



Taize & Carols Worship
Sunday, December 31, 2023 – 10:00 am
First Sunday of Christmas

This style of worship comes to us from the Taize Monastic community in France. Founded in 1940 in the midst of World War II, the community sought to be a place of peace and reconciliation. People from all over the world still worship there every day. The Taize style service is one of quiet contemplation and prayer. The songs are simple and are meant to be repetitive. As we sing the songs over and over, they become our prayers, allowing us to focus and quiet our minds and hearts. There will also be times of extended silence throughout the service. While they may seem awkward at first, you are encouraged to spend the time meditating on the Scriptures we read, praying or simply just being still.

Prelude O Little Town of Bethlehem ELW 279

v. 1 & 4

Welcome/Announcements

Gathering Song It Came Upon a Midnight Clear ELW 282

v. 1 & 4

A Time for Silent Prayer

A Reading from the book of Isaiah 61:10—62:3

To the people who returned to Jerusalem after the exile, the prophet proclaims that God's salvation will fully come to pass. Jerusalem will become a shining light to the nations and righteousness and praise will spring up as surely as the earth puts forth vegetation.

10 I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. 11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. 62:1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. 2 The nations shall see your

vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give. 3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

A Moment for Silence & Meditation

Song

In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful; in the Lord I will re - joice! Look to God; do not be a - fraid. Lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near; lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near." The piano accompaniment includes a triplet in the second system and chord markings (C, Dm, C, F) in the third system.

Psalmody

Psalm 148

- 1 Hallelujah! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise God in the heights.
- 2 **Praise the Lord, all you angels; sing praise, all you hosts of heaven.**
- 3 Praise the Lord, sun and moon; sing praise, all you shining stars.
- 4 **Praise the Lord, heaven of heavens, and you waters above the heavens.**
- 5 Let them praise the name of the Lord, who commanded, and they were created,
- 6 **who made them stand fast forever and ever, giving them a law that shall not pass away.**
- 7 Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps;
- 8 **fire and hail, snow and fog, tempestuous wind, doing God's will;**
- 9 mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars;
- 10 **wild beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds;**

(continued on next page)

11 sovereigns of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the world;

12 young men and maidens, old and young together.

13 Let them praise the name of the Lord, whose name only is exalted, whose splendor is over earth and heaven.

14 The Lord has raised up strength for the people and praise for all faithful servants, the children of Israel, a people who are near the Lord. Hallelujah!

A Reading from

Galatians 4:4-7

Paul seeks to show the Galatians that the purpose of Christ's birth was to liberate us from the law's condemnation so that we would be fully adopted into God's family as beloved children.

4 When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. 6 And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Song

I Am Sure I Shall See

E A/C# A D Bm Bm/D E E7/D
I am sure I shall see the good-ness of the Lord in the

3 A/C# A E Bm F#m F#m/E
land of the liv - ing. Yes, I shall see the

6 Bm/D D/F# C#m C#m/B F#m/A Bm/D Bm E
good-ness of our God, hold firm, trust in the Lord. I am

A Moment of Silence

“Fifth Reading”

Sherri Helman

Taken from Bob Goff’s book: *Live in Grace: Walk in Love*
A 365 Day Journey

“The story of Christmas tells us a lot about how God rolls. When the angel came to Mary to tell her what would happen, that message did not come with a playbook of everything that would come after. When Joseph learned about his coming son, the angel did not sit him down to explain the miracle or how to navigate the situation. Joseph and Mary were asked to trust, no more and no less. The same goes for the wise men. God showed them a star as a compass, but that was about it.

In our age of on-demand instructions, it is hard to accept the vague sense of direction we get in our spiritual lives. God does not give us the play-by-play of what is to come when He tells us to go. He just reminds us to pack lightly and take a lot of love!

God gave the wise men a direction, not a bunch of instructions. They knew the prophets had said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, so they knew He had come when they saw His star hanging just above the place of His birth. They did not hear the voice of God and there were no angels telling them what to do next. They just had a star to point them toward the Savior.

Who we are after Christmas morning says a lot about who we found in the manger. If you find a God who gave up everything to come live with us and die for us so we could finally get a taste of grace, you will want to give that grace to everyone you encounter. It is as if, from a manger in Bethlehem, God leaned over the whole world and said, ‘It is your move.’ Do not be discouraged just because you do not have all the answers. God is not sending you on a business trip. He is inviting you to join Him on an adventure which will always lead you to Jesus. How will you respond to His calling as we approach this New Year?”

A Moment of Silence

The Gospel: A Reading from St. Luke

2:22–40

Luke’s narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus’ connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), 24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of

the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.” 25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27 Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 “Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; 30 for my eyes have seen your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” 33 And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed 35 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.” 36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. 39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

P: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Song

See, I Am Near

Eb Bb/D Cm Fm Eb Bb/D Fm Eb/G Ab/Eb Ab/C Db
 See, I am near, says the Lord. See, I make all things new.

5 Eb Ab Db Fm Bbm Bbm/F Eb
 O _____ O _____

The Great Silence

Prayers of Intercession

O Lord, Hear My Prayer (sung after each intercession)

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call, an - swer me.
OR The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: come and lis - ten to me.
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well-spring of life.

The image shows a musical score for two systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system includes two lines of lyrics: the first line is the main prayer, and the second line is an alternative version starting with 'OR'. The second system also includes two lines of lyrics. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in the bass.

Sharing a Sign of Christ's Peace

Offering

Instrumental

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace. C: **Amen.**

Sending Song Go Tell It On the Mountain

ELW 290

Depart in Silence



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1/02—Shelley Miller

1/04—Jennifer Cilluffo

1/05—Jacque Rossfeld

1/03—Carol Bowes

1/05—David Glenn

1/06—Michael McCarty

1/04—Maggie Russell

Worship Servants for December 31

Worship Leader/Assisting Minister—Sherri Helman

Lector—Tim Goebel

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet, Makena Dohm

Today's altar flowers are donated: *By the Congregation in thanks for all of God's blessings.*

Hospitality—Tom Fink/Deb Hissong

A/V—The Acker Family

Cookies/Coffee—Linda Hanson

Welcome Table— VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer—Tim Goebel

Altar Guild—NO COMMUNION

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Kate Holtfreter/Barbara Graf

Congregational Assembly next Sunday January 7, after the service.

We will be discussing and approving the 2024 budget

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

The January 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>.

Adult Education = Good News for All: The Adult Education class is alive and well, learning and sharing God’s Word as we study the Sunday lessons of each week. We strive to be a growing and inclusive body...please join us!! On December 31st, there will be no Sunday School/Adult Ed. **Bringing in the New Year, we will again unite on Sunday, January 7, to continue our studies.** What a great way to start a new year than with a new Holy Habit!! We look forward to seeing you there!!

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.

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

The next Third Thursday service will be a Taize 1 service on January 18th at 7:00pm. The service will be livestreamed. The BLC Fellowship Committee will be providing a meal at 5:45 p.m. Please come early and share in fellowship and stay for the service.

All ages are invited to join us for BLC's annual sledding party! Join us at Twin Lakes Park at 2:30pm on Sunday, January 21st to enjoy some outdoor time in the winter wonderland. Snacks and drinks will be provided - bring your warm clothes, a sled, and be ready to have some great outdoor fun together!

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.

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.

Happy New Year! I hope that you had a wonderful Christmas, and that you enjoyed Shepherd's Joy, and Christmas Communion Song during the Christmas Eve liturgy. The choir worked hard to prepare them and we always hope that the words and melodies we sing draw you closer to God. On January 28, the choir will sing, O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts, a traditional Scottish melody arranged by Robert Powell. We will rehearse on Thursday, January 11 and January 25 at 7:00 pm. If you'd like to join us, email me at bero.tony@gmail.com, or text/call 231-942-1162. Or simply show up at a rehearsal! Peace be with you always, Tony Bero

You are all wonderful! The Fellowship Committee would like to thank all of the volunteers for the Advent meals. You are all so wonderful. We had nice evenings of food and fellowship. And a special thank you to Phil Bossardet for his planning and cooking the meal on December 21st for Blue Christmas Service. Sign-up sheets for Lent are already on the table in the Gathering space or contact Gail Goldsmith by text or phone at 231-633-2630 or at ggoldsmith74@gmail.com

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

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:

- Sun 12/31**—Hotel Indigo (Reservations required)
- Wed, 1/03**—Park Place, Minerva's Happy Hour, 4:00
- Wed, 1/10**—Park Place, Minerva's Happy Hour, 4:00

FOR BOOK CLUB MEMBERS: The book club will discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Garmus at its **Jan 23 pizza dinner meeting at 5:30.** Don't be deceived by the title of this book. It actually should make you laugh outloud!!! Yes, some chemistry is involved, but so much more! There are still some copies of the book in the bin outside the front door. Just sign your name on the sheet by the corresponding number of your book. Please contact Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net if you want to participate and cannot come to church in order to give plenty of advance notice so that ZOOM can be set up.

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

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: We hope to schedule a gathering in January or February for anyone considering membership. Please contact Pastor Paul, membership chair, Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net or the office at 947-9880 if you are interested in joining Bethlehem.

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!

Adult Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 9:30-11:30am in the Youth Room, with a study of the Gospel of John. The group is taking a Christmas break and will continue on January 10th

The Zoom Book and Bible Study: meets on Wednesdays from 1:30-3:00pm. The next study will start on January 10th with a study the Book of Mark.

The final print issue of the Living Lutheran magazine can be picked up at the welcome table on Sunday mornings. Please note that beginning with the January issue, the Living Lutheran will be digital at www.livinglutheran.org. There is no charge for the digital.

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.

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.

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. The sheets for 2024 are ready. 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 31

10:00am—Taize Worship Service (S)

Monday, January 1

**Happy New Year
Church Office Closed**

Tuesday, January 2

Bulletin articles due today

10:45am—Staff Meeting (CR)

Wednesday, January 3

11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)

Thursday, January 4

5:30pm—ACA (FH)

Sunday, January 7

9:15am—Sunday School

9:15am—Adult Ed

10:00am—Worship Service (S)

11:15am—Congregational Assembly

12:30pm—Confirmation Winter Hike

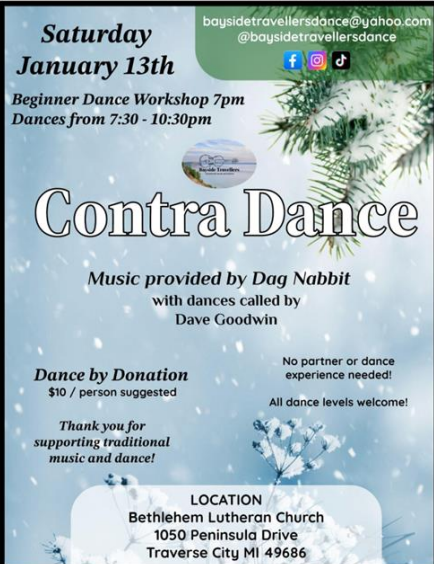


XYZ
extra years of zest

Join us for a potluck lunch,
followed by a
program or presentation.

Friday
January 12th
12pm

 Traverse City based professional organizer and home simplification expert
Ali LeLeune
partners with you to bring calm and clarity to your spaces.



**Saturday
January 13th**

baysidetravellersdance@yahoo.com
@baysidetravellersdance

Beginner Dance Workshop 7pm
Dances from 7:30 - 10:30pm

Contra Dance

Music provided by **Dag Nabbit**
with dances called by
Dave Goodwin

Dance by Donation
\$10 / person suggested

No partner or dance experience needed!
All dance levels welcome!

Thank you for supporting traditional music and dance!

LOCATION
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City MI 49686



SLEDDING AT TWIN LAKES

Sunday, January 21st
2:30pm

Snacks and drinks provided!