

**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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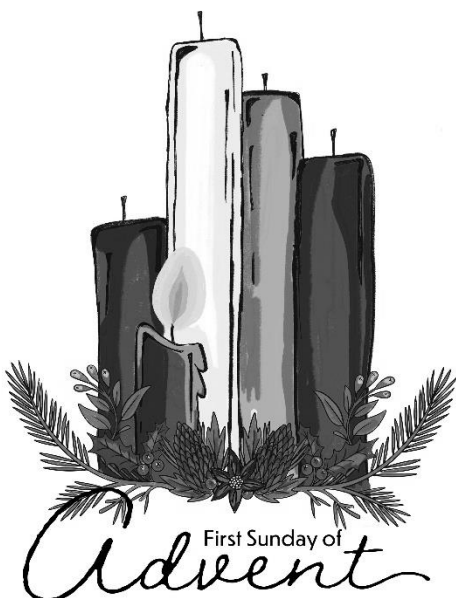
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Sunday, December 1, 2024

First Sunday of Advent

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Kathy Bowe

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

I rest in God alone :: for my hope comes from him

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #216 v.1 "While We are Waiting, Come"
**While we are waiting, come. While we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, While we are waiting, come.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY | Luke 21:25-36 {a}

There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars,

And unrest in the nations like those being tossed by the waves of the sea.

Be watchful at all times for God's Kingdom is near.

The powers of the heavens will be shaken
at the expectation of the coming of the Lord.

Be watchful at all times for God's Kingdom is near.

You will see Christ coming in the clouds with power and glory.
When this happens, lift up your heads, because your redemption is close.

Be watchful at all times for God's Kingdom is near.

This generation will not pass away until all things are accomplished.
Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will last forever.

Be watchful at all times for God's Kingdom is near.

The Lord is coming to make all things new.

Come quickly, Lord Jesus.

(The lighting of the advent candle)

*OPENING PRAYER {b}

God of love, you come to your people to dwell with us.

You come with power to transform all things.

You come with promises to make all things new.

You come with signs of your deep love for the world.

**You come, and your truth breaks into our lives
shattering lies and half-truths, setting your people free.**

Your coming is our hope,

and so, we offer you our praise and prayers in gratitude and anticipation.

Come into our lives again, O God,

and show us how to hope in the face of all that is discouraging,

for we gather in the name of Hope made flesh,

Jesus Christ, your promise and our desire. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN (insert)

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

PRAYER OF NEW LIFE AND TRANSFORMATION {b}

Merciful God, in your gracious presence

we confess our sins and the sins of this world.

Surprising God,

forgive our sleepiness in the presence of your splendor

and for when we abandon hope

**and expect and look for the same old thing in the same old way.
Forgive us our silence when we ought to have spoken up
and our carelessness with your world and each other.
Awaken us to your holy, hopeful presence so we may watch and wait for
you, Lord Jesus Christ. (moment of silent reflection)**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE {b}

The One who comes with justice also comes with mercy.

The God of Judgment is truly the Christ of compassion.

God offers us forgiveness today, in the hope we will receive it gladly.

We will not be afraid but rejoice in the God who comes to us.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

“Gloria Patri”

**Glory be to the Father, And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, Is now and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Jeremiah 33:14–16

The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 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. 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.’

Psalms 25: 1-10

¹ To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

² **O my God, in you I trust;
do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.**

³ Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous.

⁴ **Make me to know your ways, O Lord;
teach me your paths.**

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

6 Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old.

7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to your steadfast love remember me, for your goodness' sake, O Lord!

8 Good and upright is the Lord; therefore he instructs sinners in the way.

9 He leads the humble in what is right, and teaches the humble his way.

10 All the paths of the Lord are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep his covenant and his decrees.

1 Thessalonians 3:9–13

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

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 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. 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.

CHILDREN'S TIME

FIVE MINUTES OF PRAISE: "My Hope is in you, Lord" Aaron Shust
© 2011 Centricity Music

SERMON

*HYMN: #92

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

ADVENT SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

(Written by: Rev. Andrew O'Neil, St. Paul's United Church, Riverview, New Brunswick)

INVITATION

PREFACE

God be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to God.**

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

THE STORY

In the rich dark of winter, God makes an astounding promise: "I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up." (Jeremiah 33:15)...

... We gather at this table, praying that crooked ways be made straight, that valley's peace be lifted up and mountains might brought low so that all God's people might rejoice together, saying:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is the one that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

We give thanks for the mystery and wonder revealed that first night...

... With your people of all times and places, we await with hope the fulfillment of your vision for all creation.

Bless us, O God, and these your gifts. Encourage us to share your life and love, which make us, and the gifts we share, truly holy.

Transform us, God, and your world, and bless your children:

those who feel alone or afraid...

those who whose souls and homes are broken by violence...

those who will go hungry, thirsty, and cold tonight...

those who long only to hear that they are loved...

God made known in Jesus Christ, **hear our prayer.**

We pray these things, trusting in God's faithfulness revealed:

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

SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP

PRAYER FOLLOWING COMMUNION

At this table, Christ is the host, welcoming all who hunger. At our tables, may Christ be our guest this day and always, that we might welcome hope, peace, joy, and love into our lives, and become hosts to God's presence and people.

God of Love, guide us to the stables of our world, where the lonely and longing gather. Lead us to the mangers of our time, where hope and renewal are born again. Make us heralds of your love and joy. Amen.

RESPONSE #525 refrain only

“One Bread, One Body”

One bread, one body, one Lord of all, one cup of blessing which we bless. And we, though many, throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord.

PASTORAL PRAYER {b}... THE LORD’S PRAYER

Petitions end with: Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our 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.

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE #403 “Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”

Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your Spirit in this place; Lord, listen to your children praying, Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

CALL TO THE OFFERING (Jingle Change for the month of December supports the Christmas Fund)

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Doxology to tune of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye, heavenly host,

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel

Shall come to thee, O Israel.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION {b}

Holy and Righteous God, we offer our gifts with humble hearts, knowing the needs in your world are great and our gifts alone will never fill that need. We offer our gifts in hope that you will bless them and use them to help fulfil your purpose revealed in Jesus Christ, Saviour of us all. 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

**This morning’s prayers and liturgies are used with permission from: {a} United Theological Seminary, and {b} <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/> - unless noted otherwise.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- DEVOTIONALS!! – There are new devotional books in the fellowship hall, including an Advent devotional. Additionally, I have a large book of advent devotionals by Kate Bowler. It’s 96 pages, so if you like, I can email you the PDF file. Just let me know! – Pastor Randy
- The Bethlehem Cemetery Association meeting will be held on Monday, December 9th at 6:00 pm in the church library. All are welcome to attend.
- Heifer International fund raising – This week some additional funds were contributed, but hoping to get enough to add another heifer. See the display in the Fellowship Hall. Each \$10 donation is an opportunity for the drawing of the “Wisconsin” goodie basket. Deadline is December 8. Checks can be made payable to Bethlehem Merry Christians.
- The Sunday School is collecting **CHILDREN’S hats and mittens** (any size) to be donated to a location. Watch for the box in the entrance area with more information.

- **Bethlehem Ladies Annual Poinsettia Sale:**
Place order on the signup sheet TODAY!
Colors available Red and White
Single are \$14.00
Doubles are \$22.50
Flowers can be taken home on Christmas Day.

- The Adult Mission trip to Kentucky has been scheduled for March 16-22. We will be helping repair damage from tornadoes. Members of several area UCC churches will be involved. From Bethlehem: Pastor Randy, Melissa Koppenhaver, and Marie Mueller. Would you consider joining us? The cost for lodging is \$90 for the week. Please see Pastor Randy for more info or to get involved.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS -See flyers in fellowship hall for more details

- **The Wonder of Christmas!** Will be held Sat. Dec 7 from 11a-4pm and Sunday, Dec 8 from 1-4pm. This event includes hundreds of Nativity scenes artfully arranged at St. James Episcopal Church in Manitowoc. The event is free. A tomato soup and grilled cheese lunch will be available on Saturday. See flyer for more details.

- **Cookie Walk** – Sat. Dec 7 – 9a-11a – St. Peters UCC, Kiel

- **Holiday Concert/Bake Sale Event on behalf of Local Warming Shelter**
A combined Holiday Concert and all-county Bake Sale, entitled, “Baby, It’s Cold Outside”, will take place at First Presbyterian Church, Manitowoc, WI, on **Saturday, December 14 from 2pm to 4pm.** All proceeds from the event will benefit the Manitowoc Warming Shelter, which provides safe overnight lodging for unsheltered persons during the coldest nights of the year. Featured artists include The Faith Family Choir from Valders, The Park Street String-Along Band, and young concert organ prodigy Rowen Erickson. In addition to the sale of holiday baked goods, there will be arts and crafts for sale and local merchant-donated gift baskets for raffle. Santa Claus is also scheduled to appear. Churches who are willing to organize and donate baked goods and/or gift baskets to raffle are greatly appreciated, but all are invited to come and support this vital service in our community. For more information, please contact Sheryle Lyman at 352-615-0400.

- The Sheboygan County Warming Center is a mission of several churches in the city of Sheboygan, including St. John’s UCC. This winter the shelter will be operated at St. Luke United Methodist Church. They are seeking donations of clothing, bedding, travel-sized toiletries, and shelf-stable snacks, along with bus passes and Kwik Trip gift cards. See flyer for more info. Bring your donations to Pastor Randy and he will get them to Sheboygan.



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Those Grieving:

Tim Voss

Those struggling with health issues:

Darlean Rumpff

Will Mathes

Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets

Brad Westphalen

Jessica Horneck

Gary Steinhardt

Shari

Heidi Konen

Dawson Horneck

Gary Rabe

Louie Bowe

Nancy Zimmermann

Julie and Addison

Jim Markelz

Marie Rietbrock

Tom Lefeber

Mary Beth Molitor

Darlene Horneck

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Ninmer

Helen Henning

2024 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Voland (920)286-0162 or svoland44@gmail.com

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

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

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 rossw@forhealthycows.com

Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 LandKBowe@outlook.com

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 srumpff@tm.net

Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 randynmel5@gmail.com



December Worship Services:

- Sunday, December 1; 9:30am – First Sunday of Advent Communion Service
- Sunday, December 8; 9:30am – Second Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 15; 9:30am – Third Sunday of Advent - Children’s Program
- Thursday, December 19; 6:30pm – Blue Christmas Service
- Sunday, December 22; 9:30am – Fourth Sunday of Advent Service
- Tuesday, December 24; 7:00pm – Christmas Eve Lessons & Carols
- Wednesday, December 25; 9:30am – Christmas Day Communion Service
- Sunday, December 29; 9:30am – Hymn Sing

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 12/1: 8:00 am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion; Confirmation breakfast following worship; *Happy Birthday Mavryk Suttner!*

Monday 12/2: 4pm Loads of Love

Tuesday 12/3:

Wednesday 12/4: *Happy Birthday Kristen Schmitt and Kelly Biwan!*

Thursday 12/5: *Happy Birthday Declan Radder and Gary Steinhardt!*

Friday 12/6: *Happy Birthday Marcy Nimmer!*

Saturday 12/7: *Happy Birthday Stephan Deignan, Jr, Jeff Holz, and Jackie Volland!*

Sunday 12/8: 8:00 am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; 1pm Community Christmas Choir Concert at Salem UCC, Plymouth

**December Pantry Items:
Box of Cereal**

ADVENT

153 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

F C F Gm C7 F C Dm C F A C7 F F A Gm Dm C F

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child and yet a king,

F C F Gm C7 F C Dm C F A C7 F F A Gm Dm C F

from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.

Am Dm Gm7 C7 Dm7 C7 F F E Dm F A G# Gm Bbmaj7 Csus C

Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;

F F6 Gm C7 F F Bm7(b5) C7 Bb C7 F F7 A Bb F A Bb F C7 F

dear De - sire of ev - ery na - tion, Joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

WORDS: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)
MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard (1811-1887); arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

HYFRYDOL
8.7.8.7.D.