

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 22, 2024 – 10am

Modern Worship, ELW Setting 3



Prelude Music

Announcements

Lighting of the Advent Candle—Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (4th verse only, below) ELW 240
Light four candles to watch for Messiah: let the light banish darkness.
He is coming, tell the glad tidings. Let your lights be shining!

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:

Advent Hymn

Heaven sent a child to save us, light for all to see; helpless baby, mighty Savior, holy mystery.
Unto us a son is given, born in Bethlehem; Lamb of God, the Light of nations, God in flesh became.

Watching, waiting, longing for the day when His people would glorify the Name above all names.

For the joy that lay before Him, chose our agony; Jesus bore the wrath of Calv'ry, washing sinners clean.
Our Messiah, Christ our brother, word of God in flesh, loosed the chains that held us captive, broke the bonds of death.

Watching, waiting, longing for the day when His people would glorify the Name above all names.

(continued on next page)

So we wait with expectation for His Advent here. Bride of Christ, His word proclaimed for all the world to hear. He will come in clouds descending at the trumpet sound; In the light of Christ our Savior, ev'ry knee will bow.

Born in a manger, dying on a tree. Rising Easter morning to set his people free.

We're watching, waiting, longing for the day when all nations will glorify the Name above all names.

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 your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

First Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. 3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. 4 And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; 5a and he shall be the one of peace.

L: The Word of the Lord

C: Thanks be to God

Psalm: Luke 1:46b-55 (See Holden Evening Prayer Book, pages 8-9 – words based on Scripture below)

46b My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
47 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

48 for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed:
49 you, the Almighty, have done great things for me and holy is your name.

(continued on next page)

50 You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.

51 **You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,**

52 casting down the mighty from their thrones and lifting up the lowly.

53 **You have filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty.**

54 You have come to the aid of your servant Israel, to remember the promise of mercy,

55 **the promise made to our forebears, to Abraham and his children forever.**

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 1:39-45

Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

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

39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, 40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit 42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. 43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? 44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Pastor Paul Busekist

Song of the Day:

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

ELW #244

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.

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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.

Words of Institution

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 *(Please note: gluten-free wafers and white grape juice cups are available)*

Communion Songs:

***The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Come
People, Look East***

ELW #265

ELW #248

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:

Soon and Very Soon

ELW #439

Dismissal

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

C: Thanks be to God.



Bethlehem December 22, 2024
LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

12/22—Inga Nyquist

12/28—Jane Fred

12/28—Renaë Wells

12/28—Kathryn Thiel

Worship Servants for December 22

Assisting Minister—Cindy Monroe

Lector—Mary Ann Tanis

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

Today's altar flowers are donated: *In Memory of Dee Springer on the 100th anniversary of her birth*

Hospitality—Jim / Dorene Boyd

A/V—Jim Monroe / Barbara Oster

Cookies/Coffee— VOLUNTEER / Mary Ann Tanis

Welcome Table— Gail Goldsmith

Bell Ringer— Gail Goldsmith

Front Door Monitors— Gail Goldsmith

Altar Guild—Gail Goldsmith / Mary Ann Tanis

Tech Support—Jim Hinds

Counters—Barb Graf / Kate Holtfreter

Christmas Services

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

December 24: 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

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

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 of the budget are available at the back of the sanctuary. 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

2025 Giving Envelopes are Ready for Pick Up. I am happy to report that the 2025 giving envelopes have arrived! They are available for pick up at your convenience. The boxes are in the narthex in alphabetical order by last name. Please pick yours up as soon as possible so you will have them ready for January giving. If you have any questions or need help, please contact me during regular business hours. Your Bookkeeper, Phil Anderson

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!

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 dates are January 6 and January 20. If you have any questions, please contact Peggy Burns at 231 392-6913.

The December issue of the STAR is now available. If you receive the weekly email, your December issue was emailed on December 1st. The shut-ins will receive an issue by mail. There will also be a few copies available on the counter by the mailboxes. You may also contact the office at 947-9880 to request that mail delivery continues. For current issues of the Star, feel free to check online at www.bethlehemtc.org < About Us > “The Online Bethlehem Star” or type this URL to get these directly: <http://www.bethlehemtc.org/the-bethlehem-star-newsletter>.

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 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 cmunroe@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. The group will not meet for the rest of December. The next date will be January 6th. Cost is \$5.00 per person. It is slow paced stretches that helps with balance, flexibility and relaxation. Come and try it out.

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

Christian Care Giving Visitation 1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one 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.

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:

Sat 1/4—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

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.

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.

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 22

9:15am—Sunday School

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)

10:00am—Worship Service (S)

Tuesday, December 24

4:00pm—Christmas Eve Service (S)

7:00pm—Christmas Eve Service (S)

Wednesday, December 25

Christmas Day

Church Office Closed

Thursday, December 26

5:30pm—ACA (FH)

Sunday, December 29

9:15am—Sunday School

9:15am—Adult Education (YR)

10:00am—Worship Service (S)



Adult Helpers Needed!

We need some adult helpers during the 4pm Christmas Eve service!

Bethlehem's children will be "following the star" and we need adults who can hold something up, while sitting in their usual seat.

If you can help, reach out to Alanna by Monday, December 23rd to let her know!

