



How good it is to sing
praises to our God,
how pleasant
and fitting
to praise
him!

Psalm 147:1

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, February 4, 2024
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany
Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver
Organist: Polly Jeanty

If listening from your car, please tune to 101.3 FM

***= Please rise in body or spirit**

CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

Great is our Lord :: abundant is His power

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP: #148 Refrain

**O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light**

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** —from Psalm 147: 1-11, 20c and Isaiah 40: 21-31

To whom can we compare you, O Holy One?

We lift up our eyes,

We wait upon the Eternal our God.

How good it is to sing praises to our God.

A song of praise is fitting!

Let us worship God together.

*OPENING PRAYER:

Everlasting God, Creator of the ends of the earth, you who spread the heavens like a curtain, and make us a tent to live in, gather us in the shelter of your love, and renew our strength, that with wings as eagles we might not grow weary as we walk with you. We pray in the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #14 all "Sing Praise to God who Reigns Above"

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

One: God invites us to come to worship as our whole selves: God offers us a new beginning day by day and week by week. Trusting in God, we pray for transformation and new life:

All: Holy One, we hope in your steadfast love, bringing our broken hearts and our wounded spirits. Make us aware of the hearts we break, the spirits we wound, of those we treat as outcasts, of those we tread down. Renew us in your grace, renew us in your strength. Amen. (time of silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Have you not known? Have you not heard? God does not grow weary with us, but loves, forgives, and renews us. Go with renewed strength in your walk of faith. **All: Alleluia! Glory be to God! Amen!**

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #82 v.1 "O Come Let us Adore Him"

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 147: 1-11. 20

¹ Praise the LORD! How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.

² **The LORD builds up Jerusalem;
he gathers the outcasts of Israel.**

³ He heals the broken-hearted,
and binds up their wounds.

⁴ **He determines the number of the stars;
he gives to all of them their names.**

⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in power;
his understanding is beyond measure.

⁶ **The LORD lifts up the downtrodden;
he casts the wicked to the ground.**

⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.

⁸ **He covers the heavens with clouds,**

**prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the hills.**

⁹ He gives to the animals their food,
and to the young ravens when they cry.

¹⁰ **His delight is not in the strength of the horse,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;**

¹¹ but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him,
in those who hope in his steadfast love.

²⁰ **He has not dealt thus with any other nation;
they do not know his ordinances. Praise the LORD!**

Mark 1:29-39

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

SERMON

*HYMN #313 vs. 1, 3, 6

"Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life"

THE LORD'S SUPPER

(God's table is open to ALL, regardless of affiliation or membership. Please hold the elements until all have been served and we will partake together. All bread is gluten free. The inner circles are grape juice, the outer rings are wine.)

INVITATION

Leader: Beloved in Christ...and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

All: this is the joyful feast of the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the West, from the north and the South, and gather around Christ's table.

COMMUNION PRAYER

God be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to God Most High

And also with you.

We lift them to God.

It is right to give God thanks & praise.

We give you thanks, Holy one... therefore, with the entire company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you, God most holy.

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty,

the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God most high.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

... therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith

Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.

Eternal God, we unite in this covenant of faith... Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

All: Be present with us in this meal, and throughout our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit lives for ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE

CALL TO THE SUPPER

SHARING THE ELEMENTS

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Bountiful God, we give you thanks that you have refreshed us at your table by granting us the presence of Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*COMMUNION RESPONSE #525 refrain only "One Bread, One Body"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

OFFERTORY (Jingle change goes to the Sunday School's Leprosy Collection)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Tune "Old Hundredth"

**Oh God, may we who bear your name,
By gentle love your grace proclaim.
Christ's gift of peace on earth declare,
And your anointing Spirit share. Amen**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Let us pray: **Holy One, we bring our gifts and pray that they may be for the building up and lifting up of your people, for the binding of wounds and the healing of hearts, for shelter and for covering and clothing for those in need. With these gifts we offer our songs of praise as we hope in your steadfast love. Amen.**

*CLOSING SONG "Go Now in Peace"

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.
Know he will guide you, in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.***

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

** Liturgies from UCC.org written by The Rev. Stephanie Perdew, PhD, Director, The Damascus Project, Shared Theological Education Ministry of the Wisconsin & Minnesota Conferences of the United Church of Christ.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Chili worker opportunities:
Sunday February 4 - prep work 10:30 to noon
Tuesday Feb 6 - noodle cooking 8 am to noon
Wednesday Feb 7 - Chili day starting at 6 am to 7 pm.
Any help appreciated.
- Bethlehem UCC is hosting a free presentation on Advanced Directives on Tuesday, Feb 27th at 6:30pm. Representatives from Froedtert Medical will be explaining the importance of living wills and medical powers of attorney. If you were suddenly unable to make your own medical decisions and didn't have advanced directives legally in place, your medical

decisions would be made by the courts. Other important “end of life” decisions should be put in place as well. The legal paperwork from the state of Wisconsin will be available. All are encouraged to attend.

- Packets of 10 tickets for the 2024 Chili Supper are available in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign out for packets which you can sell. Payment is due by February 7, 2024.
- The Second Annual *Rural Church Fellowship Sheepshead Tournament* will be held on Sunday, Feb 18 at 1pm @ Bethlehem. Admission is a non-perishable food item. All proceeds benefit area food pantries.

Merry Christian’s Heifer Auction a Success!

The Bethlehem Merry Christians of Bethlehem U.C.C. in rural Kiel held their annual fund-raising program for Heifer International during December. Individuals from the church and the wider community gave generously to raise \$3100 to send live animals and other agricultural items to individuals in countries around the world.

These gifts are given to help individuals become self-sufficient in poor countries everywhere. Those who receive the gift animals also give others like themselves the first born of their own gift to widen the donation.

That \$3100 gift to Heifer International provided the following gifts to individuals in countries like Nepal, Zambia, and Mexico. Bethlehem’s donation will be 2 heifers, 3 sheep, 3 goats, 2 Alpacas, 2 pigs, 3 hives of honeybees, 10 flocks of chickens, 1 clean water well and 5 complete sets of garden seeds.

Heifer International hears from people world-wide whose lives have been changed through these gifts. The Merry Christians are grateful for the generosity of the church and the community in supporting this cause.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Grace Lutheran is hosting a Kiel Fire Victim Chili and Hot Dog Dinner and Bake Sale Fundraiser on Saturday, February 10th from 11am-2pm. in the church fellowship hall at 210 N. Lincoln St. [Hwy 67] in Elkhart Lake. It's all you can eat! Carry-out is available.
- 23rd Annual Holy Trinity Perch Fry – Friday, February 16 at 11928 Marten Rd in School Hill. Dine-in serving from 3:30-7pm. Carry-outs available from 11a-1p and 3:30 -7:00p by calling 773-2380. Grilled cheese plates also available. Homemade tortes, raffle tickets, and the HT lounge.
- InCourage Domestic Abuse Shelter of Manitowoc is hosting a charity event on Sat. Feb 24 – info on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.
- Sunday, Feb. 25 - Soup Cook-Off – Supporting the youth mission trip of area UCC churches – enter a soup – be a “taster” – details on the table in the Fellowship Hall.
- Mission and service opportunity: Feed my Starving Children – March 8 and 9 @ First United Lutheran Church – Sheboygan. Info on “Missions” bulletin board.

2024 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Volland (920)286-0162 or svolland44@gmail.com

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or trabefamily5@gmail.com

Elder - Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us

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Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com
Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 randynmel5@gmail.com



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Mike Stutte

Those struggling with health issues:

Mason Kannell	Jaxxen Kane
Sarah Arnold	Tom Brickbauer
Heidi Konen	Marie Rietbrock
Brenda Voland	Daisy Sippel
Darlene Horneck	Gene Radder
Helen Henning	Dana
Tom Lefeber	Mary Beth Molitor
Jessica Horneck	Crystal
Dawson Horneck	Gary Steinhardt
Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Gmother)	

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Nimmer

Other Concerns:

Those displaced by the recent apartment fire in Kiel.

Those affected by wars in Israel and Ukraine, and others globally.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 2/4: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion; Chili Supper prep following

Monday 2/5:

Tuesday 2/6: ~Happy Birthday Brandon Hoban!

Wednesday 2/7: CHILI SUPPER 3pm-6:30pm; ~Happy Anniversary Mike & Judy Brockway

Thursday 2/8:

Friday 2/9: ~Happy Birthday Zander Jeanty!

Saturday 2/10:

Sunday 2/11: 8am Sunday School; 8:30a Book Study; 9:30am Worship; WISE mtg after worship ~Happy Birthday Aaron Suttner!

February Pantry Items:

Box of Sandwich Bags, Garbage Bags, Plastic Wrap or Foil

Thank you, members of Bethlehem and select organizations, for supporting the trip to our Confirmation retreat on Jan. 19 and 20 at Daycholah!

The most meaningful part of the retreat, for me, was making new friends from other churches. I also liked the collage project, since it was a great way to remind myself who I am and what I value. I also learned a lot from the “game of life” about how life isn’t always going to be easy, so you have to find ways to work around the hard parts of life. –Aliyah Arnold

During the confirmation retreat, the experience went really well and better than expected. This wasn't just because of the food, (I mean, the food was very, very good - don't get me wrong), but because of all the great experiences and friends I made in that short period of time. Some of these great experiences were the game of life, which helped me learn about the challenges life can have, and the collage which made me think about who I truly am as a person. There were also some other mini lessons that taught me more about how trusting God even through tough times can make it easier through those times. Oh, and the food was also great, with an all-you-can-eat buffet with everything from meals to desserts! –Tyson Arnold

I enjoyed the retreat and it was a great experience. I liked that we learned about God while also having fun. We played many good games and did activities to get to know each other better and meet new people. We did devotions and learned different stories about God. Each pastor did a different activity to learn about God and his people. We each brought an item to represent ourselves and it was cool to see what other people enjoyed. We also did a magazine wheel (collage) to show what we enjoyed doing. – Courtney Riesterer