

First Sunday of Advent

December 3, 2023 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle – Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (*1st verse only, below*) **ELW 240**

Light one candle to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

He shall bring salvation to Israel, God fulfills the promise.

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation.

C: Amen.

P: God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Everlasting God,

C: ... you love justice and you hate wrongdoing. We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness that make us reluctant to work against oppression. We are complicit in systems of exploitation. We choose comfort over courage. We are careless with creation's bounty. Look upon us with mercy. Turn our hearts again to you. Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.

P: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song:

Soon and Very Soon

ELW #439

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

C: And also with you!

Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **C: Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

This lament comes from a people who have had their hopes shattered. The visions of a rebuilt Jerusalem and a renewed people of God, spoken of in Isaiah 40–55, have not been realized. Instead, the people experience ruin, conflict, and famine. This lament calls God to account—to be the God who has brought deliverance in the past.

1 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence—
2 as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil—to make your name known to your adversaries,
so that the nations might tremble at your presence! 3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you
came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. 4 From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. 5 You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we
transgressed. 6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We
all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. 7 There is no one who calls on your name, or
attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our
iniquity. 8 Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.
9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O Lord, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.

3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

4 O Lord God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.

7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

17 Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.

18 And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

19 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia

S 142a

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

Jesus said: 24 “In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. 27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. 28 “From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. 31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 32 “But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

My Lord, What a Morning

ELW #438

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of Heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the Church / Sign of the Peace *(Let us give one another a sign of peace according to your comfort level.)*

Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

As the Grains of Wheat

ELW #465

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: God our provider, by your merciful hand abundance springs up from the earth. Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty. Let them be a sign of your steadfast love and faithfulness for all people, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Words of Institution

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Communion (*Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available*)

Communion Songs:

**O Come O Come Emmanuel (v.1-4)
Christ Be Our Light**

**ELW #257
ELW #715**

Final Blessing

P: The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

Give Me Oil in My Lamp

Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning; Give me oil in my lamp, I pray.
Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning; Keep me burning 'til the break of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King of kings! Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King!

Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising; Give me joy in my heart, I pray.
Give me joy in my heart, keep me praising; Keep me praising 'til the break of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King of kings! Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King!

Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting; Give me peace in my heart, I pray.
Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting; Keep me resting 'til the break of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King of kings! Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King!

(continued on next page)

Give me love in my heart, keep me serving; Give me love in my heart, I pray.
Give me love in my heart, keep me serving; Keep me serving 'til the break of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King of kings! Sing hosanna, sing hosanna, sing hosanna to the King!

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: **Thanks be to God.**



Bethlehem December 3, 2023
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/3—Frank Wall
12/5—Craig Bauer
12/5—Dave Peppler

12/7—James Hinds
12/7—Denice Bossardet

12/8—Clark Rasmussen
12/10—Tim Goebel

Worship Servants for December 3

Assisting Minister—Barbara Wright

Lector—Nancy Ammann

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Pr Paul

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Dave & Peg Peppler in Celebration of God's Grace*
By Jacky Putman in Honor of Members' Birthdays

A/V—Dale Wentzloff, Jim Hinds and the Acker Family

Hospitality—Jim and Dorene Boyd

Cookies—VOLUNTEER

Welcome Table—VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Altar Guild—Kate Holtfreter/Barbara Oster

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Kate Holtfreter/Barbara Graf

Building and Office Hours are: 9:00am – 2:30pm, Monday – Thursday.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: We often find the front door and/or the kitchen door unlocked when there is no one in the building. Please be sure that the doors are locked when you leave.

Please Note:

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Alanna Steffunick/Ministry Coordinator works 9:00am-2:30pm – in the office on Tuesday and Thursday and from home on Wednesday

Offerings: The offering plates are now passed during the service. The vase in the back of the Sanctuary is still available for those who prefer not to touch the offering plate.

The December issue of the STAR is now available. For current issues of the Star, feel free to check online at www.bethlehemtc.org < About Us > “The Online Bethlehem Star” or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>.

The January/February/March Christ In Our Home is now available. Please take a copy for yourself and also for friends and family.

Adult Education in the Youth Room plus Sunday School - every Sunday at 9:15am. Please note that they will not meet on December 24th and December 31st.

The next Third Thursday service will be a Blue Christmas service on December 21st at 7:00pm. The service will be livestreamed. The BLC Fellowship Committee will be providing a meal prepared by Phil Bossardet at 5:45 p.m. Please come early and share in fellowship and stay for the service.

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes? Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council: bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes OR you may call the office to request a copy.

BABY PANTRY PROJECT: Parents visiting the baby pantry really appreciate all the items you have been donating. They especially need laundry soap, cleaning products and toilet tissue. The next Baby Pantry date is Thursday, December 14th. Thank you one and all!

Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar: Please call Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880

2024 Giving Envelopes are Ready for Pick Up - I am happy to report that the 2024 giving envelopes have arrived! They are available for pick up at your convenience. The boxes are in the narthex in alphabetical order by last name. Please pick yours up as soon as possible so you will have them ready for January giving. If you have any questions or need help, please contact me during regular business hours. Your Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson

Due Dates for STAR/Bulletin/Screen Announcements:

- STAR: The third Friday of the month sent to admin@bethlehemtc.org (Please note STAR in subject line)
- Bulletin/Verbal Announcements: Tuesday of the week sent to admin@bethlehemtc.org (Bulletin/Worship Folder is prepared on Tuesday and printed on Thursday morning.) (Please note Bulletin or Announcement in subject line)
- Screen Announcements/Weekly BLC Emails: Tuesday of the week sent to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org

Celebrate a new child in your life with a rose on the baptismal font! Cost \$10.00 per rose. Contact Barbara Oster at beo6475@yahoo.com or 231.668.7038.

SALVATION ARMY BELL RINGING: Volunteers are needed to ring bells for the Salvation Army at Tom's East Bay Store on December 8, and December 9, 2023. The first shift starts at 10:00 am and the last shift starts at 6:00 pm. Each shift is 1 hour long. If you are willing to ring please call Carl Lehto at 231-223-7187 home, or 231-944-9640 cell. We need 18 ringers. You can bring a friend with you to ring. Please dress warmly. The needs are greater than ever so your help will be appreciated more than ever. Merry Christmas. Thank you.

TRAVERSE CITY HIGH SCHOOL CHRISTMAS GIFT TREE IS UP! Please note that most of the items on the 'tree' are clothing and more 'needed' items. There is also a separate sheet that lists other items the students would love to have. You may choose one or both. Please drop off **unwrapped gifts** prior to Sunday, December 10th. Thank you for your generosity. The students so appreciate it!

Caroling for our Homebound (shut-in) members on December 10th: It's time to get in the spirit of the season! On Sunday Dec 10, we will have a light meal after the service and then divide into groups to go caroling. We hope to have enough people for 3 teams to cover different parts of town, so we want to get the word out early! If you feel singing is not your strong suit, that's ok - the rest of us will help carry the tune. Your smiling presence is most important! Our members who cannot get out to see us REALLY appreciate seeing other members in-person. Please mark your calendar for the 10th!

Fellowship Friends: We are so thankful that BLC is a giving and involved church. You (and a friend) are needed to sign-up to help with our Advent meals. You could plan/buy the food, prepare the food, serve the food, or clean up after. The sign-up sheets are on the table in the Gathering space or contact Gail Goldsmith by text or phone at 231-633-2630 or at ggoldsmith74@gmail.com

Our Advent nights will be on Thursdays, December 7, 14 and 21. The theme this year is "I Wonder as I Wander".
Thursday, December 7th: 5:45pm Sandwich and Salad meal; 7:00pm Holden Evening Prayer
Thursday, December 14th: 5:45pm Sandwich and Salad meal; 7:00pm Advent/Christmas Hymn Sing
Thursday, December 21st: 5:45pm Special meal prepared by Phil Bossardet; 7:00pm Blue Christmas Service

It's time for cookies! We (all ages) will be frosting cookies for the homebound on Thursday, December 7th at 5:00pm before the 5:45pm dinner. If you have sugars, sprinkles or other decorations to share, we would appreciate it. Thanks.

Honoring a "Blue Christmas" on the 21st: Perhaps you or someone you know is not feeling the "Joy" of the Advent and Christmas season this year. Often loss, anxiety or grief during the Holidays can leave us feeling out of sync with our culture, when in fact the true meaning of Advent includes nearly every human emotion, as we long for Christ's birth. Leaders from four local ELCA churches invite you to join them on the longest night of the year - December 21st at 7pm at Bethlehem. This year's annual "Blue Christmas" service includes words of solace and hope from Pastors Haley Vay Beaman (Feast of Victory - Acme), Tim Jahn (Advent - Lake Ann), Matt Deames (Faith & Evangelical - East Jordan) and Paul Busekist (Bethlehem - Traverse City). Peace be with you this season as we journey together.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. Leave them by the garage. These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

Spotlight on Zeke: So many of us enjoy Zeke's talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Wed 12/6—Park Place, Minerva's Happy Hour at 4:00

Sat 12/9—Hotel Indigo at 6:00

Wed 12/13—Park Place, Minerva's Happy Hour at 4:00

Sat 12/16—Brady's at 6:30

FOR BOOK CLUB MEMBERS: The book club is taking a Christmas holiday in December. The Jan book will be announced in the group email and in the Jan STAR. If you are not on the email list and want to join our group on the 4th Tues at 5:30 please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net.

DIRECTORY NEWS - For those who did not have their photo taken or submitted, or for those who might like an additional one, you may order a copy of our new church directory. Please contact Kathy Ancinec at 989-906-2765. The cost will be \$8.00 per copy, before December 6, 2023. After that date, it will cost \$12.00. Reserved copies will be available for future members only.

Dear Members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church,

It's that time of year; the leaves start to turn color and fall to the ground. It is also the time of year when we like to take some time and gratefully thank the congregation for your continued support of our wonderful church. We are all grateful to have such abundant blessings with our location and our faithful members. It's important to remain dedicated to our Christian faith and do our best to follow through on our commitments. With love & kindness we ask that if you are able and willing to help the church in a financial way, we really need your help. Contributions are behind where we should be for the start of the fourth quarter. This is primarily because of pledged money that has not yet been received. We respectfully ask that if you can do what you have pledged or even a little bit more, the church will put those dollars to good work. Thank you for prayerfully considering this appeal. We appreciate your support and are grateful for all you do to make Bethlehem Lutheran Church a thriving community of believers. Jim Monroe, BLC Financial Secretary and Phil Anderson, BLC Bookkeeper

New member orientation: Arrangements are in the works for a gathering in December or January. Please contact membership chair, Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or the office at 947-9880 if you are interested in joining Bethlehem.

December's XYZ Potluck & Presentation will be on Friday, December 8th, at 12pm noon. While primarily geared toward seniors, the group is open to any adult who would like to attend! XYZ meets monthly September through May for a potluck lunch, followed by a program or presentation. December's presentation will be by one of our own members of Bethlehem, Sherri Helman, who will give a presentation titled: "The Bible in Living Color." On Sherri's trip to the Holy Land this past January, one of the repeat travelers described her first pilgrimage there as this: "A time when the Bible went from black and white to living color." That was the experience that occurred for Sherri. In her sharing at the December XYZ Luncheon, some of those experiences will be shared from the heart! Please know this will not be a political conversation about the conflicts and unrest within Israel...it will be an intimate sharing of faith, blessing, and gratitude! We hope you will join us in December for good food, fellowship, and a wonderful presentation!

The Zoom Book and Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm. The group will complete the study the Mitch Albom book, Have a Little Faith on December 6. On December 13th at 1:30pm, the group will watch the Hallmark movie based on the book. You are welcome to join us in the Youth Room. The next study will start in January where the group will study the Book of Mark.

Our Care Giving Committee has put up a “Communitas” Board on the wall of our Coat Room! This “BOARD” is needed and helpful for ALL of us! Following is a suggestion of some things YOU and our YOUTH can do to “interact” with the board and other members of our congregation. The purpose of our “Auxilium Communitas” BOARD (Latin for “Community/Congregation Assistance”) is to SHARE our gifts, talents, or skills to others that might be in NEED of something like: Gardening, Organizing, Painting, Raking leaves, Shoveling, Household tasks, Carpentry, Manicures, Pedicures, Companionship, Care giving, etc. - This list is Endless! You never know when YOU will be in need of some extra help personally, in your home or yard – let's make this “reciprocal” - All ages are Welcome to Help Service our Congregation!

Copies of the Living Lutheran magazine can be picked up at the welcome table on Sunday mornings or from the Shooting STAR box below the outside mailbox. Please note that beginning with the January issue, the Living Lutheran will be digital at www.livinglutheran.org.

Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations? It has been moved inside the coat room to the right. Also, the area for the Oleson and Family Fair receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside.

Coffee and Cookies on Sunday: Remember that treats and a hot drink on Sunday are appreciated by all. Please take a moment to sign up to bring cookies or some other tasty treat on the Sunday that works best for you. Or sign up to prepare the coffee. As requested by some of our new members there is a plan in the works to have one Sunday per month when we join in the Fellowship Hall. We can sit at a table and chat with someone new while we munch on a treat. More on that to come...

Name tags: Your name tags are in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and with so many recent new members it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

Food Pantry: We will NOT be closing our outdoor pantry for winter this year. We have a new member who ran an outdoor pantry downstate and she has given us lots of ideas of foods that can be stored there during the cold months including: hamburger helper, stuffing mix, dry milk, instant potatoes, cookies, and rice. Also, there is always room for dry goods such as toilet paper, paper towels etc. Please start looking for some of these items when they are on sale and bring your extras to the coat room. Your generosity is so appreciated.

A big thank you to all who turned in Olesons' receipts. We just received a check from Olesons for \$268.15 for a total of \$593.03 this calendar year. Please continue to drop off your Olesons' receipts at Bethlehem. Please note they do not expire. Thank you.

Hoop's Pet Food Pantry: This is the only pet food pantry in NW lower Michigan. They primarily provide dry food, wet food, treats, cat litter and toys for mostly dogs and cats but they will support any type of pet to the best of their ability. Please visit them at the Square Deal Country Store, 900 Woodmere Ave, TC from **11:00am – 2:00pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month** with your donations OR you may leave donations in the tub on our “donations” table in the coat room. The volunteers have expressed their appreciation when receiving our donations.

Have something important going on at Bethlehem that you'd like others to know about? Maybe a Small Group? A Club Event? Feature it on the Screen Announcements, weekly emails and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included in any of these, please reach out to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna.

Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. Please use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$40 (payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the offering plate on Sunday morning (Preferable) or during the week, in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either “in honor” or “in memory” or “to celebrate”. If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, December 3

- 9:15am—Sunday School
- 9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
- 10:00am—Worship Service (S)
- 12:30pm—Confirmation Class at Advent
- 2:00pm—Christmas Tea Social (GS)

Tuesday, December 5

Bulletin articles due today

- 9:00am—Property Work Group
- 9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)
- 10:45am—Staff Meeting
- 3:00pm—AAUW (FH)
- 7:00pm—Choir Rehearsal (S)

Wednesday, December 6

- 9:30am—Adult Bible Study (YR)
- 11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)
- 1:30pm—Zoom Bible/Book Study

Thursday, December 7

- 5:30pm—ACA (Library)
- 5:45pm—Advent Meal (FH)
- 7:00pm—Advent Service (S)

Friday, December 8

- 12:00pm—XYZ Potluck (FH)

Saturday, December 9

- 5:30pm—Contra Potluck/Dance (FH)

Sunday, December 10

- 9:15am—Sunday School
- 9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
- 10:00am—Traditional Worship Service (S)



