

✠ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION ✠

Greeting

P The Lord be with you. **C** And also with you.

Hymn of Invocation “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You” #334 (G)

Invocation, Confession of Sins and Absolution Page 203

✠ SERVICE OF THE WORD ✠

We Speak To God:

Introit *Psalm 25:1-3; antiphon: Zech 9:9b*



P Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*
righteous and having sal- | vation.

C To you, | O LORD,*
I lift | up my soul.

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

C Indeed, none who wait for you shall be | put to shame;*
they shall be ashamed who are wantonly | treacherous.

All Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

P Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*
righteous and having sal- | vation.

Kyrie ~ *Lord, Have Mercy* Page 204

Hymn of Praise ~ *Glory To God in the Highest* omitted during Advent

Salutation and Response Page 205

Collect of the Day

P Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Lighting Of The Advent Wreath^① The First Candle: The Prophecy Candle

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” *(Isaiah 7:14 NIV)*

P As we light the first candle on our Advent wreath, we recall with thanksgiving the vivid and courageous words and actions of the prophets. Called by God and overtaken by the Word, they spoke forth God’s truth and pointed to the coming of the Messiah. Their words still call us to faith and to action. Let us pray:

All Lord Christ, come among us, and by Your Spirit, grant us courage to speak and to act as those who have been called and chosen to carry Your Word to our world. Raise up among us wise and faithful messengers of Your grace and peace. In Your strong name. Amen.

P Sing to the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things;

C His right hand and His holy arm have worked salvation for Him. *[Psalm 98:1]*

P Oh, that You would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before You!

C As fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make Your name known. *[Isaiah 64:1,2a]*

P One candle is set ablaze, as we wait with eager expectation for You, Lord, to come down.

C Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come!

Advent Cantic..... “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” [#357:1, 3]



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
3 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes on



Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
Si - nai's height In an - cient times didst give the Law



Un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re - jice! Re - jice!
In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe. Re - jice! Re - jice!



Em - man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!
Em - man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Author Unknown • Tune: French, 15th cent. • Text and Music: Public Domain

God Speaks To Us:

Old Testament Reading..... Isaiah 64:1-9 Pew Bible, page 623

① The Advent wreath contains a number of symbols. The evergreen wreath symbolizes eternal life in Christ. The candles are symbolic of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. The act of lighting more candles each week anticipates the imminent coming of Christ. The Prophecy Candle announces a period of waiting for our

Lord. The Bethlehem Candle symbolizes preparing to receive the Christ Child. The Shepherd’s Candle symbolizes sharing of the news of Christ’s birth. The Angels’ Candle symbolizes Christ’s final coming on Judgment Day when He will appear in glory with all His angels. The Christ Candle is lit on Christmas Eve. This central candle signifies that the Light of the World, Jesus, has come.

["Oh that You would rend the heavens and come down."]

Gradual and Verse *Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.; Psalm 24:7*

P Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
C Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!

P Behold, your King is coming to you,
C righteous and having salvation.

P Blessèd is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
C From the house of the Lord we bless You.

P Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
C that the King of glory may come in.

Epistle **1 Corinthians 1:3-9** Pew Bible, page 952
[He will sustain you to the end.]

Alleluia and Verse..... Page 205

Gospel Acclamations Page 206

Holy + Gospel..... **St. Mark 13:24-37** Pew Bible Page 850
[The Lord bids us to stay alert for we do not know the time when He will come again.]

Children’s Message

Hymn of the Day.....“**Savior of the Nations, Come**” #332

Sermon..... “**Confident in the Coming of Christ**” Isaiah 64:1-9
1. The _____ being visited
2. The _____ visiting
3. The _____ of the visit

We Respond To God:

Nicene Creed Page 206

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray to the Lord, **C** Lord, have mercy. or **P** Lord, in Your mercy, **C** Hear our prayer.

Offering and Attendance Registration

+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +

Please note our Communion Information in the bulletin.

Preface and Sanctus ~ Holy, Holy, Holy Page 208

**Prayer of Thanksgiving, Lord’s Prayer, The Words of Our Lord,
and Pax Domini ~ The Peace of the Lord** Page 209

Agnus Dei ~ Lamb of God Page 210

Distribution Hymns..... “**Your Table I Approach**” #628
“**O God, My Faithful God**” #696 (E)
“**The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns**” #348 (G)

Nunc Dimittis ~ Song of Simeon..... Page 211


Post-Communion Collect, Benedicamus and Benediction Page 212

Hymn of Departure “**Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring**” #353 (G)

Silent Prayer

Announcements and Sending:

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **C** Thanks be to God!



ADVENT

Today, the Christian Church Calendar begins a new year in the season called Advent.

“**Advent**” means “coming” and is the name of a 4 week season of the Church Year which focuses on the coming of Jesus. He came as a baby to be our Savior; He comes to us now in Word and the Sacraments; and He will come again on the Last Day. Advent is a season of preparation and repentance ... a time to get ready ...

Throughout the season of Advent and Christmas, the Advent Wreath displayed in the Sanctuary reminds us of the passing of time as we move toward that great Festival when we celebrate the birthday of our Savior and King! The 4 Candles of the Advent Wreath remind us that we, in the Christian Church, are setting aside four Sundays before Christmas for preparation of God’s gift to us in His Son, the Babe in the Manger ... and this Season of Preparation is called “Advent.”

The Advent Wreath is a circle, without beginning or end, and symbolizes the eternity of God. The consecutive lighting of the 4 candles is to remind us of the unfolding of His plan, step-by-step through the centuries, to bring Christ into the world. The light of the candles reminds us that Jesus is The Light of the World! According to one tradition, the candles are named:

<i>The Prophecy Candle</i>	<i>The Shepherds’ Candle</i>
<i>The Bethlehem Candle</i>	<i>The Angels’ Candle</i>

SO REJOICE with us this Advent Season in the knowledge that the promises signified in the entire Old Testament have been fulfilled in the Christ of Bethlehem’s Manger.

**“REDEEMER, COME! I OPEN WIDE
MY HEART TO THEE; HERE, LORD ABIDE!”**

Note: The Letters in parentheses after the Hymn number indicate hymns selected because of direct connection to the Propers (i.e., Scripture Readings) for the day ... OT=Old Testament, FR=First Reading, SR= Second Reading , Ps=Psalm; V=Verse; E=Epistle, G=Gospel. Hymns with no such indication are hymns that, while having no direct connection to the Propers, still support the theme of the day.

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FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

December 3, 2017

OUR MISSION STATEMENT: *Steadfast in the Word, Bethlehem Lutheran Church shares Christ and serves people with friendship in His love in all of God's world.*

WELCOME TO BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH! We extend a most joyous welcome to all who are worshipping today. We are confident the Lord will reveal Himself to you through this Divine Service so that you may know the joy of His presence in your life. To our guests: If you have any questions about the Christian faith or about Lutheran worship and practice, please ask the Pastor, one of our Elders, or any of our members. God bless you in Christ Jesus!

COMMUNION INFORMATION: Bethlehem congregation confesses and affirms what the Bible teaches, namely that in this sacred meal Jesus Christ is truly present with His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine, given for the forgiveness of sins. Since participation in this Sacrament is based on complete agreement and unity in all doctrine, and since Christian Churches vary widely in their teachings even about the Lord's Supper, **first time visitors desiring to commune are asked to speak to the Pastor before approaching the Altar.** Normally only confirmed members, active and in good-standing, of congregations in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and synods with whom we are in Altar Fellowship (in North America: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Haiti, Lutheran Church-Canada and American Association of Lutheran Churches) will be invited to commune with us. Lutherans who are inactive (i.e., not currently members in good standing), who have not communed in the last six months or more, and/or guests who are formerly "Missouri Synod" but now worship in a different denomination **should also speak to the Pastor before approaching the Altar.** **All communicants are asked to Register by signing the Registration sheet in the Narthex.** Please note that in registering you affirm that you have 1) examined yourself (1 Cor. 11:27-28; 2 Cor. 13:5) 2) that you acknowledge, confess, and repent of your sins (which includes the sin of irregular worship), and 3) by God's grace, as the Catechism also teaches, intend to change such sinful behavior in thought, word, and deed and live a godly life in accord with God's Word. If this is not your intent and you commune, you do so untruthfully and will not receive the Lord's Supper to your spiritual benefit, but to your great harm (1 Cor. 11:29). Communicants are ushered forward by row. Please receive the host upon an open palm. The Chalice (or common cup) is available at every table. The Duty Elder will offer the individual cups and is followed by the Pastor who will offer the Chalice. Please tip the base of the chalice yourself to avoid spillage. The individual cups in the center ring contain de-alcoholized wine for those who have so requested. You may direct questions to the Pastor or Duty Elder.

WORSHIP NOTES: The Chasuble is a Eucharistic Vestment which the Pastor puts on before preparing the Sacramental vessels. It is a visual mark indicating that in the transition from the Service of the Word to the Service of the Sacrament something extraordinary is about to take place. The use of such a vestment is in keeping with both Lutheran tradition and practice; as our Lutheran Confessions state (*Ap XXIV*).

AS WE GATHER: This is the First Sunday in Advent and the beginning of a new Church Year of grace. Our Church Year counts time differently than the secular calendar. We are tied to the fullness of time in which God sent His one and only Son into the womb of the virgin, born to save us. Each Advent is a reminder that we are one step further from Bethlehem and one year closer to our Lord's coming again. Advent emphasizes the threefold arrival of Christ—who has come as the newborn Savior, who will come as Judgment-Day Savior, and who daily comes as means-of-grace Savior. The *Introuit* Antiphon proclaims: "See, your King *comes* to you, righteous and *having salvation*" (Zech 9:9b). The *Collect* pleads: "*Come* that by your protection we may be *rescued* ... and be *saved*." The *Gradual* proclaims: "Blessed is he who *comes* in the name of the Lord" (Ps 118:26). The *Epistle* portrays the Church as those who "*eagerly wait* for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed" (1 Cor 1:7). The *Gospel* warns us to watch for the sudden coming of Christ (Mk 13:33, 35, 37).

AS WE COME INTO THE SANCTUARY - let us be sensitive to the needs of those who use the quiet and reverence of the Prelude as a time to prepare their hearts and minds for the Divine Service. **ALSO:** Out of respect for God's House and courtesy for other worshippers, please turn off all cell phones. Please also encourage one another to show respect to

God, His Word, our fellow-worshippers, and our Pastor by limiting movement during Scripture Readings, Sermon & prayers. Thank you.

TODAY'S SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON taught the children that at Pentecost, God sent the Holy Spirit to His Church (Acts 2:1–21). Now, through Word and Sacrament, God gives us His Holy Spirit to create and sustain saving faith in Jesus. Ask the children to tell you about what happened at Pentecost. Ask them when they received the Holy Spirit (in Baptism)

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE "Leviticus: Life in the Blood" -- Holiness. What is it? Leviticus shows how God goes to great lengths not only in defining true holiness, but also in sharing His holiness with his redeemed and ransomed people.

THE COLOR FOR ADVENT is blue, the color of hope and anticipation. Royal blue is a reminder that Jesus Christ is the King whose coming fulfilled God's promises of rescue from sin and death. The Advent Wreath is one way we mark this time of waiting, with an additional candle lit each week.

ADVENT MID-WEEK SERIES: This year's midweek Advent worship series theme is "*God's Advent Family*" - Interviews with Bible Characters from the CHRISTmass Story: This Wednesday, December 6th, we meet Zechariah (father of John the Baptizer). Each service is preceded by a fellowship meal. Make sure you put this time of Advent preparation, fellowship and worship on your schedule!

ADVENT MEALS: The LWML will host the 1st Advent Midweek supper on December 6th. See Megan Taylor if you would like to help.

TREE TRIMMING AND DECORATING will be done on Saturday, December 9th. See Megan Taylor for more information.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICE: Fill your hearts with joy as we await our Savior's birth at the children's Christmas Service. "From Heaven Above" will be presented during the Divine Service on December 17th. Practice will be held after Divine Service December 10th. Dress rehearsal will be Saturday, December 16th at 10:00 a.m. Please see Melanie Jackson for more information.

BETHLEHEM'S CHRISTMAS DINNER will be Sunday, December 17th, following the Divine Service. Ham and turkey will be provided. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex for sides and desserts. See Megan Taylor for how you can help with food, decorating and clean-up.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS: It is time to order poinsettias for our Christmas Services. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex and you also have the opportunity to place these flowers "in memory of" a loved one. Your help in beautifying the Sanctuary for Christmas is appreciated! There are only 6 left!

FLOWER CHART FOR 2018: The cost of the Chancel flowers are \$25 PER VASE. Members have the option to purchase one or two arrangements.

NEWSLETTER - The **DECEMBER** edition of *The Bethlehem Star* newsletter is in your mailbox in the narthex. Make sure you have picked up your copy.

OUR STEWARDSHIP LAST WEEK			
OFFERINGS		ATTENDANCE	
General Offering	\$1218.00	Sunday School	32
[Needed per week:	\$2,668.00]	Divine Service	70
Building Fund	\$0.00	Thanksgiving Eve (11/22)	31
[Needed per week:	\$350.00]	Communion	27
Thanksgiving Eve	\$300.00		

ABOUT THE COVER: Our heavenly Father keeps all His promises. And His promises have always been certain. As promised, Jesus brought the kingdom of God to those who believed, just as He promised. God's promises are as sure for us as they were to His people of old. He will bring His kingdom to us through His Word and will return to take us into His kingdom. We can rely on that promise.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR NEXT WEEK: Isaiah 40:1-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; St. Mark 1:1-8.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR MINISTRY THIS WEEK		
Sunday (12/03)	9:00 AM	Advent 1
	10:15 AM	Sunday School & Bible Classes
		Divine Service (Setting 4) / Holy Communion
	Acolyte/Crucifer:	Jessica Bowden
	Pianist:	Sylvia Frenzel
	Altar Guild:	Lori Fortner & Dot James
	Duty Elder:	Gil Daughtrey
	After Church:	Evangelism Meeting
Wednesday (12/06)	5:15 PM	Choir Practice
	6:00 PM	Advent Meal
	7:00 PM	Advent Midweek I
	Acolyte:	Christopher Harris
	Pianist:	Sylvia Frenzel
	Duty Elder:	Gil Daughtrey
Saturday (12/09)	9:00 AM	Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup
	3:00 PM	Tree Decorating
Sunday (12/10)	9:00 AM	Advent 2
	10:15 AM	Sunday School & Bible Classes
		Divine Service (Setting 3) / Holy Communion
	Acolyte/Crucifer:	Kristen Harris
	Organist:	Mary Bowden
	Altar Guild:	Lori Fortner & Dot James
	Duty Elder:	Gil Daughtrey
After Church:	LWML Meeting / Children's Christmas Service Practice	

IN THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

National Leadership and Military: including members Kyle Lawson and Kyle Shepherd, as well as Robert Garcia [Juanita's son], and Jeremy Stafford [Marcy Hogan's nephew]

Health needs - Members: George Nelson, Marjorie Smith (now at TruCare); **Friends:** Yvette Durbin (11/19) [Palestine Police Officer] Debbie Noonan (11/19) [Marcy Hogan's friend], **Joan Smith** (12/3) [Dorothy Jackson's niece], Marissa Williams (11/19) [Marcy Hogan's niece]

Homebound - Members: Dorothy Jackson, Martha Kaudelka, Ardelle Samford, Johnnie Weaver ... **Friends:** Benjamin Garcia

Celebrating this week: Birthdays: Nathan Lightell, Brenda Roller, Ann Worsham ...

All who commune

NOTE: New prayers requests are in **BOLD**. Prayers submitted will stay on the prayer list for two weeks unless updated. Please inform the Pastor and the Church Office regarding the status of submitted prayers so we may be timely and up-to-date in petitions to our gracious God.

TO ADD PETITIONS TO OUR PRAYER CHAIN CALL LEA ROSIER AT (903) 729-1879 or (903) 391-5678

www.belctx.org
info@belctx.org

Rev. David L. Adler,
Pastor

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Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Adult Bible Class: 9:00 AM
Divine Service: 10:15 AM

"To Give Light to Those who Sit in Darkness"

