

## **BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist  
2 Advent | Sunday, December 7, 2025  
ACS Holy Communion Setting 11

### **WELCOME, WE'RE GLAD YOU'RE HERE!**

**If you are new to Bethel, here is some helpful information about worship services.**

*We use the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal) and the supplement All Creation Sings (purple hymnal), which contain liturgy and hymns. Liturgy pages are at the front of each hymnal, with the page numbers at the bottom and in the bulletin as (red ELW p.) or (purple ACS p.) Hymn pages are in the back two-thirds of the hymnal, with the page numbers at the top and in the bulletin as (red hymnal #) or (purple hymnal #). The songs from the Green Book are in the bulletin as (green binder #). **Hearing assistive devices are available; speak to an usher for assistance.***

### **SPIRIT ART**

**A meditative study of scripture through art.**

**Matthew 3:1-12**



## GATHERING

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

MEDITATION TIME      “Watchmen, Tell Us of the Night” arr. by Mark Hayes  
                                 “Come Thou Long Expected Jesus” arr. by John Carter

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Long-expected God, **we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God’s timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.** God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God’s own righteousness. + We are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG      “Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!” (red hymnal #246)

GREETING (purple ACS p. 12)

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 (purple ACS p. 12)

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (purple ACS p. 12)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**This morning, we light two candles. The first, a reminder that we are called to wait and stay awake as we wait. The second, a beacon of hope for those weary, despairing, and lost, hope in God’s promise of the Messiah, the promise of all being baptized with the Holy Spirit. In our longing, and in our hope, fill us with your Holy Spirit, that we might spread your word and your light for all to see, feel, and hear. Amen.**

SONG AFTER THE CANDLE LIGHTING      “Christ Be Our Light” (red hymnal #715 vs. 1 & 2)

## WORD

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10

<sup>1</sup> A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup> The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be

the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 72/1-7, 18-19 (responsive reading)

<sup>1</sup> Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

<sup>2</sup> **that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

<sup>3</sup> that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, and the hills, in righteousness.

<sup>4</sup> **Let him defend the needy among the people, rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

<sup>5</sup> May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

<sup>6</sup> **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field, like showers that water the earth.**

<sup>7</sup> In his time may the righteous flourish; and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

<sup>18</sup> **Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel; you alone do wondrous deeds!**

<sup>19</sup> And blessed be your glorious name forever, and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13

<sup>4</sup> Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors <sup>9</sup> and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name"; <sup>10</sup> and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people"; <sup>11</sup> and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; <sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope." <sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (purple ACS p. 14)

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12 The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup> In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming,  
<sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’” <sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY “On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry” (red hymnal #249)

NICENE CREED (purple ACS p. 16)

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION God of grace, **hear 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 “Pachelbel's Canon” edited and arranged by Patrick M. Liebergen  
Flute Duet by Terri Helland and Emily Koehler

OFFERING PRAYER

**Lord of abundance, we return to you a portion of what you have given to us. Turn us to set our hope not on the uncertainty of riches, but on you, who richly provides for us. Multiply what we have gathered to bless all who are suffering and in need, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING (purple ACS p. 20)

The Lord be with you. **And also 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.**

PREFACE

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (purple ACS p. 20)

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (purple ACS p. 21)

Holy God, you alone are holy,...with every breath. **We praise you, O God.**

Generations rejoice in your faithfulness...into the future. **We rejoice in you, O God.**  
We give you thanks...with us now. **We thank you, O God.** In the night...proclaim the  
mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**  
We pray for the gift of your Spirit...without end. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (purple ACS p. 24)

COMMUNION

COMMUNION SONG (purple ACS p. 25)

SONG DURING COMMUNION "All Earth is Hopeful" (red hymnal #266)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

### **SENDING**

**God blesses us and yo us in mission to the world.**

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in  
waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG "Prepare the Royal Highway" (red hymnal #244)

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Keep awake. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE "All Earth Is Hopeful" edited by Curt Oliver

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**NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:** Is 35:1-10; Ps 146:5-10; James 5:7-10; Matt 11:2-11

### **THANK YOU TO THOSE SERVING TODAY!**

**GREETER:**

**USHER:**

**LECTOR:** Bryon Weisenburger

**COFFEE:**

**TREATS:** Jan Gohl

**ALTAR:** Weisenburgers

**COMMUNION ASSISTANT:** David Gohl

### **SERVING NEXT SUNDAY, DEC. 14**

**GREETER:**

**USHER:**

**LECTOR:** Bryon Weisenburger

**COFFEE:**

**TREATS:** Mona Dobrava

**ALTAR:**

**COMMUNION ASSISTANT:** Jaxen McBride

### **CHURCH COUNCIL EXECUTIVE BOARD**

**President:** (2 yr. term) David Gohl  
952-358-0201; [david.g.m.gohl@gmail.com](mailto:david.g.m.gohl@gmail.com)

**Vice-President:** (1 yr. term) Peggy Wick  
612-499-0186; [sully72828@gmail.com](mailto:sully72828@gmail.com)

**Council Secretary:** (2 yr. term) Julie Hanson  
320-485-7870 or 612-396-8038; [j3hanson@tds.net](mailto:j3hanson@tds.net)

**Treasurer:** (1 yr. term) Jill Duncan  
320-420-6284; [treasurer@lpbethel.org](mailto:treasurer@lpbethel.org)

**Financial Secretary:** (2 yr. term) Stacy Meyer  
320-620-1040; [finsec@lpbethel.org](mailto:finsec@lpbethel.org)

### **CHURCH COUNCIL BOARD MEMBERS**

**Trustee Board:** (1 yr. term) Jeff Hanson  
320-485-7870 or 612-396-8374; [j3hanson@tds.net](mailto:j3hanson@tds.net)

**Trustee Board:** (2 yr. term) Bryon Weisenburger  
320-282-4747; [bryonw@usa.com](mailto:bryonw@usa.com)

**Finance Board:** (1 yr. term) Mitch Overbye  
952-237-3320; [moverbye8@yahoo.com](mailto:moverbye8@yahoo.com)

**Finance Board:** (2 yr. term) Sara Jepsen  
605-760-0685; [candsjepsen@gmail.com](mailto:candsjepsen@gmail.com)

**Education Board:** (1 yr. term) Pete Hallberg  
507-430-8609; [phallberg58@icloud.com](mailto:phallberg58@icloud.com)

**Education Board:** (2 yr. term) Katie Radtke  
952-215-6878; [gemini.radtke@gmail.com](mailto:gemini.radtke@gmail.com)

## **BETHEL'S 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.

## **THIS WEEK AT BETHEL**

### **Sunday, December 7 (2 Advent)**

- Worship: 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday school Christmas program practice: following worship
- Intergenerational Sunday school: following worship

### **Monday, December 8**

- Worship and Music Committee meeting: 5:00 p.m.
- Council meeting: 6:00 p.m.

### **Wednesday, December 10** (Deadline for annual reports and to order your food shelf boxes)

- Choir practice: 5:45 p.m.
- *Way of the Manger/Light of the World*-Advent worship service: 6:30 p.m.

### **Sunday, December 14 (3 Advent)**

- Worship: 9:00 a.m.
- Sunday school Christmas program practice: following worship
- Intergenerational Sunday school: following worship

**QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS?** Contact the church office at 320-395-2125 or [bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com). If you need emergency pastoral care, please call Pastor Molly Wills at 320-339-8169 or email her at [pastor@lpbethel.org](mailto:pastor@lpbethel.org).

**\*\*EMERGENCY PASTOR\*\***: **Pastor Molly will be on vacation Dec. 20-23, and Dec. 29-Jan. 2.**

**During this time, contact Pastor Cathy Jones at 763-528-1784, House of Grace, Montrose.**

**ADDRESS:** 77 Lincoln AVE N, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, (Mailing USPS: PO Box 207)

**WEBSITE:** [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org) | **FACEBOOK:** [www.facebook.com/lpbethel](http://www.facebook.com/lpbethel)

**BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Wednesday at noon

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** 25<sup>th</sup> of the month

**VANCO GIVING:** Scan the QR code or visit [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

under the "Give" section, or complete an application and submit it to the church office.

**TEXT GIVING:** To give, text dollar amount to **866-298-7547**



#### **MID NOVEMBER 2025**

\$ Contributions:	6,043.00
\$ To Meet Budget:	10,262.01
<b>\$ Difference:</b>	<b>-4,219.01</b>
Weekly Average Attendance:	56

#### **FOR THE YEAR 2025**

YTD \$ Contributions:	94,598.19
YTD \$ To Meet Budget:	112,882.11
<b>YTD \$ Difference:</b>	<b>-18,283.92</b>

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

- **ADVENT 2025:** Please look for Bethel's Facebook posts about our mid-week Advent worship services on December 10, and 17 at 6:30 p.m., as well as our Candlelight Christmas Eve service at 4:00 p.m. Please share these posts so that others know they are invited and welcome to join us. You can also share them on your community pages, such as New Life in Lester Prairie. If you need help, ask a Bethel Lutheran Teen. Additionally, the Sunday School Christmas program is on December 21, during worship.
- **WELCA ADVENT MISSION PROJECT:** Bethel WELCA has partnered with the Lester Prairie School Outreach Program to sponsor three local families this year. During Advent, a Christmas Giving Tree will have wish lists/tags hung on it to take and purchase items.
- **POINSETTIA SIGN-UP:** It is time to order poinsettias to adorn our sanctuary. A sign-up sheet with more information is on the bulletin board. Thank you so much for your participation!
- **LEFSE MAKING:** Tuesday, December 16, at 1:00 p.m. in the church basement. Contact Julie or Jeff Hanson, Judy Angvall, or Diane Horsman if you are interested!
- **NO QUILTING UNTIL THE NEW YEAR:** The quilting group will resume on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Anyone is welcome to join us on Wednesdays!
- **FOOD BAG ITEM COLLECTION:** We are collecting **granola bars and protein bars** to donate to Common Cup Ministry's Weekend Food Program for school children in need. Donations may be left in the Common Cup Corner in the narthex.
- **ANNUAL REPORT REMINDER:** Email your Annual Reports to [bethellutheranlp@gmail.com](mailto:bethellutheranlp@gmail.com) by **December 10**. (*Pastor, Council President, Education Board, Finance Board, Trustee Board, WELCA President; Committees: Cemetery, Endowment, and Worship.*) Email your Financial Annual Reports by **January 10**. (*Council Treasurer, 2026 Budget, and WELCA Treasurer.*)
- **NOMINATION COMMITTEE SEEKING CANDIDATES FOR 2026:** Open positions include **Congregation Council:** Vice-President, Treasurer, Finance Board, and Education Board (all 2-year terms). *The Finance and Education Board members partner with another board member, and only one member at a time needs to attend the monthly council meeting.*  
**Congregation Committees:** Cemetery 2-year term/*need one*; Endowment Committee 3-year terms/*need two*; Audit 3-year term/*need one*; Nominations Committee 1-year terms/*need four*; Representatives for ELCA Synod Assembly in June/*need one male and one female*. Contact Peggy Wick, Ron Foust, Cathy Houg, Emily Koehler, or Tamie Foust with questions or if you're interested in volunteering.

## **WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP**

***You can serve with family, friends, or on your own—no experience is necessary.***

***\*There are opportunities to sign up for December!\****

A **Greeter** welcomes every member and guest as they enter the church. This role involves making introductions, assisting those with full hands, providing directions, extending invitations, and sharing a warm smile. For questions, please call Ron Foust at 612-201-2351.

An **Usher** greets people at the sanctuary door, lights the candles before the service, distributes bulletins, informs parents about our nursery, collects offerings, guides individuals to communion, answers questions as they arise, and provides a welcoming and helpful presence for both members and guests! For questions, please call the office at 320-395-2125.

A **Lector** is responsible for reading scripture lessons during worship services. Occasionally, you may also be asked to assist with other parts of the service, such as reading prayers or liturgy. For questions, please call Cathy Houg at 320-282-2152.

A **Worship Assistant** helps the pastor during the service, primarily assisting with communion and baptisms. For questions, please call Pastor Molly at 320-339-8169.

**The Altar Guild** prepares the sanctuary for worship by arranging the sacraments, filling candles, and changing altar cloths. For questions, please call Judy Angvall at 612-501-3233.

***Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board in the narthex.***

**Other ways to participate:** You could provide special music, offer flowers to decorate the sanctuary, deliver a children's message, or join the Worship & Music Committee. Contact the office if you need more information.

***We welcome volunteers of all ages and look forward to your involvement! Together, we can fulfill our mission and ministry!***