



**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Sunday, December 17, 2023

Third Sunday of Advent

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune your car radio to 101.3 FM

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

CENTERING THOUGHT: We gather together in this season of Advent anticipating hope, praying for peace, attempting to cultivate joy and share love amidst commotion, grief, despair and uncertainty. In the midst of the ancient ruins, what has brought you joy this week? Or what are you grateful for this morning?

RINGING OF THE BELLS

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE (a)

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

KINDERGARTEN AND PRIMARY JUNIOR CHRISTMAS POEM

CHANCE FOR THE CHILDREN TO OFFER CHRISTMAS WISHES

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Inspired by Psalm 34 and the Magnificat) {a}

Leader: O magnify our God with me and let us exalt God's name together.

All: Our souls magnify the Lord.

Our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!

Leader: We will bless the Lord at all times;

God's praise shall continually be in our mouths.

All: Our souls magnify the Lord.

God's mercy endures from generation to generation.

Leader: Let our souls make their boasts in the Lord;

Let the humble hear and be glad.

All: Our souls magnify the Lord

for the Mighty One has done great things.

*OPENING PRAYER {a}

Let us pray,

**God of Mary, Mother of Jesus – and all of the lowly who seek to be lifted –
God of Isaiah, who felt the Spirit upon him calling him to bring Good
News—**

Let your Spirit fall upon us in this hour.

Out of the ruins, remind us of your everlasting covenant.

Anoint us as we seek to share and experience your Good News.

Bind our broken hearts.

Awaken us to the liberation within and among us.

Embolden us to proclaim your favor

As we seek you more deeply.

Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #92 all

“O Come, O Come, Immanuel”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION {a}

Let us pray:

Holy Creator, we often get caught up in what we do not have –

The material things we lack, the access and privilege we may lack,

The answers, even, that seem to escape us in crucial moments.

**Forgive us for the times we forgot to remember you. Hold us accountable
for the moments we failed to see you in The blessings of ages past. Help us
reconnect with our joy and our gratitude. Remind us to name our joys, our
miracles, our deliverances, our redemptions One by one by one, for you are
there in them all. (time for reflection)**

WORDS OF GRACE

God hears what is named aloud, what is named within, and what is yet to be named. Go forth knowing that the Spirit of the Lord is upon you, and this joy you have – **the world didn't give it and the world can't take it. Amen.**

*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.**

PASTORAL PRAYER ... LORD'S PRAYER

Each petition ends with: *Come to us, Christ Jesus; And bring us joy.*

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.

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

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Doxology to tune of "O Come, O Come Immanuel"

**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, Immanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION ^(b)

God of justice and joy, we bring our gifts to you in gratitude for your unfailing goodness to us. Bless these gifts and use them to create justice and bring joy into the world in Jesus' name. Amen.

CHILDRENS PLAY

"The Friendly Beasts Tell All"

*CLOSING HYMN #100 all

"O Come All Ye Faithful"

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Cast:

Donkey Narrator	Blake Holz
Donkey	Melanie Voland
Gabrielle	Tyson Arnold
Mary	Mia Watson
Joseph	Jacob Riesterer
Cow Narrator	Hallie Brockway
Cows	Kamlynn and Easton Rumpff
Sheep Narrator	Kylie Brockway
Sheep	Ellie Holz
Shepherd	Emerson Witkowski
Camel Narrator	Courtney Riesterer
Camel	Stephen Deignan
Wise Woman	Aliyah Arnold



A special "Thank You" to Ruthie Rumpff for donating the costumes to the Sunday School.

**liturgies and prayers used with permission from (a) ucc.org, and (b) <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Merry Christians collect cash register receipts from the Kiel Piggly Wiggly store. No other area store receipts are of any use to us. We receive a monetary rebate for every dollar that is spent on groceries. Please help us help others by placing your used store receipts in the box under the mailboxes in the fellowship hall. Thank you! Bethlehem Merry Christians
- For many years Bethlehem UCC has supported Heifer International through an auction hosted by the Bethlehem Merry Christians. In order to make a donation in 2023, the Merry Christians are asking you to make a monetary gift. Checks can be made payable to: Bethlehem Merry Christians. And mailed to: Lora Mathes, 21607 CTH C, Kiel, WI 53042. Thanks in advance for your generosity to help those in need. ~Bethlehem Merry Christians

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

InCourage Domestic Abuse Shelter of Manitowoc is hosting a charity event on Sat. Feb 24 – info on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

2023 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

LOOKING FOR LITURGISTS!

Pastor Randy is looking for persons interested in leading worship services as liturgists. Lead the Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession, and Read a portion of the scriptures. A sign-up sheet is on the door to the pastor's office. Let Randy know if you have any questions.

December Worship Services:

- Thursday, December 21; 7:00pm – Blue Christmas Service
- Sunday, December 24; 9:30am – Fourth Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 24; 7:00pm – Christmas Eve Stories & Candlelight Service
- Monday, December 25; 9:30am – Christmas Day Communion Service



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Bob Radder

Those struggling with health issues:

Sarah Arnold	Mason Kannel
Heidi Konen	Marie Rietbrock
Brenda Voland	Daisy Sippel
Darlene Horneck	Gene Radder
Helen Henning	Dana (Melissa K's sister)
Tom Lefeber	Mary Beth Molitor
Jessica Horneck	Sandra Tesch
Dawson Horneck	Gary Steinhardt
Crystal	Neal (Louie's Brother)
Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Gmother)	

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Other Concerns:

Those affected by war in Israel.

Those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 12/17: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Children's Program

Monday 12/18:

Tuesday 12/19:

Wednesday 12/20

Thursday 12/21: 7pm Blue Christmas Service

Friday 12/22:

Saturday 12/23:

Sunday 12/24: NO Sunday School; 9:30am Advent Worship; 7pm Christmas Eve Worship with Stories

December Pantry Items:

Box of Cereal