



# **BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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## **Sunday, December 8, 2024**

### **Second 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

***When I sit in darkness :: guide my feet to the way of peace***

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 1:68-79 {a}

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,

**for he has shown favor and redeemed his people.**

He has raised up a Savior in the house of his servant David,  
**as spoken on the lips of his holy prophets of old.**

He has shown mercy to us and remembered his holy covenant.

**We will serve him in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives.**

The tender mercy of God will dawn on high and visit us with salvation.  
**It will shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.**

Christ is coming to guide our feet in the way of peace.  
**Come quickly, Lord Jesus.** — *(The lighting of the advent candles)*

\*OPENING PRAYER {b}

**God of peace and promise, you are the giver of life, living in us through the power of your Holy Spirit. You are the voice that calls us from our wandering, setting us on a new path. You are the living water that purifies us, baptizing us for service in the world that so badly needs your love. You are the Way that we are called to walk and you are the one who supplies all things for the journey. Refresh us in this time of worship, and reignite our desire to serve you each and every day. Glory, honor and praise be yours now and always, one God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. Amen.**

\*OPENING HYMN #83

“People Look East”

PRAYER OF NEW LIFE AND TRANSFORMATION {b}

Merciful God, in your gracious presence  
we confess our sins and the sins of this world.

**Merciful God,  
baptism promises the washing away of our sin  
and the start of our new life in Christ.  
But we confess that we are still in love with our old ways.  
We sin against you and one another,  
in what we do and in what we fail to do.  
We excuse ourselves, and take comfort in what is familiar and pleases us  
rather than what serves you.  
Forgive us when we mistake such comfort for the peace you offer us in  
Christ Jesus and prepare our hearts to embrace new ways of following him.  
(moment of silent reflection)**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE {b}

Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, proclaimed this hope: “By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, giving light to those in darkness, guiding our feet in the way of peace.”

**We receive God’s tender mercy today, and we trust that God’s peace will prevail for all those who seek forgiveness in Jesus’ name. Thanks be to God.  
Amen**

\*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

### **Luke 1:68–79**

‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,  
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.  
He has raised up a mighty savior for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,  
that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.  
Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,  
and has remembered his holy covenant,  
the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,  
to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness  
before him all our days.  
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
to give knowledge of salvation to his people  
by the forgiveness of their sins.  
By the tender mercy of our God,  
the dawn from on high will break upon us,  
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.’

### **Luke 3:1–6**

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high-priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,  
‘The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.  
Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth;  
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” ’

## CHILDREN'S TIME

## SERMON

\*HYMN: #86

“like a child”

## PRAYER CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER #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.**

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

Petitions end with: “Christ Jesus, coming among us, **Bring us peace.**”

**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.**

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

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}

**Mighty and merciful God, we bring our gifts to you, trusting that your  
blessing will multiply their transformative power and use in the world. Use  
them and us to prepare the way for Christ to enter lives with his compassion  
and courage, so that the world will know his peace and trust his name. May  
it be so.**

\*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/>

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Food Drive!! We are doing a reverse advent calendar to collect food for the Kiel Food Pantry during the month of December. There is a list near the front entrance with the desired items.
- The Sunday School is collecting CHILDREN'S hats and mittens (any size) to be donated to the Salvation Army. Please help yourself to a hat or mitten ornament as a reminder, located on the Christmas tree in the entrance. Your donation can be dropped off in the box next to the tree. We will be collecting thru December 22.
- 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. Sign up on the table!
- 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.
- Way to go!!!! Heifer International fund raising – This week we added a heifer, a pig, a sheep, a goat, a flock of chicks and bees. . See the display in the Fellowship Hall. Each \$10 donation is an opportunity for the drawing of the “Wisconsin” goodie basket. The deadline is Sunday, December 8. Checks can be made payable to Bethlehem Merry Christians.
- 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

- Supper With Santa -Wed, December 11 from 4-7pm – Ebenezer UCC, Chilton
- **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.

**December Worship Services:**

- 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



**Those in our thoughts and prayers:**

**Those Grieving:**

Mark Beitzel  
Gary Steinhardt

**Those struggling with health issues:**

Gary Rabe	Shari
Will Mathes	Louie Bowe
Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets	Nancy Zimmermann
Brad Westphalen	Julie and Addison
Jessica Horneck	Darlene Horneck
Marie Rietbrock	Mary Beth Molitor
Tom Lefeber	Dawson Horneck
Heidi Konen	

**Those unable to worship with us:**

Merlin Nimmer      Helen Henning

**2024 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team**

Elder/President - Steven Volland (920)286-0162 or [svolland44@gmail.com](mailto:svolland44@gmail.com)  
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Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 [randynmel5@gmail.com](mailto:randynmel5@gmail.com)

**This Week at Bethlehem:**

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

**Monday 12/9:**

**Tuesday 12/10:**

**Wednesday 12/11:**

**Thursday 12/12:**

**Friday 12/13:** *Happy Birthday Darlene Horneck and Christa Taylor!*

**Saturday 12/14:** *Happy Birthday Hunter Hemauer, Steve Sheets, and Ivan Salm!*

**Sunday 12/15:** 8:00 am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Children's Program; \*\*SPIRIT ARTICLES DUE @ 5pm\*\*

**December Pantry Items:  
Box of Cereal**

