



## **BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

11608 Lax Chapel Road - Kiel, WI 53042

Phone: 920.894.3332

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**Sunday, December 11, 2022**

**Worship led by: Rev. Roy Rogers**

**Organist: Polly Jeanty**

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

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

RINGING OF THE BELLS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

\*OPENING PRAYER

The first prayer of St. John the Baptist to his disciples: **"Holy Father, guard your strength and show us your glory and make your son known to us and fill us, my Lord, with your spirit which gives light through your knowledge." Amen**

\*HYMN #117

"I Wonder as I Wander"

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

When we offer God our confession, we join the beautiful work of reconciliation, which begins with our reconciling with God. Trusting in our Partner in grace, let us make our confession, first in silent prayer.

SILENT CONFESSION

## UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious and loving God, open our hearts so that we are able to admit to you the fullness of our lives – that which is beautiful and good, and that which is hurtful and hateful.**

**We confess that we do not follow Jesus in all that we do.**

**We love with condition.**

**We judge and condemn.**

**We cast the first stone, and keep the logs in our own eyes.**

**We do not turn to You as the source of our healing.**

**Forgive us, we pray. Forgive our sin, and empower us to be imitators of Christ in love and service. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Friends in Christ, know this: the mercy of God is from everlasting to everlasting, and I remind you of this surpassing grace – in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Alleluia! 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.**

## SCRIPTURE READING

**Luke 3:1-20**

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.” ’

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

SERMON "An Expository Sermon"

\*HYMN (insert) "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry"

CALL TO THE OFFERING - (Offerings and Jingle Change are collected before and after worship. The basket is located near the double doors to the sanctuary. December's Jingle Change supports the Christmas Fund, which aids retired, lower-income clergy. There are also envelopes in the Fellowship Hall for those wishing to make a larger designated offering.)

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE  
**Doxology**  
 For Advent

Em G C D7 G D G C G  
 Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God, all crea - tures

5 Am Bm7 Em Am Em B7 Em A7 D Em  
 here\_\_\_ be - low. Praise God a - bove, ye heaven - ly host. Praise

10 D Bm G C Am D7 G D Em Bm G  
 Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

15 C D7 Em D G C G Am Em Bm Em  
 man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Words: Thomas Ken, 1674  
 Music: 15th Century French

VENI EMMANUEL  
 LM with Refrain

Text and tune adapted by Dean McIntyre, The United Methodist General Board of Discipleship, PO Box 340003, Nashville TN 37203-0003. Telephone 615-340-7073. Website <http://www.umcworship.org>. Email address: [music@gbod.org](mailto:music@gbod.org). Text and tune are public domain.

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**For the wondrous gift of life, we are thankful, O God. Your generous outpouring of grace reminds us of the fruitful life we are called to bear. May these gifts of time and labor, therefore, embody our desire to share and contribute to your coming reign among us. Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER...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.**

\*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

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

### **Merry Christmas from the Sunday School!**

#### **Mark your calendars!**

- The annual **Sunday School Christmas program** will be on **December 18, 2022 @ 9:30** during the worship service.
- There will **not** be Sunday School on December 25<sup>th</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Giving Tree**

This season, the Sunday School are collecting gifts for a local family in need. There are ornaments on the tree in the entrance that have items to select to purchase. The Sunday School will be purchasing the families need for pots and pans, and we are hoping our church families can help with their other needs (and wishes!) for this family. What a great opportunity to give loving and generously this season. Feel free to select an ornament, purchase the item, and return it (unwrapped) to church by December 18.

#### **Last Day for Heifer Auction Donations!**

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 2022, the Merry Christians are asking you to make a monetary gift by Sunday, December 11. 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

### **Bethlehem's Spiritual Leadership Team:**

#### **Reverend Roy Rogers**

Phone: 920.428.0183 or email:

[rogersr671@gmail.com](mailto:rogersr671@gmail.com)

#### **Randy Koppenhaver, Licensed Lay Minister**

Phone: 920.286.2531 or

email:

[randynmel5@gmail.com](mailto:randynmel5@gmail.com)

## **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Sunday, Dec. 11 – Handbell Christmas Concert – Ebenezer UCC, Chilton – 3pm
- Saturday, Jan. 14 – Ordination of Nicole Herda- Grace UCC, Two Rivers – 11am

### **2022 Bethlehem UCC Consistory Members**

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

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or [trabefamily5@gmail.com](mailto:trabefamily5@gmail.com)

**Elder – Open Position – Prayerfully consider serving your Bethlehem family**

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 [rossw@forhealthycows.com](mailto:rossw@forhealthycows.com)

Deacon/Secretary – Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 [LandKBowe@outlook.com](mailto:LandKBowe@outlook.com)

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 [srumpff@tm.net](mailto:srumpff@tm.net)

Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 [jm59umland@gmail.com](mailto:jm59umland@gmail.com)

### **Those in our thoughts and prayers:**

#### **Joys:**

Piercy Edward Hoepfer Heugel was born 11/6/22 – Parents: Sage and Emily Heugel, Proud Grandparents: Scott & Jane Umland

#### **Families who have lost loved ones:**

Lincoln Boris (Grandson of Kert & Christi Henning)  
Michael (Grandson of Shirley/ Nephew of Kathy and Kaye)  
Doris Schuler (Mother of Linda Rabe)  
Steve Rumpff  
DuWayne Nimmer  
Jane Markelz

#### **Those struggling with health issues:**

Bob Radder	Daisy Sippel
Finn (a young boy with cancer)	Darlene Horneck
Doreen Schmidt	Helen Henning
Tom Lefeber	Hattie Lucille
Jessica Horneck	Kenzie Koppenhaver
Dana (friend of Melissa K)	Dawson Horneck
John Buchholz (Marie's brother)	Gary Steinhardt
Sandra Tesch	

**Those unable to worship with us:** Merlin and Doris Mae Nimmer



## The Advent Conspiracy: Making Christmas Meaningful Again

1. Worship Fully... Because Christmas begins and ends with Jesus
2. Spend Less... and free your resources for things that really matter
3. Give More... of your hands, your words, your heart
4. Love All... including the poor, the sick, and the forgotten

Weekly Reflection: Read Luke 2:8-12

Imagine for a moment being one of the shepherds. You are going about your job, looking after the sheep, you like the solitary. Then in the stillness of the night, out of the blue, an amazing power surrounds you, God's glory is in your midst. How would you feel? Would you be terrified like the shepherds, or comforted?

When I look back on my life and I have been placed in the presence of powerful people with authority, I have been like those shepherds. Terrified that I might be in trouble. Terrified that I might mess things up. Terrified that I might be criticized. At times we meet people who feel the same about God. They worry that God will criticize, condemn, and even punish them.

But God has a different message for us, just like he had for the shepherds. God's angel says: "Don't be afraid, I bring you good news that will bring great joy for all the people" This good news is that God uses His power and authority not to condemn or terrify people, but to give us Jesus, who gives us the real gift of Christmas, the gift of a loving life with God forever. So being in God's presence leads to joy, not fear, when we truly hear from God.

REFLECT: As you spend time with God take notice of the good news God gives you, that you can share with everyone you know.

PRAY: Almighty God, Thank you for using Your power and glory to give us the Good News of Christmas, may everyone know You by Your Good News. Amen.

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### **This Week at Bethlehem:**

**Today Sunday 12/11:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship

**Monday 12/12:**

**Tuesday 12/13:** 6:30pm Consistory Mtg; ~Happy Birthday Darlene Horneck and Christa Taylor!

**Wednesday 12/14:** 6pm Confirmation Class Service Project @ Kiel St. Vinnie's; ~Happy Birthday Steve Sheets and Ivan Salm!

**Thursday 12/15:** 7pm Blue Christmas Service

**Friday 12/16:**

**Saturday 12/17:**

**Sunday 12/18:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Children's Program; followed by congregational meeting \*\*Spirit News Due!\*\*

**December Pantry Items: Box of Cereal**