

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Vibrantly open to the spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church seeks to serve God
and its neighbors by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.*

Sunday, December 10, 2023

Rev. Susan Engholm, Interim Pastor

Third Sunday of Advent, ACS Setting 11

Jan Smith, Accompanist

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude *All Earth is Hopeful* arr. by Curt Oliver

Gabriel's Message arr. by Todd Beaney/Curt Oliver

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. **Amen.**

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.

Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Everlasting God,

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 exploitations. 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.

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. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn "People, Look East" ELW #248

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Kyrie (ACS p. 12) **O Lord, have mercy upon us...**

Canticle of Praise (ACS p. 12) **Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!...**

"Readings for Lighting of the Advent Wreath" written by Pastor Natalia Terfa

Jan and David Gohl: Our verse for this third week of Advent is from the book of Isaiah chapter 55, verse 12: For you shall go out in joy and be led forth in peace...Let us pray: **Gracious God as we wait for your arrival into our broken world, give us eyes to see moments of joy. Joy in the mundane, in the dark, in the sadness and fear. Give us the strength to hold onto our joy until we can rejoice with the chorus of angels at the coming of the one who makes our joy complete. Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

First Reading Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**
Psalm 126 (read responsively)
Second Reading 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**
Children's Sermon
Gospel Acclamation (ACS p. 14) **Alleluia, Alleluia...**

The Gospel according to John the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel Reading John 1:6-8, 19-28 The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**
Sermon

Hymn of the Day "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" ELW #815

New Member Welcome (p. 232) *Terri, Tyler, McCoy, Adderley, and Etta Helland*

Let us welcome these friends in Christ to this community of faith: **We rejoice with you and give thanks and praise to God. Let us proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all the world.**

Nicene Creed (ACS p. 16)

Prayers of Intercession Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Peace The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Offering "My Lord, What a Morning" arr. by Martha Lynn Thompson Chime Choir
Offering Prayer

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 (ACS p. 20)

Preface for the Day (ACS p. 20-22) **Holy, holy, holy God of power and might...**

Lord's Prayer (ACS p. 24)

Communion (ACS p. 25) **O Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world...**

Communion Hymn "All Earth Is Hopeful" ELW #266

Prayer after Communion

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

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. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn "My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness" ELW #251

Dismissal Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude *Prepare the Royal Highway* arr. by Curt Oliver

WELCOME

Bethel Lutheran Church—December 10, 2023—Third Sunday of Advent

OUR MISSION STATEMENT—Vibrantly open to the Spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church seeks to serve God and its neighbors by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.

QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS? Please contact the church office at 320-395-2125 at bethellutheranlp@gmail.com. For emergency pastoral care needs, please contact the church office first, and if nobody answers, call Interim Pastor Susan Engholm at 320-293-1811. Bulletin submissions due: Wednesdays at noon. Newsletter deadline: 25th of the month. **GivePlus Text 866-298-7547**

SIMPLY GIVING offers convenience for you and much needed consistency for Bethel! Try it this summer! If you have questions contact Stacy Meyer, Financial Secretary, at finsec@lpbethel.org.

TODAY

- **We welcome the Helland family to our Bethel community!**
- **Hearing assist devices are available**: speak to an usher for assistance
- **Sunday School, Confirmation class, Adult Education**: following worship
- **Christmas Cards** for our homebound members will be available in the narthex today for folks to sign and write a note of greeting.

MONDAY (12/11)

- **Bible Study**: 9:00 am
- **Council meeting**: 6:30 pm

WEDNESDAY (12/13)

- **Quilting**: 1:00 pm-4:30 pm-Quilters will meet today, then take a break until January, meeting on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays [of each month].
- **Worship & Music meeting**: 4:00 pm
- **Choir practice**: 5:45 pm during Advent
- **Light of the World Evening Prayer**: 6:30 pm tonight and 12/20. (Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship service w/communion: 5:00 pm—NO 9:00 am worship)

SUNDAY-Advent 4 (12/17)

- **Praise Worship (w/Sunday school)**: 9:00 am
- **Multigenerational Birthday Party for Jesus**: immediately following worship

Poinsettia sign-up: Help beautify the sanctuary for Christmas by ordering a poinsettia. Sign up on the bulletin board. There is a spot to dedicate your plant in celebration, honor, or memory of loved ones. Make checks out to Bethel Lutheran Church. Give your payment to Judy Angvall. **Sign-up Deadline:** TODAY

Reminder: Please return the gifts you purchased for our Advent Project by next Sunday, December 17. Include the identifying tag along with the gift! Thanks!

Kid's Treat Bags: If you would like to give a monetary donation toward treat bags for Sunday, December 17, contact Diane Horsman. Thank you!

EVERYONE: Sunday school kids, retirees, confirmation students, young adults, parents with babies or young children, men and women, empty nesters, single folks, visitors, young and old, everyone in between, and Pastor Susan, too! ALL are invited to the Birthday Party for Jesus on December 17 immediately following worship downstairs in the fellowship hall! Come for coffee and birthday cake, games, crafts, cookie decorating, treat bags for kids, and gift wrapping for local families we are gifting this Christmas season. Don't miss out on this very special event!

A reminder to remember your Holiday Secret Pal between now and Christmas in small, fun, and meaningful ways! Enjoy this season of giving.

November food shelf collection report: Thank you! Thank you! Our congregation gave \$855 plus 21 lbs. of food to the McLeod Emergency Food Shelf. In addition, we purchased 4 lbs. bags of sugar, small salt and pepper sets (extras that are very much appreciated) and lots of personal care products (items the food shelf cannot purchase with their funds) with our \$250 Thrivent grant.

Year-end giving: The Church Endowment Fund is an excellent place to give your year-end gift, the gift that keeps on giving, expanding Bethel's outreach abilities. The yellow Endowment Fund envelope assures your gift goes to the intended fund. Please make checks out to Bethel Endowment Fund and place your envelope in the Endowment Committee's mailbox. Thank you in advance!

The choir will attend the National Lutheran Choir Tuneup on the 20th of January from 9:00 am to noon at Roseville Lutheran Church. Anyone who enjoys singing is welcome to join us! Please RSVP to Emily Koehler or Jan Smith.

Lester Prairie Lions Community Breakfast: TODAY, December 10, at the Lester Prairie City Hall. Serving: pancakes, eggs, sausage, toast, juice, and coffee from 9:00 am to noon. Free will offering. Proceeds from this event will support local Lions projects. Please come, enjoy, and support!