

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Eve  
Sunday, December 24, 2023  
5:00 pm, Lester Prairie, MN

Rev. Susan Engholm, Interim Pastor  
Jan Smith, Accompanist  
GivePlus Text 866-298-7547

Prelude "Midnight Stars Make Bright the Skies" setting by Anne Krentz Organ

Welcome

Gathering Hymn "O Come, All Ye Faithful" ELW #283

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God, the Word made flesh, our life and our salvation. **Amen.**

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin. *Silence for Reflection*

God of life, **you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are self-centered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.**

Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In + Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God. Amen.

Prayer of the Day

**Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn "Love Has Come" ELW #292

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Dana and Dean Smith

Let us pray: **Gracious God, we have waited for your arrival, and here you are. As Mary and Joseph welcomed you into their lives, help us now welcome you into ours. Let us live as those who let hope, peace, joy, and love shine in the world, just as your light now shines in us. Amen.**

Readings (printed on the back) The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Choir Anthem "O Come, O Come on Christmas Day" setting by Patrick Liebergen

Children's Message

Gospel Acclamation "O Little Town of Bethlehem" ELW #279 (verse 1)

Gospel Reading Luke 2:1-20

Sermon

Hymn of the Day "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" ELW #270

Prayers of Intercession Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Nicene Creed (ELW p. 104)

Offering "How Great Our Joy" arr. by Stan Pethel

Doxology "Go Tell It on the Mountain" ELW #290 (refrain only)

Offertory Prayer

**God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. Amen.**

Words of Institution

Communion Hymns

"Angels We Have Heard on High" ELW #289

"It Came upon the Midnight Clear" ELW #282

"Away in a Manger" ELW #277

"From Heaven Above" ELW #268 (verses 1-3)

Hymn of Light "Silent Night, Holy Night!" with "Night of Silence" by Daniel Kantor  
(The congregation joins the choir singing ELW #281, verses 2 & 3)

**<sup>2</sup> Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight;**

**glories stream from heaven afar,**

**heav'nly hosts... sing, alleluia!**

**Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior is born!**

**<sup>3</sup> Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light**

**radiant beams from your holy face,**

**with the dawn of redeeming grace,**

**Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

Blessing

God bless you and keep you, + Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever. Amen.

Sending Hymn "Joy to the World" ELW #267

Dismissal

Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim the good news.

**Thanks be to God!**

Postlude "Angels From the Realms of Glory"



Merry Christmas

A special thank you to those who shared their musical talents this evening!

Jan Smith, Accompanist

Terri Helland, Flute and Soprano Saxophone

Emily Koehler, Bethel Choir Director and the Bethel Choir members

Jill Duncan, Elaine Olson, Mitch Overbye, Nicole Weisenburger, Chimes Choir

Nicole Jaeger, McCoy Helland, Carl Overbye, Nicole Weisenburger, Bethel Brass

## Poinsettia Donation Dedications

In celebration of family given by Judy and Eric Angvall  
In memory of Carroll and Florence Tutt given by Cathy Houg and Carolyn Barr  
In memory of Virgil Lenzmeier given by Jean and Pete Hallberg  
In memory of family members given by Peggy, Jeff and Alex Wick  
In memory of Roger Olson given by Elaine Olson  
In memory of Craig Jepsen given by Sara Jepsen  
In celebration of family given by Lisa and Steve Klobe  
In celebration of family given by Terri and Tyler Helland  
In celebration of family given by Danise Klumb  
In memory of Craig Jepsen given by Emily and Jon Koehler  
Jill and Brian Duncan  
In celebration of family given by Diane and Dave Horsman  
In memory of Lloyd Weisenburger given by Shirley Weisenburger  
In memory of sister Jeanette Houg, father Wilbert Radtke, mother Lorraine Seemann,  
and step-father Clarence Seemann given by LuAnn and Bryon Weisenburger  
Angie and Ray Gohl, Don and Gertrude Sanderson given by Jan and David Gohl  
In memory of Mary Ann Hanson given by Julie and Jeff Hanson  
In memory of Tim Smith and in celebration of family given by Jan Smith  
In celebration of Grandkids given by Carol and Lloyd Wortz  
In honor of Grandpa and Grandma Groe given by your loving Grandkids  
In celebration of wedding anniversary given by Kathy and Dick Kiekhaefer

Thank you for your poinsettia/wreath donation to beautify our sanctuary!  
You may take your plant home following our worship service.

