



## **BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**Sunday, November 23, 2025**

**Reign of Christ**

**Worship Leader: Rev. Randy Koppenhaver**

**Musician: 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

***Surely God is my salvation :: I will trust and not be afraid!***

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #557 v. 1** "I Just Came to Praise the Lord"  
**I just came to praise the Lord, I just came to praise the Lo—rd**  
**I just came to praise his Ho--ly Name, I just came to praise the Lord**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

Say among the nations, The Lord reigns.

**Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice!**

God comes to judge the earth.

**God will judge the world with righteousness and the people with truth.**

Come, let us worship God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Blessing and honor, glory and power be to our God now and always.**

\*OPENING PRAYER:

**God of majesty and mercy, Three in One and One in Three,  
we give you thanks and praise for your commitment to your creation.  
In Christ, you have turned the world upside down, revealing your strength  
through weakness, and your power through compassion. In the cross of  
Christ you taught us that no hopeless situation or frightening possibility is  
beyond your reach. We praise you for your love at work around us and  
within us, always able to do more than we can ask or even imagine. Receive  
our love and our loyalty this day, our Sovereign and our Savior. Amen.**

\*HYMN #58

“Crown Him with Many Crowns”

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:

**God of wisdom and warning,  
we confess that we often prefer our own plans to your purposes.  
We shrink from acts of service that seem too demanding.  
Forgive us when our commitment wavers  
and we think someone else will take up the challenges we face.  
Inspire us with the example of Jesus,  
and energize us with your Spirit to follow him as our Shepherd,  
wherever he leads. Amen.**

*Time of silent reflection...*

WORDS OF GRACE

Christ embodied God’s love and mercy so powerfully that he offered forgiveness  
to his tormentors from the cross.

**In grace he reaches out to us, too. We receive his forgiveness this day, and  
will offer it to others for his sake. Amen.**

\*RESPONSE #565 v. 1

“Blessed be the Name of the Lord”

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

**Psalm 46** – p. 627 of hymnal – leader reads odd verses, people even

**Colossians 1:9-20**

<sup>9</sup> For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying  
for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all  
the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives,<sup>[e]</sup> <sup>10</sup> so that you may live a life  
worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work,  
growing in the knowledge of God, <sup>11</sup> being strengthened with all power according  
to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, <sup>12</sup> and

giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you<sup>[f]</sup> to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. <sup>13</sup> For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>15</sup> The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup> For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup> And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup> For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup> and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

### **Luke 23:33-43**

<sup>33</sup> When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. <sup>34</sup> Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”<sup>[a]</sup> And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

<sup>35</sup> The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.”

<sup>36</sup> The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar <sup>37</sup> and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.”

<sup>38</sup> There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the jews.

<sup>39</sup> One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!”

<sup>40</sup> But the other criminal rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? <sup>41</sup> We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.”

<sup>42</sup> Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.”<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Jesus answered him, “Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

### CHILDREN’S TIME

### SERMON

\*HYMN #38

“O Worship the King, All Glorious Above”

### PRAYER CONCERNS

### PASTORAL PRAYER...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.**

#### **SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE**

**Open our eyes Lord  
We want to see Jesus,  
To reach out and touch Him  
And say that we love Him.**

**Open our ears Lord  
And help us to listen,  
Open our eyes Lord  
We want to see Jesus.**

#### **INVITATION TO GENEROSITY**

**OFFERTORY** At Bethlehem United Church of Christ, we collect TWO offerings each Sunday. Our regular operational offering is collected in the wooden plate. In the metal cans, we collect loose change and small bills for a monthly designated benevolent collection. November's Jingle Change supports The Sunday School's community Christmas project.

#### **\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

**"Give Thanks"**

**Give thanks with a grateful heart**

**Give thanks to the Holy One**

**Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ,  
His Son (2 times)**

**And now...**

**let the weak say, "I am strong"**

**Let the poor say, "I am rich**

**Because of what the Lord has done  
for us" (2 times)**

**Give thanks... (2 times)**

#### **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**Merciful God, you envision a world where the hungry are fed and strangers are welcomed. We bring you our gifts to share in that vision. With your blessing, may our gifts bear fruit in Christ's name, and offer his blessing to those we serve for his sake. 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/COMMISSIONING

POSTLUDE

*\*\*liturgies for this morning were used with permission from: <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

**Thanksgiving for Immanuel Food Pantry**

Way to go Bethlehem family and friends! A total of 286 grocery items plus \$90 in cash and gift cards was contributed to the Thanksgiving Food Pantry bags. The Merry Christians went shopping for the rest of the items needed to fill 40 bags of groceries. The following was collected:

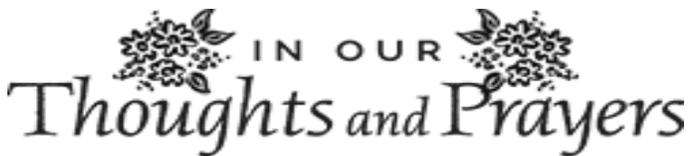
|                               |                           |   |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 25 Boxes of Mashed Potatoes   | 26 Cans of Green Beans    | 31 Boxes of Jello                         |
| 22 Jars of Turkey Gravy       | 58 Cans of Corn           | 6 Boxes of Stove Top Stuffing             |
| 20 Bags of Marshmallows       | 7 Cans of Cranberry Sauce | 46 Cans of Cream of Mushroom Soup         |
| 4 Cans of French Fried Onions | 8 Cans of Yams            | 33 Cans of Pie Filling (Apple or Pumpkin) |

- Heifer International: Still time to contribute to the Heifer International. In 2024 Bethlehem donated \$2750 to Heifer. The goal for 2025 was set at \$1820. To date we've got enough funds for 1 heifer, 2 sheep, 2 goats, 1 pig, 2 flocks of chicks, and 1 hive of honeybees. Deadline is Sunday, December 7.
- Bethlehem Ladies will be taking Poinsettia orders. We have single, double and triple red or white poinsettia available. Order deadline is Sunday, November 30th, 2025. Sign up sheet in the fellow ship hall. Please make check payable to Ginny Schultz.
- **RCF YOUTH FRIENDSGIVING!!!** All high school-aged youth (Grades 9-12) are invited to St. Peter's UCC on Sunday, Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> from 4pm-6pm. Bring a game and snack to share. Bring a friend! (see flyer)
- **Thanksgiving Eve!** Wednesday, Nov. 26 we will be joining with St. John's UCC (NH) and Gloria Dei Lutheran for worship. The service will include communion and be held at Gloria Dei (N1230 7 Corners Rd, New Holstein). Everyone is invited to a light supper at "Gloria's Meals" beginning at 5pm - Worship at 6:30pm. Pie and coffee (decaf) to follow worship.

- The confirmation students will be preparing and serving breakfast to cover the costs of their winter retreat. Please join them on Sunday, Dec. 7 following worship. Freewill donations will be collected.
- Bethlehem UCC is signed up to work at the Sheboygan Warming Center on Sunday, January 26. The shift is from 6pm-9pm. The work involves setting up for dinner, serving dinner, washing dishes (commercial dishwasher) and cleaning up. There are five slots available. Sign up in the fellowship hall.

**Community Announcements – See flyers in fellowship hall for details.**

- Cookie Walk – 12/6 – 9a-11a – St. Peters UCC, Kiel
- Christmas Bingo – 12/14 – 11:30a-2:00pm - St. Marks UCC – see flyer for details



**Joys:**

The birth of Ryland Everson Rugowski – Parents: McKenna (Mueller) and Daniel Rugowski

**Those Grieving:**

The Family of Tom Phillip, Jr  
 The Family of Jeanette Wriedt  
 The Family of Will Mathes

**Those struggling with health issues:**

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Louie Bowe      | Dawson Horneck  |
| Heidi Konen     | Darlene Horneck |
| Brad Westphalen | Jessica Horneck |
| Sofia           | Melissa         |
| Hubert          | Larry           |
| Chase Goekes    | Tyler Smith     |
| Mark            | Molly           |

**Those unable to worship with us:**

Merlin Ninmer      Helen Henning

**This Week at Bethlehem:**

**Sunday 11/23:** 8:00am Sunday School; 9:30am Sunday Worship; Decorate church for Christmas; *Happy Birthday Ellie Holz!*

**Monday 11/24:**

**Tuesday 11/25:** *Happy Birthday Joe Molitor*

**Wednesday 11/26:** Thanksgiving Eve Worship @ Gloria Dei: 5pm Meal; 6:30pm Worship;  
*Happy Birthday Logan Shaver!*

**Thursday 11/27:** Happy Thanksgiving!

**Friday 11/28:** *Happy Anniversary Kerry & Barb Henning!*

**Saturday 11/29:** *Happy Birthday Joe Schmidt and Mark Wirtz!*

**Sunday 11/30:** 8:00am Sunday School; 9:30am Sunday Worship; *Happy Birthday Leah Henning!*

**December Panty Item: Box of Cereal**

