

Welcome to Bethel Lutheran Church!
Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor / Jan Smith, Accompanist
Christmas Eve / Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Spirit Art

A meditative study of scripture through art.

John 1:1-14



Gathering

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

MEDITATION TIME “Come Ye Lofty, Come Ye Lowly” and “Sheep May Safely Graze”
both arr. by Martha Lynn Thompson Chime Choir and Flute

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG “O Come, All Ye Faithful” (red hymnal #283)

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty Savior, Abiding Comforter. **Amen.** Trusting in God’s steadfast love and faithfulness, let us confess our sin. Reconciling God, **we yearn for your presence to transform our grief, pain, and despair. We confess that we have not always prepared room in our hearts for your love; we have not always recognized your presence among us; and we have not always embraced your message of peace. We cry out, weary with the burden of violence, oppression, division, and fear. We confess our failure to make room for**

those seeking refuge; our participation in causing others pain; our reluctance to embody your good news. Overcome our failures and reluctance, be born in us today, and teach us to sing the joyful song of your salvation. Amen. God's grace upon grace flows over us all and + Christ's presence redeems the whole creation. Through God's abundant mercy, love, and salvation our sins are forgiven. Let the earth rejoice and be glad! **Amen.**

CHOIR ANTHEM "Pacem" (Peace) arr. by Patrick M. Liebergen

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY & ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

This evening, we light five candles. The first, a reminder that we are called to wait and stay awake as we wait. The second, a beacon of hope in God's promise of the Messiah baptizing all with the Holy Spirit. The third, a challenge to us to live as John the Baptist and Jesus lived. The fourth, a testament to our foundation built upon the Holy Spirit. The fifth, and final candle, a light of joy in the good news. The good news that through your incarnation, through your life, your sacrifice, and your ascension, you have made us all your children, who were born, not of blood, or the will of flesh or of the will of man, but of God! The good news that through your Holy Spirit, we have inherited your kingdom. So, tonight, we rejoice in you and praise your holy name as one body in Christ, as your beloved children. Amen.

SONG AFTER ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING "Christ Be Our Light" (red hymnal #715 v. 1-5)

Word

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

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. ³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice" (red hymnal #288)

SECOND READING: Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, ¹² training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled,

upright, and godly, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION "O Little Town of Bethlehem", v. 1-2

¹ O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light. The hopes and fear of all the years are met in thee tonight.

² For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all the earth!

GOSPEL: John 1:1-14 The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. ⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY "Night Long-Awaited: Noche anunciada" (purple hymnal #912)

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the

prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**
PEACE The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING “O Holy Night” arr. by Stan Pethel

Bethel Brass

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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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

SONGS DURING COMMUNION

“Away in a Manger” (red hymnal #277)

“Joy to the World” (red hymnal #267)

“Hark the Herald Angels Sing” (red hymnal #270)

“From Heaven Above” (red hymnal #264, v. 1-3)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

DISTRIBUTION OF LIGHT

*After dimming the lights, the ushers will light the candle at one end of each pew. Share the light by allowing the person next to you to tip their candle toward your lit candle. **(Do NOT tip the lit candle!)** Children can “light” their battery-operated candles. After the hymn of light, please extinguish your candle.*

HYMN OF LIGHT

“Silent Night, Holy Night!” with “Night of Silence” by Daniel Kantor

The congregation joins the choir singing verses 2 & 3 of “Silent Night, Holy Night!”

² 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.

³ 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.

Sending

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

BLESSING

May the triune God, glorious Mystery, holy Incarnate One, abiding Comforter, + bless you with endless grace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG “Angels We Have Heard on High” (red hymnal #289)

DISMISSAL Glory to God in the highest! **And peace to God’s people on earth!**
Go in joy, embody God’s redeeming grace. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE “Angels From the Realms of Glory” arr. by Anna Laura Page

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SUNDAY’S READINGS: Is 63:7-9; Ps 148; 1 Peter 4:12-19; Matt 2:13-23

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.

QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS? Contact the church office at 320-395-2125 or 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.

****EMERGENCY PASTOR** Pastor Molly will be on vacation 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 | **FACEBOOK:** www.facebook.com/lpbethel

BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Wednesday at noon

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: 25th of the month

VANCO GIVING: Scan the QR code or visit 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 DECEMBER 2025

\$ Contributions: 4,335.19
\$ To Meet Budget: 10,262.01
\$ Difference: -5,926.82
Weekly Average Attendance: 60

FOR THE YEAR 2025

YTD \$ Contributions: 101,688.38
YTD \$ To Meet Budget: 123,144.12
YTD \$ Difference: -21,455.74

Thank you to those serving tonight!

ALTAR GUILD: Judy Angvall

CANDLE LIGHTER: Lynken McBride

COMMUNION ASSISTANT: Adderley Helland

USHER: Nicole Kleve & Bryon Weisenburger

LECTOR: Adderley Helland

TREATS: Sara Jepsen & Emily Koehler

Serving on Sunday, December 28

GREETER: Jill & Brian Duncan

ALTAR GUILD: Judy Angvall

CANDLE LIGHTER:

COMMUNION ASSISTANT:

USHER: Ron Foust

LECTOR: Bryon Weisenburger

COFFEE: Ron Foust

Chime Choir

Jill Duncan, Sara Jepsen, Nicole Kleve, Stacy Meyer,
Elaine Olson, Mitch Overbye, Jan Smith

Flute

Terri Nelland

Bethel Brass

Adderley Nelland, McCoy Nelland, Nicole Kleve



Poinsettia Dedications

In celebration of our grandchildren, Liam and Linnea, by Judy and Eric Angvall

In celebration of our grandchildren, by Diane and Dave Horsman

*In memory of Lloyd, Willy, Clarence, Lorraine, and Jeanette,
by LuAnn and Bryon Weisenburger*

In celebration of Kim and Tom Moorse, by Cathy Houg

In celebration of family, by Lisa Klobe

In memory of family, by Peggy and Jeff Wick

In memory of family, by Julie and Jeff Hanson

In memory of Jean's father, Virgil Lenzmeier, by Jean and Pete Hallberg

In memory of Tim, by Jan Smith

In memory of Lloyd, by Shirley Weisenburger

In honor of Pastor Molly Wills, by Bethel Women of the E L C A

In giving thanks for our daughters and their families, by Jill and Brian Duncan

In memory of family, by Tamie and Ron Foust

Jean and Jerry Christenson

