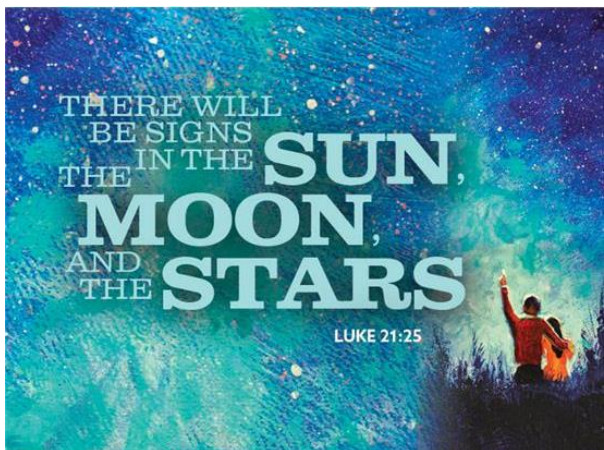




Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church

God's Family Working Together To Welcome All



First Sunday of Advent

December 1st, 2024

W8267 Hwy 33 East
Portage, WI 53901

Pastor Jaime Benson
Office: 608-742-8502

www.bethlehemLCportage.org

Church Office Hours:

Mon-Wed 9 am to 3 pm

Thurs-Fri 9 am to 12 pm

or by appointment

Hearing assistance devices are in the Narthex. Please ask the usher if you have any questions.

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

Daily Devotionals are available in the Narthex. These are in regular or large print.

Holy Communion is celebrated each week; all people of God are welcome. We offer it prepacked or continuous. The prefilled communion cup is in a basket just before you enter the sanctuary. Lift the clear cellophane on top to get the wafer and then you have the grape juice. If you would like a **gluten free wafer**, please let the usher know before the start of worship. We also offer continuous communion for those that wish to come up.

Communion Card - Please fill out a card found in the pew racks and give it to the usher when you come up for communion. You may also scan this QR

code to enter your record of communion or open this link:

<https://forms.office.com/r/MM0URweYEh?origin=lprLink>



Children's Worship Activity Bags are available in the Narthex with activities for your children. 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.

Ways to stay connected. Follow us on



Enter to praise

We invite those who are able to stand each time this symbol ❖ appears in the bulletin.

❖ ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

#257 v 1 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Blessed are you, God of Jacob, for you promise to transform weapons of war into implements of planting and harvest and to teach us your way of peace; you promise that our night of sin is far gone and that your day of salvation is dawning. As we light the first candle on this wreath, wake us from our sleep, wrap us in your light, empower us to live honorably, and guide us along your path of peace. O house of Jacob, come, **let us walk in the light of the Lord. Amen.**

❖ CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might,

we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

God in our midst,

we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

Amen.

❖ GATHERING HYMN

#239 v 1,4 “Hark, the Glad Sound!”

❖ 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.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

¹⁴ The 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. ¹⁵ In 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. ¹⁶ In 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

¹ To 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.**

³ Let 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.**

⁵ Lead 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.**

⁷ Remember 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.**

⁹ You 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

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. ¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³ And 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.**

❖

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 READING: Luke 21:25-36

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

[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. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because

your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven 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, ³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Be 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.**

CHILDREN’S SERMON

SERMON

❖ HYMN OF THE DAY

#715 v 1,2,5 “Christ, Be Our Light”

❖ 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.

❖ MISSION STATEMENT

Bethlehem Lutheran Church is a growing community where we love inclusively, welcome, serve, and thrive through our relationship with God.

❖ THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE *Pray aloud as the Spirit guides you.*

P: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God’s presence.

A brief silence.

God of righteousness, your people live in hopeful expectation of your coming. Fill your church with renewed passion for our shared mission, and deepen our relationships with other Christians and other faith traditions in our local community and across the world. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, all creation shows that your presence is near. Help us sense your goodness and love in the sun and moon, in sprouting leaves and bare branches, in the roaring sea and quiet breeze. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of the nations, your reign extends over all principalities and powers. Give leaders and all in authority hearts for justice and peace. Encourage efforts to enact policies that benefit the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of change, you accompany us through life's transitions. Be near to all who are changing jobs, moving, welcoming children, or facing the loss of loved ones. Sustain those who are ill or suffering especially those on our prayer list and in our hearts. In times of change, remind us of your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of community, your Spirit holds us together. Sustain our care for one another. Inspire us to seek new ways to live together and to embrace the diversity of thought and identity in our communities. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of memory, we give you thanks for faithful ones who have died. Tend to our grief and sorrow with renewed trust in your promise of abundant and eternal life. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

P: Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

❖ PEACE

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

OFFERING

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

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **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.**

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn...

❖ 

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,



heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

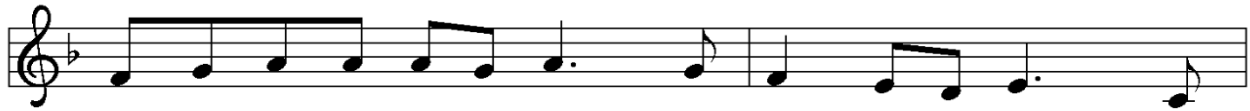
❖ WORDS OF INSTITUTION

❖ 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.

❖ INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

You may come forward to receive communion at this time. If you prefer to celebrate communion in your pew with prepackaged elements, please let the usher know.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for

sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The deadline to sign up for Gifts of Bethlehem is December 2nd.
- Poinsettia order forms are on the narthex table. These are due with payment by Dec. 9th.
- Kwik Trip Car Wash Cards are on sale now! There is a form in the narthex to write your name and the number of cards you'd like to order. Now thru Dec. 8th we're doing this, and the cards will be available by Dec. 17th. Please make checks payable to the church, write "car wash" in the memo line and leave the money in the message box on the table. Proceeds will get saved for our air handlers.

MILESTONES

❖ BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

❖ SENDING HYMN

#259 v 1,4 "Fling Wide the Door"

❖ DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **Thanks be to God.**

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Wednesday Worship Team, 5:30 pm 11/27

Music: Carla

Acolyte: Kayson Bulgrin

Usher: Geoff Gilbert

Altar Guild & Com. Assistant: Geoff Gilbert

Sunday Worship Team, 9:00 am 12/1

Music: Carla

Reader & Com. Assistant: Del Molden

Usher: Dean Traut

Acolyte: Sofia Bell

Altar Guild & Com. Assistant: Kerry Melby

Video Production: Lori & Brady Cox

**No Quilting or Bible Study
the month of December!**

This Week at BLC

Monday, December 2nd

10:30 am Tai Chi

1:00 pm Euchre Card Club

5:00 pm Finance Committee meeting

Wednesday, December 4th

10:30 am Tai Chi

5:30 pm Worship

6:30 pm Confirmation

Friday, December 6th

9:00 am Christmas Tree set-up

10:30 am Tai Chi

Saturday, December 7th

9:00 am Christmas Tree decorating

9:00 am Sundry School program practice

Sunday, December 8th

9:00 am Gifts of Bethlehem

10:00 am Fellowship hour

Wednesday Worship Team, 5:30 pm 12/4

Music: Carla
Acolyte: Leah Haroldson
Usher: Geoff Gilbert
Altar Guild & Com. Assistant: Sharon Horvath

Sunday Worship Team, 9:30 am 12/8

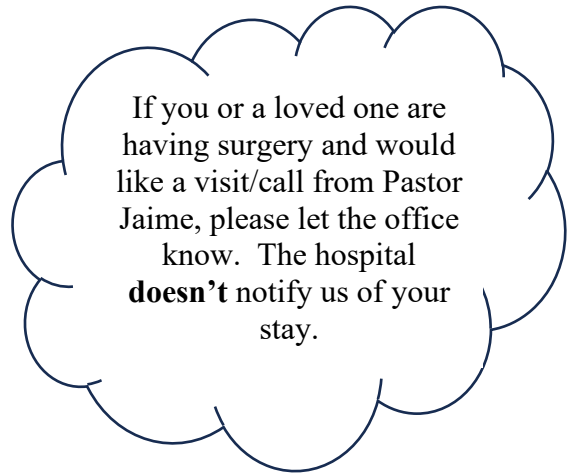
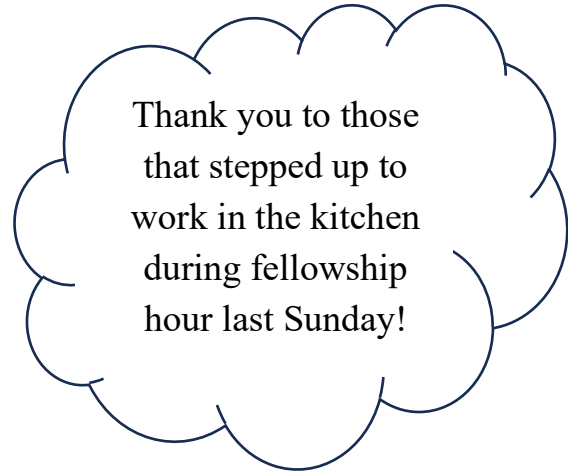
Music: Carla
Usher: Robin Kvalo
Video Production: Ben Rudolph
Coffee Hour: Sunday School

Church Prayer List, please pray for:

Bonnie Bender, Jim Crawford, Shelvy Ritter,
Mark Teslik, Donn Trnrud

Our Extended Family Prayer List:

Tony Dixon (nephew of Brian Franson & Bonnie Dixon)
Yvonne Marshall (daughter of Jean Elliott)
Freda Manzullo (sister of Mark Teslik)
Nan Rebholz (mother of Robin Kvalo)
Steve Rohrbacher (son of Ed & Marie Rohrbacher)
Tatiana Sampson (niece of Jean Elliott)
Dan Swift (son of Joan Swift)
Tom Teslik (son of Mark Teslik)



New Member Class

Interested in joining the Bethlehem family? Pastor Jaime is holding a new member class on December 15th at 10:30 am. Please call the office (608-742-8502) if you'd like to attend.



Kwik Trip Car Wash Cards

Car Wash Cards are on sale now to help raise funds for our air handlers. These are \$35 for 5 washes (a \$50 value) and the church gets \$15 per card. Order form is in the narthex – great Christmas gift!