, find a list of the best locations at <https://outdoortroop.com/13-perfect-sledding-spotsnear-st-paul/>

Winter Flower Show. Marjorie McNeely Conservatory, Como Park. Open daily 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. December 5 – January 4, 2026. Free; donations appreciated. <https://comozooconservatory.org/como/sunkengarden-2>.

Holiday lights. View the holiday lights at a multitude of locations around the Twin Cities metro area. Find them at givemethemike.com/minnesota-holiday-lights-2025. Some displays are free, some take food donations, others charge. More specific to Saint Paul: <https://www.visitsaintpaul.com/blog/best-places-to-see-holiday-lights-in-saint-paul/>.

Winter Lights 2025. Stroll through the Minnesota Arboretum gardens decked out in Winter Lights. Enjoy fresh air as you explore outdoor light displays, highlighting flowers, trees and the beauty of nature, on a .75-mile walking route. Tickets \$25, must be purchased and reserved in advance. Parking included

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The Minnesota Boys Choir sings in concert.

in the cost of the ticket. Weekends and additional dates. <https://arb.umn.edu/winterlights>

Minnesota Boys Choir. Winter Concert, 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 21. A Most Wonderful Time: 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 26 and Winter Concert at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 4, 2026. Locations vary. Freewill donation requested. For more information on any of these events, go to boychoir.org/support/attend-a-concert.html

European Christmas Market at the Union Depot runs Friday - Sun-

day Dec. 19 -21. Check for hours: <https://stpaulchristmasmarket.org>. In addition to small kiosks for shopping, the event features live music, dance ensembles, and festive food.

GLOW Holiday Festival will run now through Jan. 4, 2026, at CHS Field. Stroll through over a million lights, and so much more! Enjoy strolling through the holiday lights, while soaking up all the amenities at CHS Field. Tickets are \$27.47 for adults, \$17.58 for children (ages 3-12), which includes all applicable ticketing fees and taxes. <https://www.glowholiday.com>.

Landmark Center Activities:

Santa's Workshop, Dec. 14 from 1 p.m. - 3 p.m. Free. Come for a free photo with Santa and stay for family activities. Star of the North Holiday Concert, Dec. 17 from 7:30 p.m. – 9 p.m. Songs of the Season: Carols of Minnesota Composers, Dec. 18 at noon and 6 p.m. www.landmarkcenter.org/events/.

Minneapolis Institute of Ice.

January 8, 2026 – March 1, 2026. Located at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. See works of art outdoors. Free. www.minneapolis.org/calendar/minneapolis-institute-of-ice/



The European Christmas Market at Union Depot.