

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2022 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle—Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (4th verse only, below) ELW 240

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

He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining!

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be God's name forever.

C: Amen.

P: Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of new beginnings,

C: ... we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.

P: People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

C: Amen.

Gathering Song:

Open Up the Heavens

We've waited for this day. We're gathered in Your Name, calling out to You.
Your glory, like a fire, awakening desire, will burn our hearts with truth.

You're the reason we're here. You're the reason we're singing.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Your presence in this place, Your glory on our face, we're looking to the sky.
Descending like a cloud, You're standing with us now. Lord, unveil our eyes.

You're the reason we're here. You're the reason we're singing.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Show us, show us your glory. Show us, show us your power. Show us, show us your glory, Lord.

Show us, show us your glory. Show us, show us your power. Show us, show us your glory, Lord.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

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. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Message

Pr Paul

First Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

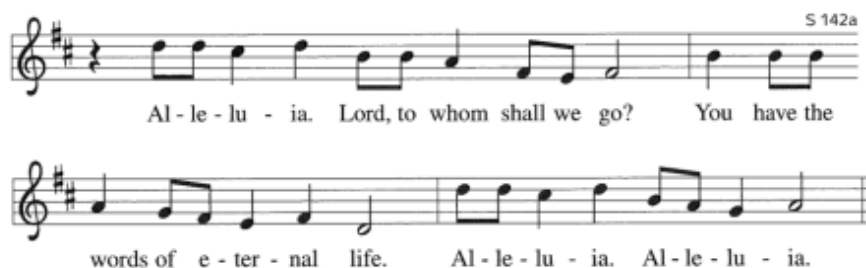
10 The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, 11 Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. 12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. 13 Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. 15 He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. 16 For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia



Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

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

18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. 19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. 20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." 22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." 24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, 25 but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

Savior of the Nations, Come

ELW 263

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.)

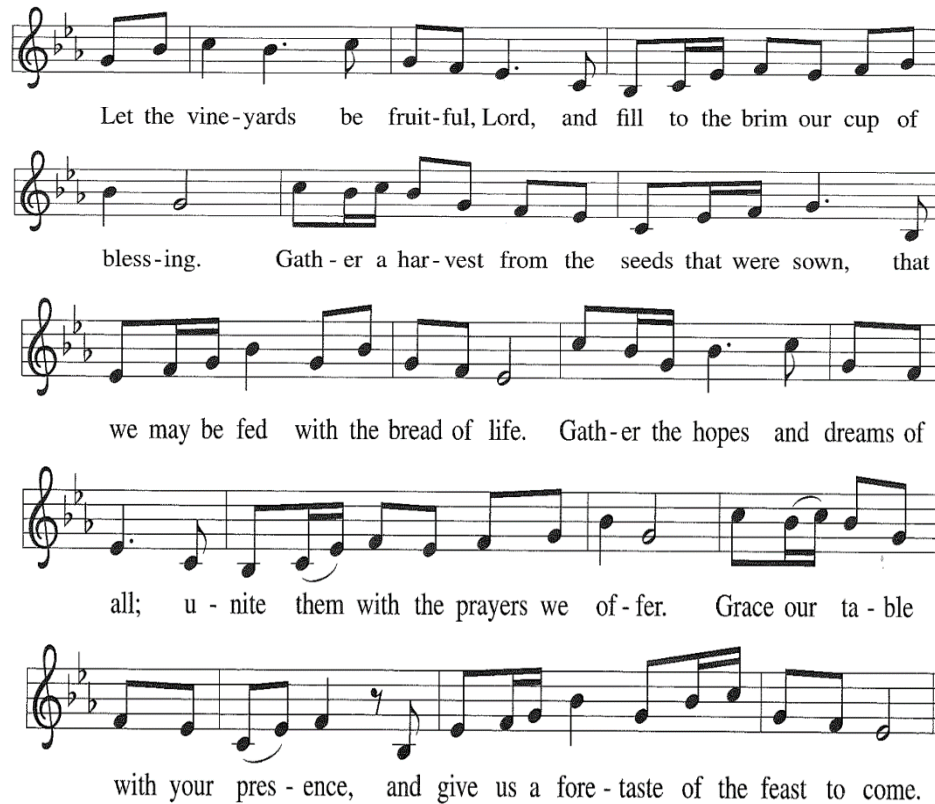
Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful



Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through 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)
Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup

ELW 257

ELW 492

Final Blessing

P: God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
✠ bless you now and forever.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

Advent Hymn

Heaven sent a child to save us, light for all to see; helpless baby, mighty Savior, holy mystery.
Unto us a son is given, born in Bethlehem; Lamb of God, the Light of nations, God in flesh became.

Watching, waiting, longing for the day when His people would glorify the Name above all names.

For the joy that lay before Him, chose our agony; Jesus bore the wrath of Calv'ry, washing sinners clean.
Our Messiah, Christ our brother, word of God in flesh, loosed the chains that held us captive, broke the bonds of death.

Watching, waiting, longing for the day when His people would glorify the Name above all names.

So we wait with expectation for His Advent here. Bride of Christ, His word proclaimed for all the world to hear.
He will come in clouds descending at the trumpet sound; In the light of Christ our Savior, ev'ry knee will bow.

Born in a manger, dying on a tree. Rising Easter morning to set his people free.
We're watching, waiting, longing for the day when all nations will glorify the Name above all names.

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Christ is near.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem
LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 18, 2022

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

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

12/20—Summer Grayson-Ogden

12/22—Inga Nyquist

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

Christmas Service Schedule:

Christmas Eve – 4:00pm Worship Service with special emphasis on children (service will be livestreamed)

Christmas Eve – 7:00pm Worship Service (service will not be livestreamed)

Christmas Eve – 9:00pm Holden Evening Prayer (service will not be livestreamed)

Christmas Day – 10:00am – Hymn Sing (service will not be livestreamed)

Christmas Caroling Sunday TODAY, December 18th, after worship! This year we'd like to bring back the (pre-Covid) tradition of singing Christmas Carols to our homebound members. We can gear up on some hot chocolate and pizza/snacks beforehand at Bethlehem, grab the yummy wrapped cookies we'll be making at the December 8th Advent Night, and head out with Christmas songbooks in-hand. If you are interested, please let Pastor Paul or Nancy Ammann know or just show up that day in the Fellowship Hall some time shortly after 11:15am!

Pledges: As Bethlehem Lutheran Church prepares for a new year, it is important to know what support we can depend on from our congregation members. By knowing what you are willing to commit financially, we are able to better plan for the future. If you have already turned in your pledge card, we sincerely thank you. If you have not, please prayerfully consider doing so in the coming weeks. The “2023 open pledging season” will last through December 2022. Please be assured that we will happily accept your pledge at any time in 2023. Jim Monroe, Financial Secretary, Phil Anderson, Bookkeeper

Refresh Update: Refresh is winding down this year. We have begun sanding and painting cabinets in our new Library/Conference Room. We hope to have the floor stripped and cleaned in the next few weeks along with some minor touch up items. We have also installed some new lighting in the gathering space. The new lights are LED and are brighter and provide a cleaner look to our gathering space. We do have some small items to finish up but most of our work in the gathering space will begin in 2023. Please let us know if you have any questions about our ongoing projects. Thanks to all who have made contributions and continue to support our work. Thanks, Chuck Ardingo

COVID: Please note that masks are required for unvaccinated persons in worship and highly encouraged for those who are vaccinated.

Today's altar flowers are donated by: *Kristen Rivard in Honor of Justin's 34th birthday.*

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.

Blue Christmas Winter Solstice Hike is next Thursday, December 22nd at 6:00pm. The trail is in Grand Traverse Commons area. Meet the group behind Spanglish Restaurant. Suggestion: wear a headlamp and, of course, proper clothing and shoes.

Third Thursday: The next Third Thursday service will be a service of Holden Evening Prayer on January 19th at 7:00pm. The service will be livestreamed.

The December issue of the STAR is now available. The January STAR will be available on Sunday, January 1st and then mailed out that week. 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>.

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

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.

Pecan Sale: The Worship and Music committee thanks you for your continued support during our annual Schermer Pecan sale. We also appreciate the seed money received from Thrivent again this year. We are sold out of the Dark Chocolate Pecans but we do have a limited supply of the Caramel Clusters, the Cinnamon Glazed, the Milk Chocolates and the Mammoth Halves. If you need more or did not get your pre-order in, please contact Barbara Oster at 231.668.7038 or beo6475@yahoo.com or call her at the BLC office (Monday, Tuesday or Thursday – 947.9880).

The newest Living Lutheran magazine and the January/February/March Christ in Our Home can be picked up at the welcome table on Sunday mornings or from the Shooting STAR box below the outside mailbox.

Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations? It has been moved inside the coat room to the right.

Coffee and Cookies: You are welcome to stay after the Sunday service for coffee, cookies and conversation. This will be done as many Sundays as there are volunteers to make the coffee and/or bring cookies, etc. There is a sign-up sheet available near the cookies. There are open dates, so please sign up!

Sunday School and Adult Education will not meet on Christmas Day, 12/25/22 and New Year's Day 1/1/23.

Name tags: Your name tags are back in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it. If you notice a visitor please encourage them to make a nametag which are kept with the welcome notebook.

Choir announcement: Hope you have enjoyed the recent offerings from the choir. New members are always wanted so come add some music into your life! The choir is excited with its new Advent and Christmas music. The choir will take a break during the beginning of Jan and resume rehearsals on Thurs Jan 26. Contact Tony Bero at bero.tony@gmail.com or 942-1162 so he can have music ready for you.

Adult Bible Study gets together on Wednesdays from 9:30am-11:30am. It is a casual discussion of the Gospel of Mark. Bring your bibles and come, share, learn and grow with us. This group will take a break until January 4th with the new time noted here.

The Zoom Bible Study on Wednesdays will take a break during Advent and Christmas and start up again in January. Look for more information of the study topic as we get closer to January.

24 hr food pantry closing for the winter: The outdoor pantry has closed for the winter but food will be stored inside for visitors to the monthly baby pantry and anyone else who stops at our church. Before April anyone in need can contact the office to arrange a pick-up from the indoor storage. If you find a deal too good to refuse from Nov to Apr the teal bin will be available in the coat room for placing your goodies.

With the outdoor Food pantry closed, WELCA would like to make canned goods available for our baby pantry people. So you may still bring what you can to put in the plastic container IN THE COAT ROOM. Thanks for caring.

BLC Book Club: The BLC book club is taking its regular break during the month of Dec. The book for Jan 24 at 5:30 is *The Sunflower* by Richard Paul Evans. It is NOT available as a book club kit so you will need to find your own book. If you are not on the email list and want to be involved send your information to cmonroe@chartermi.net for the ZOOM link.

LAUNDRY BASKET PROJECT UPDATE: The laundry basket project is ongoing. Please drop off any cleaning items in the Narthex. Families who visit the baby pantry have been most appreciative. Blessings to you all!

Monthly STAR: Thanks to all of you who have said that you will read the STAR on line or pick it up at church. Those of you who come to church, be thinking if there is any member close in your neighborhood that you could deliver their copy to them. If you have recently decided to read on line or pick-up at church, please call the office and let them know.

A big thank you to all who have turned in Oleson's receipts. We just received a check from them for \$186.58 for a grand total of \$651.20 for the year 2022. Please continue to drop off your Oleson's receipts at Bethlehem!!! Thank you so much!!!

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 1100am – 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. Please note that they are anticipating an increased need over the winter,

Bethlehem Week at Safe Harbor Coming in February - Yes, Bethlehem Lutheran will be joining with Northern Lakes Community Church (a Presbyterian congregation) to provide a week of evening meals again this winter. We will be serving from February 4 through February 10. Bethlehem will take Saturday February 4, Sunday February 5, and Tuesday February 7. "Five Loaves; Two Fish" of Leland is taking February 6- and all Mondays throughout the winter! Northern Lakes will handle the 8, 9, and 10 February.

Come January we will have sheets to sign-up to assist in a number of ways outside of the kitchen with guest interaction and providing breakfast and other items. Reach me at any time at 631-0040. You may have also seen that Safe Harbor is going to be open days on the weekends. Safe Harbor will be looking for volunteers to assist the professional staff with supervision on Saturdays and Sundays during the day. Those shifts will be from 8AM to 1PM and 1PM to 6PM. If you have never volunteered at Safe Harbor before, this could be a good place to start. I can assist you in signing up for one of these opportunities. Look forward to a regular great response from Bethlehem members. More to come. Mark your calendars! Thank you. Tom Rockne
Bethlehem Safe Harbor Coordinator M.231.631.0040

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 and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included for either Screen Announcements or Facebook Events please reach out to admin@bethlehemtc.org.

Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. The signup sheets for 2023 are now up on the poster.

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.

Bethlehem sends weekly emails directly to your inbox with important announcements and information!

If you are not getting them for any reason or if you have something you'd like to have added please reach out to admin@bethlehemtc.org

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 on the calendar.

Sunday, December 18

10:00am—Worship Service (S)

11:15am—Christmas Caroling

Tuesday, December 20

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)

9:00am—Property Work Group

6:00pm—Council Meeting

7:00pm—Lautner SG (Offsite)

Wednesday, December 21

11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)

Thursday, December 22

5:30pm—ACOA

6:00pm—Winter Solstice Hike

Saturday, December 24

4:00pm—Christmas Eve Service with emphasis on children (S)

7:00pm—Christmas Eve Service (S)

9:00pm—Christmas Eve Holden Evening Prayer Service (S)

Sunday, December 25

Have a Blessed Christmas

10:00am—Christmas Day Hymn Sing Service (S)