

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle - Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (3rd verse only, below) ELW 240
Light three candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway for the King of glory.

Confession and Forgiveness

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

C: **Amen.**

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: God of mercy,

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

P: God of might,

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

P: God in our midst,

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

P: 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.

C: **Amen.**

Gathering Song:

Open Up the Heavens

McDonald, Ingram & Andrews

We've waited for this day. We're gathered in Your Name, calling out to You.
Your glory, like a fire, awakening desire, will burn our hearts with truth.

You're the reason we're here. You're the reason we're singing.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Your presence in this place, Your glory on our face, we're looking to the sky.
Descending like a cloud, You're standing with us now. Lord, unveil our eyes.

You're the reason we're here. You're the reason we're singing.

(continued on next page)

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Show us, show us your glory. Show us, show us your power. Show us, show us your glory, Lord.
Show us, show us your glory. Show us, show us your power. Show us, show us your glory, Lord.

Open up the heavens. We want to see You. Open up the floodgates, a mighty river, flowing from Your heart, filling every part of our praise.

Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all!

C: And also with you!

Kyrie

A: In peace, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord. **C: Lord, have mercy.**

A: For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

A: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord. **C: Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray together,

C: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Children's Message

Peggy Burns S.A.M.

First Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-20

The prophet Zephaniah's message is mostly one of judgment for sin. This reading, however, which comes from the conclusion of the book, prophesies joy for Judah and Jerusalem. Judgment has led to repentance, and God's salvation is at hand.

14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! 15 The Lord has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. 16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. 17 The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing 18 as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. 19 I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. 20 At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.

L: The Word of the Lord **C: Thanks be to God**

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia

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 3:7-18

John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

P: A reading from... **C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin 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. 9 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." 10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" 11 In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." 12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13 He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." 14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." 15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 16 John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." 18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Peggy Burns S.A.M.

Song of the Day:

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn

ELW #242

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 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.

Prayers of the Church / Sign of the Peace *(Let us give one another a sign of peace according to your comfort level.)*

Offering

Offering Song:

Zeke Clemons

Offertory:

Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring

ELW #691

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray together.

C: 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.

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.

Final Blessing

P: 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.

C: Amen.

Sending Song:

He Came Down

ELW #253

Dismissal

A: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem December 8, 2024
LUTHERAN CHURCH

1050 Peninsula Drive
Traverse City, MI 49686
(231) 947-9880
www.bethlehemtc.org

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/15—Fran White

12/15—Sammy Steffunick

12/17—Marilyn Johns

12/20—Summer Grayson-Ogden

12/22—Inga Nyquist

Are you grieving something from a death or something else? It could be any kind of loss, and it hurts. We have a place for you here at Bethlehem on the 1st Monday of the month from 3:30 to 4:30 and the 3rd Monday of the month from 5:30 to 6:30 in the Youth Room. The next December date will be December 16th. If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231 392-6913.

Worship Servants for December 15

Worship Leader: Peggy Burns

Assisting Minister—Karen Feahr

Lector—Dave Pepler

Musicians: David Husser, Zeke Clemons, Phil & Denice Bossardet

Today's altar flowers are donated: By the Congregation in Thanks for all of God's blessings

Hospitality—Phil Anderson

A/V—Barbara Oster / Jim Hinds

Cookies/Coffee— VOLUNTEER / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— VOLUNTEER

Bell Ringer— Tim Goebel

Front Door Monitors—Tina Dohm

Altar Guild—No Communion

Tech Support—Julia Acker

Counters—Barb Graf / VOLUNTEER

Advent and Christmas Services

December 19: 7:00pm Blue Christmas Service (will be Live-streamed)

December 24: 4:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with emphasis on Children (will be Live-streamed)

December 24: 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Advent Meals BLC will be having meals prior to Advent Worship services.

December 19th will be Blue Christmas and Phil Bossardet will be making a wonderful Christmas dinner with Red wine braised beef, Roasted acorn squash, Brussel sprout-parsnip medley, Cheddar mashed potatoes, Rich gravy, Apple-cranberry compote, Green salad, Dinner breads including some gluten free bread/rolls, Desserts will be Connie Christopherson's pies, also apple crisp.

The Fellowship Committee could use more help in providing the meals. If you would like to help please talk to Gail Goldsmith or call her at 231-633-2630.

Time to join in singing Christmas Carols: This is the opportunity to bring BLC to some of our members who cannot easily come to BLC. We will go out in small groups to sing Christmas carols to those who have not been able to join us at church. Even if you feel you cannot sing, others have described this as one of the most meaningful activities of their Christmas season. Please set aside time after the service on Sunday December 22. We will plan to have a light meal before we venture out to share out carols.

BLC ANNUAL BUDGET MEETING SCHEDULED FOR JAN 5 AFTER THE SERVICE: Please attend if you can. It is critical for you to be involved in knowing the financial status of our congregation and in voting to approve the budget for 2025. Copies will be available in church as soon as the proposed budget is approved by church council at its meeting on 12/17. If the service has to be cancelled due to bad weather on Jan 5, the meeting will be postponed to the following Sunday.

Project Feed the Kids is looking for some help this season to help families with kids to be able to have a Christmas. The need is great, they already have had 700+ families ask for help. That is almost double from last year. If you can or are able to help, please text with "I want to help" 231-409-9227. You can drop unwrapped toys at J&S Hamburg on S Airport off Garfield.

Counters are needed! Jim Monroe is looking for offering counters for the calendar year of 2025. Counters will be assigned for a month at a time. Depending on the number of volunteers, it could only be a couple of times per year. To volunteer, please contact Jim at 231-941-0788 or by email at xcski@chartermi.net

Dear Members of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, It's that time of year when the Finance Committee and the Church Council is preparing a budget for the next year. To help forecast income for 2025, please return your 2025 pledge card, if you have not already done so. We are all grateful to have such abundant blessings with our location and our faithful members. It's important to remain dedicated to our Christian faith and do our best to follow through on our commitments. With love & kindness, if you have not fulfilled your pledge 2024, we ask also that you do so before the end of the year. Thank you for prayerfully considering this appeal. We appreciate your support and are grateful for all you do to make Bethlehem Lutheran Church a thriving community of believers. Jim Monroe BLC Financial Secretary; Phil Anderson BLC Bookkeeper

VISIONING RETREAT SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 11: Our Visioning work is well underway and we are experiencing a well-deserved pause during this Advent and Christmas Season. Our mission statement has been created and we are now going to be doing some “heavy lifting” in creating the Vision Statement. The January retreat is open to those who would like to join the work of the Visioning Team and Pastor Roger Hardy as we move into this next phase. **The retreat will be from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 11, at Liv Arbors, 2955 Leggett Drive (off of Hartman Road).** There is no cost and lunch and snacks will be provided. If you plan to attend, please sign up on the sheet posted in the church gathering space by Sunday, January 5. For those attending, we ask that you plan to stay for the entire retreat in order to complete the tasks planned for that day! Many Thanks! Blessings as You Continue your Preparations for the Christ Child!

Wednesday Bible Studies:

The Adult Bible Study meets from 9:30am—11:30am with the topic of the Book of 1 Corinthians

The Zoom Bible Study meets from 1:30pm—3:00pm -- Group will be taking a Christmas break and will return aft New Year's

Christ In Our Home: Did you know that there is a large print version of Christ in Our Home? We are considering ordering this version along with our regular size but need to know if there is a need here. If you or someone that you know would benefit from using large print, please call the church office at 231-947-9880 or email Barbara at admin@bethlehemtc.org

BOOK CLUB NEWS: The book club will NOT be meeting in December to discuss a book. The next meeting will be Wed, Jan 15 at 5:30. We will be reading “*The River We Remember*” by William Kent Krueger. The book club has previously enjoyed books by this author. Please join us in the Fellowship Hall if you like to discuss good books. Any questions can be directed to Cindy Monroe at cmonroe@chartermi.net.

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX: The photo sheet of new members is now available as a loose insert for your directory if you took the time to have your photo taken. Please check your BLC mailbox and carry the sheet safely home to place inside your directory. Be sure to check the reverse side for more names.

Coffee and Cookies on Sunday: Remember that treats and a drink on Sunday are appreciated by all. The sign-up sheet has many BLANK spaces so please take a moment to sign up to bring cookies or some other tasty treat on the Sunday that works best for you. Or sign up to prepare the coffee to give our loyal volunteer Mary Ann Tanis a day off.

CHAIR YOGA: Chair Yoga continues every Monday at 3:00 in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$5.00 per person. It is slow paced stretches that helps with balance, flexibility and relaxation. Come and try it out.

Christian Care Giving Visitation 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage on another and build up each other, as you are doing. As a Ministry we are called to take care of each other. Our goal is to provide care for all of those in need and to make sure no one feels alone and not cared for by our congregation. You are loved and wanted by all of your church family. If we can help you or you know of anyone who has a need, please let me know. Peggy Burns cobaltblues2003@yahoo.com or 231 392 6913 If you would like to be a caregiver please let me know.

Next Month at Safe Harbor! As the holidays move closer, I want to thank you all again for the gifts of time and food you are planning for our Safe Harbor effort in the New Year. We'll be serving Safe Harbor guests on Saturday, 25 January; Sunday, 26 January; Tuesday 28 January. Kitchen Teams will be led by Cindy Monroe, B.J. Christensen, and Tina Dohm and the crews they have recruited. Zeke will be entertaining one night and we are seeking more talent-guitar, keyboard, other... We will welcome congregational "treat" support from you with sign-ups right after Christmas. This is needed community outreach. This is heeding Christ's command to serve our neighbors. All volunteers have been pleased with their experiences. Please contact me with any questions. Tom Rockne
Bethlehem Safe Harbor Coordinator M.231.631.0040

Food pantry news: Winter has definitely come in with a bang. In order to keep our food pantry open in these freezing temperatures, we have to shift the types of items we keep it stocked with. Foods in cans and glass jars can't withstand these temperatures. Therefore, consider picking up dry good, especially things like powdered milk, cereal, and pasta. We can also stock hand and foot warmers and some personal care items. Thank you in advance for your generous and continued support of our little pantry. Suzanne and Kathie

You are Invited to Sunday Morning Adult Education: it is that time again, time to power up our learning and sharing of Scripture. Adult Education has resumed as of this morning. We will meet in the Youth Room from 9:15 to 9:45 each Sunday to discuss the lessons for the day. This is a relaxed venue, with inquisitive sharing, practical application, and an opportunity to get better acquainted with your brothers and sisters in Christ! We hope you will join... All Are Welcome!!!!

Spotlight on Zeke: So many of us enjoy Zeke's talents with religious music, but did you know that he plays other kinds of music at various locations in the Traverse City area? Here is a list of his engagements in the next month that are close to TC:

Wed 12/18—The Pub, Traverse City 7:00pm **Fri 12/20**—Hotel Indigo, Traverse City 6:00pm

GET A TREAT AND TAKE A SEAT!!! Remember that on the final Sunday of month, we are moving our coffee hour into the Fellowship Hall. This allows each person to sit for a moment and perhaps visit with someone new. So, on that Sunday each month be sure to take a turn into the Fellowship Hall. We will have a reminder sign on the counter in the Gathering Space to help you remember. Thank you!

Volunteers for Watching the Front Door During Worship: The Safety and Security Committee has the new sign up sheets available. We need volunteers who can be available to stay in the Gathering Space to lock the doors and let in late comers for Sundays. We appreciate all of the volunteers. If you have any questions, the committee members are Gail Goldsmith, Maureen Bauer, Jana Rockne and Jan Stretlien

PROTECT OUR CARPET: spills always happen, but we now have a consistent way to deal with them. If you cause one or see one, please grab the spot cleaner in the squirt container over by the triple sinks in the kitchen. Just follow the directions on the bottle and we should be able to keep our carpet in good condition. Thank you!!

Building and Office Hours are: 9:00am – 2:30pm, Monday – Thursday. Office Phone #: 231-947-9880

Offerings: Even though the offering plates are passed during the service, you may use the vase in the back of the Sanctuary if you prefer not to touch the offering plate.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: We often find the front door and/or the kitchen door unlocked when there is no one in the building. Please be sure that the doors are locked when you leave.

Please Note:

Barbara Oster/Administrative Assistant works 9:00am-2:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Phil Anderson/Bookkeeper works 8:30am-12:30pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

Alanna Steffunick-Boomer/Ministry Coordinator works 9:00am-2:30pm – in the office on Tuesday and Thursday and from home on Wednesday

Looking for a link to last month's full Council minutes? Type this address/url into your web browser to get the latest approved minutes from Council: bethlehemtc.org/Council-Minutes OR you may call the office to request a copy.

Prayer Requests:

- Prayer Chain: Please contact Jan Stretlien at jstretlien@gmail.com or 231-947-3265
- Prayers read from the altar: Please call Administrative Assistant in the church office 231-947-9880 or admin@bethlehemtc.org

Celebrate a new child in your life with a rose on the baptismal font! Cost \$10.00 per rose. Contact Barbara Oster at beo6475@yahoo.com or 231.668.7038.

Norm Fred has helped a previously homeless couple for a few years. They are proud people and do not like to be given charity but they will accept help in the form of donated cans that they can recycle for money. Please bring in your recyclables in for them. Leave them in plastic bags by the garage. These are nice people. There, but for the Grace of our God, go we.

Are you looking for the Caring Table for your donations? It has been moved inside the coat room to the right. Your donations are very much appreciated.

LOST AND FOUND: If you lose something in the church building, please check our new Lost and Found box located in the Coat Room. Also, if you find something, please put it in the box.

Yarn Available: There is yarn available free for the taking located in the cabinets located under the mailboxes in the Narthex. Take what you need.

Name tags: Your name tags are in your mailboxes. Please retrieve them so you can proudly wear them on Sunday mornings. We often have visitors and with so many recent new members it helps them if they can see a friendly face and attach a name to it.

A big thank you to all who have turned in Olesons' slips. On August 29th, we received a check from Olesons for \$190.86 for a year-to-date total of \$397.46. Olesons' slips never expire. Please continue to turn in your Olesons receipts to Bethlehem. Thanks so much!!! Also, the area for the Oleson receipts is in the lower cabinets below the mailboxes (under the A-B-Cs...). The cabinet door is marked with the receptacle inside. Unfortunately, we are no longer collecting the receipts from Family Fair.

Hoop's Pet Food Pantry: This is the only pet food pantry in NW lower Michigan. They primarily provide dry food, wet food, treats, cat litter and toys for mostly dogs and cats but they will support any type of pet to the best of their ability. Please visit them at the Square Deal Country Store, 900 Woodmere Ave, TC from **11:00am – 2:00pm on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every month** with your donations OR you may leave donations in the tub on our "donations" table in the coat room. The volunteers have expressed their appreciation when receiving our donations.

Have something important going on at Bethlehem that you'd like others to know about? Maybe a Small Group? A Club Event? Feature it on the Screen Announcements, weekly emails and on our Facebook Events Page! If there is something you'd like featured or included in any of these, please reach out to alanna.steffunick@bethlehemtc.org If you are not getting the weekly emails for any reason, please contact Alanna.

Please consider signing up for Altar Flowers for a Sunday service. Please use the sign-up poster in the Narthex by signing on the date you request. Then fill out a pink slip with the necessary information and place it and a check for \$40 (payable to Bethlehem Lutheran Church or BLC) in the offering plate on Sunday morning (Preferable) or during the week, in the Administrative Assistant's mailbox near the church office entrance. You may select either "in honor" or "in memory" or "to celebrate". If someone has already signed on the date you would like, feel free to add your name – we welcome more than one on a Sunday.

The church calendar is below. Please be sure to notify the office (admin@bethlehemtc.org or 231.947.9880) to be sure that your group is of the calendar.

Sunday, December 15

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Worship Service (S)

Monday, December 16

3:00pm—Chair Yoga (FH)
3:30pm—Grief Group (YR)

Tuesday, December 17

Bulletin articles due today

9:00am—Property Work Group
9:00am—LWR Quilters (FH)
6:30pm—Council Meeting (Library)
7:00pm—Choir Rehearsal (S)

Wednesday, December 18

9:30am—Adult Bible Study
11:30am—Music Rehearsal (S)
1:00pm—Baby Pantry/Toy Shop set-up (FH)

Thursday, December 19

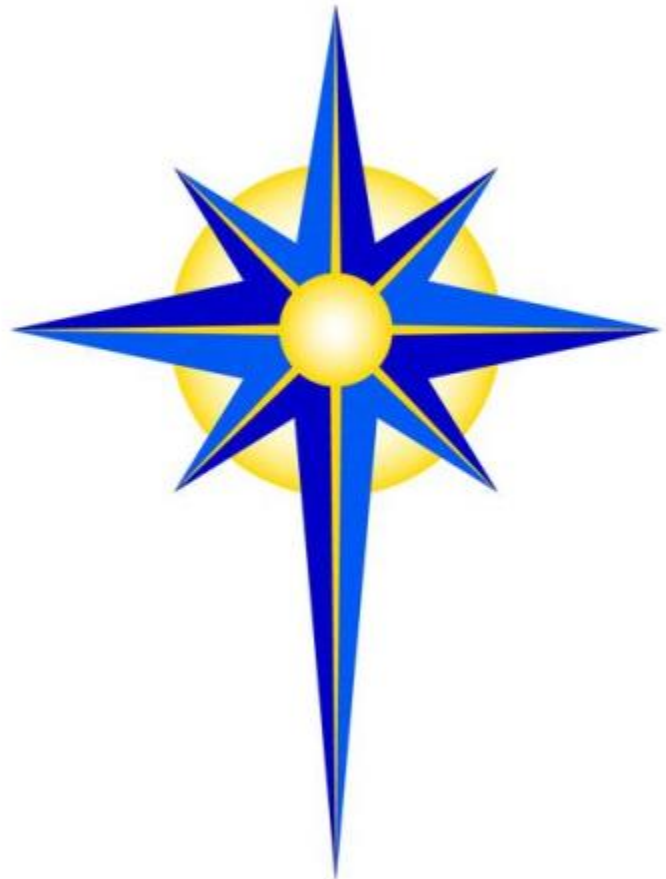
9:00am—Baby Pantry Set-up (FH)
10:00am—Baby Pantry (FH)
5:30pm—ACA (Library)
5:45pm—Advent Meal (FH)
7:00pm—Blue Christmas Service (S)

Friday, December 20

9:00am—Baby Pantry/Toy Shop Clean-up (FH)
10:00am—Sew Pieceful (FH)
1:00pm—Lehto SG (Library)

Sunday, December 22

9:15am—Sunday School
9:15am—Adult Education (YR)
10:00am—Worship Service (S)



Blue Christmas
a service of hope and remembrance

December 19th, 2024
Dinner 5:45pm Worship 7pm

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
1050 PENINSULA DR, TRAVERSE CITY MI 49686

The true meaning of Advent includes nearly every human emotion,
as we long for Christ's birth.

Leaders from four local churches invite you to join them
for worship at Bethlehem on Blue Christmas
for words of solace and hope.

This year's themes will be Peace, Hope, Love, and Faith.

This service is made possible with support from the following churches:



Sunday,
December 22nd

*Christmas
Caroling*

CHRISTMAS EVE
AT BETHLEHEM

WORSHIP 4PM
(CHILDREN'S PROGRAM)
LIVESTREAMED

WORSHIP 7PM