

**Second Sunday of Advent
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
December 10, 2023
Sunday 10:00 a.m.**



Welcome to All! We are glad that you are able to worship with us today. **Please fill out a connection card in the pews if you like.**

During the service, we will sit or stand in reverence to our Lord. Please do what is physically comfortable and reverent for you. For those who are unable to receive Communion near the altar and wish to have the Pastor administer it at your seat, please obtain a red and white card from one of the ushers and hold it up at Communion time to alert the Pastor. If you or a little one would like to receive a blessing instead of Holy Communion, we invite you to come forward and cross your arms at the time of Communion. Please feel free to introduce yourself to our Pastor and fill out one of the Visitor cards available at our Welcome Table in the Gathering Place.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Setting 3, page 138

Pre-Worship Music/Announcements

Prelude

Lighting of the Advent Candle - Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (2nd verse only, below) ELW 240

Light two candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.

He shall bring feed the flock like a shepherd, gently lead them homeward

GATHERING

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 Hymn *Blessed Be the God of Israel* ELW #250

Greeting

A: 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 (lead by Pastor Paul)

S 138

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

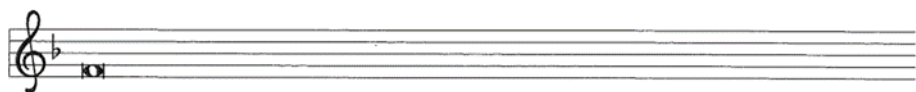
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

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.

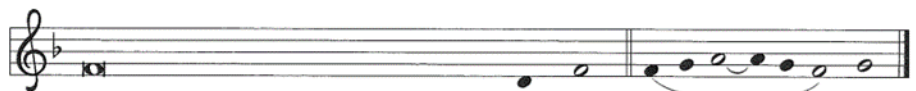
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

Hymn of Praise

Glory to God



Assisting minister
Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.



All
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together...

C: Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Message

Pastor Paul

WORD

First Lesson

Isaiah 40:1-11

In grand, flowing, poetic lines, the prophet announces that the exile of God's people in Babylon is over. God will deliver Israel and will care for her as a shepherd cares for the sheep. This word can be trusted, because the only enduring reality in life is the word of God.

1 Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. 2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. 3 A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. 5 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." 6 A voice says, "Cry out!" And

I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. 9 Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" 10 See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. 11 He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalmody

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

1 You have been gracious to your land, O Lord; you have restored the good fortune of Jacob.

2 You have forgiven the iniquity of your people and blotted out all their sins.

8 I will listen to what the Lord God is saying; for you speak peace to your faithful people and to those who turn their hearts to you.

9 Truly, your salvation is very near to those who fear you, that your glory may dwell in our land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

11 Faithfulness shall spring up from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

12 The Lord will indeed grant prosperity, and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness shall go before the Lord and shall prepare for God a pathway.

Second Lesson

2 Peter 3:8-15a

This short letter deals with pressing concerns regarding the final advent of Jesus, especially concerns that could arise over its apparent delay. The author of the letter calls on Christians to anticipate the promised coming of the Lord through conduct dedicated to God.

8 Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. 9 The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. 11 Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, 12 waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? 13 But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. 14 Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; 15a and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

L: The Word of the Lord.
C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *Alleluia*

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 1:1-8

The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: ...Glory to you, O Lord...

1 The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. 2 As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way; 3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,'" 4 John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

Apostle's 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 Intercession: response after each petition: **“Receive our prayer”** (*Before prayer*) A: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

(*Conclusion*) P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **C: Amen.**

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

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

Offering/Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory (*Please stand, as able.*) **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.**

Great Thanksgiving

S 144a

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

Great Thanksgiving *(continued)*

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

Holy, Holy, Holy

S 144b

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

The 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.

P: The gifts of God for the people of God. Taste and see that the Lord is good.
 **Please note: *Gluten-free wafers and white grape juice are available.*

Communion**Lamb of God**

S 146

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
 mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
 world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
 sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymns

Around You, O Lord Jesus
Bread of Life from Heaven

ELW #468
ELW #474

Post-Communion Blessing

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **C: Amen.**

Post-Communion Canticle**Thankful Hearts**

Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.
 Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.
 Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with
 shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer after Communion

A: Let us pray. Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior.

C: Amen.

SENDING

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

Hark, the Glad Sound

ELW #239

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem December 10, 2023
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/10—Tim Goebel 12/12—Garth Stowe 12/15—Fran White
12/11—Marjorie Whitney 12/12—Rachell Moyer 12/17—Marilyn Johns

Worship Servants for December 10

Assisting Minister—Barbara Oster

Lector—Barbara Graf

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

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By Sherri Helman in Memory and*

Celebration of the life of Jim Helman

A/V—The Acker Family and Paul Ton

Hospitality—Leonard/Barbara Graf

Cookies—Tom/Jana Rockne

Welcome Table—Gail Goldsmith

Bell Ringer—Gail Goldsmith

Altar Guild—Mary Ann Tanis/Gail Goldsmith

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Kate Holtfreter/Barbara Graf

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.

Our Advent nights will continue on Thursdays, December 14 and 21. The theme this year is "I Wonder as I Wander".

Thursday, December 14th: 5:45pm Pizza, Salad and Cookies; 7:00pm Advent/Christmas Hymn Sing

Thursday, December 21st: 5:45pm Special meal prepared by Phil Bossardet; 7:00pm Blue Christmas Service

- The menu includes ham, stuffed winter squash, mashed sweet potatoes, green bean casserole, green salad, dinner rolls and dessert. Phil is looking for volunteers to make some desserts. If you are able, please call Phil at 231-499-7522.

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 (Evangelical – East Jordan) and Paul Busekist (Bethlehem - Traverse City). Peace be with you this season as we journey together.

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

The Zoom Book and Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm. The group has completed the study the Mitch Albom book, *Have a Little Faith*. 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.

DIRECTORY NEWS UPDATE – The company producing the directory is moving slower than anticipated. We are now looking at January or February for delivery.

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.

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!

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 10

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Traditional Worship Service (S)
11:30am—Pizza and Caroling for the Homebound

Monday, December 11

1:00pm—Finance Committee (CR)

Tuesday, December 12

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—Property Work Group
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)
12:00pm—Sarah Circle (Library)
6:00pm—Y2A/Christian Ed meeting (YR)
6:30pm—Executive Committee (CR)
7:00pm—Choir Rehearsal (S)

Wednesday, December 13

11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)
1:00pm—Baby Pantry Set-up (FH)
1:30pm—*Have a Little Faith* Movie (YR)

Thursday, December 14

9:00am—Baby Pantry Set-Up (FH)
10:00am—Baby Pantry (FH)
1:00pm—Rebecca Anna Circle (Library)
5:30pm—ACA (Library)
5:45pm—Advent Meal (FH)
7:00pm—Advent Service (S)

Friday, December 15

STAR Articles Due

10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)
1:00pm—Lehto SG (Library)

Sunday, December 17

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

