



Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church

God's Family Serving Christ with Love



1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, November 28, 2021

W8267 Hwy 33 East, Portage, Wisconsin 53901

Pastor Jaime Benson pastor.jaime.benson@gmail.com

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Church Office Hours: Mon-Wed 9am-3pm, Thurs & Fri 9am-12pm

Holy Communion is celebrated each week; all people of God are welcome. Please fill out a Communion Registration card found in the pew racks, and put it in the offering bowl as you leave the sanctuary. **Please either pick up your prepackaged communion elements on your way into the sanctuary or you may come up to the altar to receive it.** It contains a wafer, which you open first by lifting the clear cellophane on top and then the grape juice. If you would like a **gluten free wafer**, please let the usher know before the start of worship.

Children's Worship Activity Bags are available in the Narthex with activities for your children, please help yourself. You can place the used activity bags in the basket located beneath the activity bag tree as you leave. We have a **Cry Room** for your comfort where you can hear and see the service. Due to Covid-19 we are asking that you **reserve the Cry Room** and it will only be for one family at a time.

Hearing assistance devices are available on the counter in the Narthex for your convenience. Please ask the greeter or usher for help.

Large print copies of the bulletin are available in the Narthex.

Enter to Praise

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

#257, v. 1 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

P: At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming. O Emmanuel,

Wake us up to your coming.

P: We gather together to expect the unexpected and imagine the unimaginable. O Emmanuel,

Wake us up to your coming.

P: We wait for the day when God will recycle tanks into tractors and transform minefields into soccer fields. O Emmanuel,

Wake us up to your coming.

P: We stay awake by telling stories that offer a glimmer of a future and agitate dormant hope within us. O Emmanuel,

Wake us up to your coming.

P: Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of this candle, whose flame brings warmth to winter and fills this place with the glow of hope.

Amen.

Light the first candle.

#257, v. 3 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Please rise in body and/or spirit.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God for whom we wait,

in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✚ your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

#242, v. 1, 2, “Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn”

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

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

You may be seated for the readings

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name—“The LORD is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.” The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 25:1-10

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. (Ps. 25:1)

¹To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

³Let none who look to you be put to shame; rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

⁶**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

⁸**You are gracious and upright, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

⁹You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

¹⁰**All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Upon Timothy’s report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.

⁹How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in

love for you. ¹³And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise in body and/or spirit for the Gospel



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

The holy gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror; but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.” The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

You may be seated

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

Please rise in body and/or spirit

SERMON HYMN

#256, v. 1, “Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

THE 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 power of 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

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Pray aloud as the spirit guides you*

P: In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

A brief silence.

God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind especially, for all of those on our prayer list. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters, for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

PEACE

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

Due to Covid-19, we will not be collecting offerings as usual. You may put your offering in the bowl upon leaving the sanctuary. We share our offerings for the mission of Christ through Bethlehem. Thank you for your participation in this ministry to the Glory of God!

OFFERING PRAYER

God of our waiting and watching, we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives to the service of all your people. Prepare the way before us as we meet you in this simple meal, through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. **Amen.**

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

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE 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.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to Christ's banquet. Feast on God's gift of grace.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion is celebrated with individual elements in your pew or you may come up to the altar to receive the prepackaged elements. You may sit after receiving Communion

You may be seated

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Most High God, you have come among us at this table. By the Spirit's power, form us to be bearers of your word, sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all, through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Need worship volunteers for all of December
- You can start to bring in your donated baskets for the Gifts of Bethlehem auction. Deadline is Friday, Dec. 3rd

- Looking for people to be on the Church Council. See the bulletin and newsletters for more info

Please rise in body and/or spirit

BLESSING

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

#244, “Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers”

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**

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Depart to Share

Today’s Worship Team

Wednesday 5:30 pm, 11/24

Music: Carla

Usher: Geoff Gilbert

Next Week’s Worship Team

Wednesday 5:30pm, 12/1

Music:

Usher: Geoff Gilbert

Sunday Morning Service 9am, 11/28

Music: Carla

Reader: Mark Teslik

Usher: _____

Video Production: Justice Oh

Coffee Hour: Cloe Rehdantz

Altar Flowers: Joan Von Haden in honor of Granddaughters Emma & Ella

Sunday Morning Service 9am, 12/5

Music:

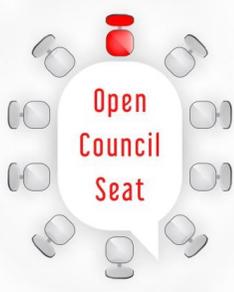
Reader: _____

Usher: _____

Video Production: Brady & Lori Cox

Coffee Hour: _____

Open Church Council Seats in 2022



Looking for members interested in being on the church council. It is a 3 year term and you must be a voting member. Term would start at the end of the 2022 annual meeting. Let Pr. Jaime, a current council member or the office know if you’d like to put your name on the ballot.



Collecting food for Portage Food Pantry until Nov. 28th.

Offering Envelopes for 2022

If you receive envelopes now, but would rather just have a number, please contact the office by Nov. 29th

Family Time with Pr. Jaime

Pr. Jaime will be spending special time with our youth and their families on these days:

- December 1st – Confirmation Q&A with the Pr. Potluck & Acolyte training
- December 5th – Sunday School families

Please watch your emails for more information.

Please Pray For

Church Prayer List:

Lucile Gauger
Jeremy Schilling
Bonnie Bender
Lynn Grueneberg
Noretta Moran

*Would you like someone added to the prayer list?
Contact the church staff.*

For all positions in December!

Our Extended Family Prayer Concerns:

Norma Jenkins (Sue Conner's mother)
Quintin and Oliver Kuhl (Grandson & great grandson of Kathy & Bud Lawrence)
Brian Loveland (friend of Lucille Gauger)
Fred Richardson
Nelson Richardson
Jody Crosby
John and Judy Skille (Tania Anderson's parents)
Brad Kohnke
Deb Moe & family (Sandra Sween's cousin)
Randy VonRuden
Betty Hayes (Chad Hayes' grandma)
Steve Rohrbacher (Marie & Ed's son)
Bill (Ann Ciske's father-in-law)
Randy
Tom Teslik (Mark Teslik's son)
Rick Voight (Halley Harms' father)
Shannon Henderson
Patty McGee
Natalie Pierce

This Week:
Sunday, November 28 – Advent Starts
9 am Worship
10 am Sunday School
Monday, November 29
10:30 Tai Chi
1:00 pm Card Club
Tuesday, November 30
9 am Quilters
Wednesday, December 1
Live wreath making
10:30 am Tai Chi
5:30 pm Worship
6:30 pm Confirmation Class

New Member Installation: We'll welcome new members Sunday, Dec. 5th

Holiday Decorating Schedule
The decorating committee is in need of a lot of help to decorate for Christmas. The Marketplace will be set up again this year in the narthex as well as the live tree in the sanctuary. You can see Margaret Molden or Ginny Paulson for details and times. Please come when you can. Here is the schedule:

- Wed. 12/1 – making living wreath
- Fri. 12/3 - Marketplace setup
- Sat. 12/4 - Christmas decorating and tree installation
- Tues. 12/14 – take down of the Market

GIFTS OF BETHLEHEM AUCTION

We are looking for donations for the basket auction. The deadline to drop off is Fri. Dec. 3rd. The auction will start Dec. 5th