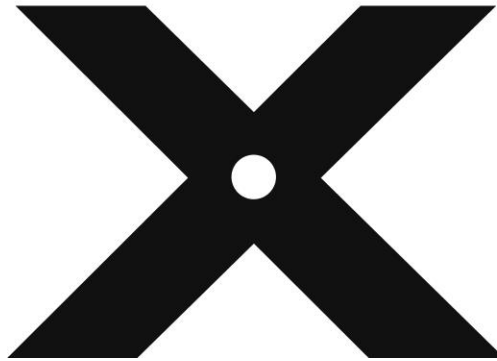


O Come,
O Come
Emmanuel



A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS:

We extend a warm welcome from Bethel Presbyterian Church!
We are glad you have chosen to worship with us this Christmas Eve.
May you experience the warmth and love of Christ on this special evening.

*When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we say "sins...sin against us"
rather than "debts..." or "trespasses..."*

BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
DECEMBER 24, 2022 – 7:00 PM

** Indicates congregation standing if able.
Congregational responses indicated in bold.*

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude “STILLE, STILLE”

Candle Lighting Liturgy

Worship Leader: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked to fill in the blank for the statement: “My story is. . .” From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

Teenager: Amazing!

Child: Just beginning.

Adult: A wee bit messy, with lots of love.

Older Adult: Privileged.

Teenager: Hopeful.

Child: Full of silliness.

Adult: Still unfolding.

Older Adult: Long, but good.

Teenager: One of resilience.

Child: Incomplete, thank goodness.

Adult: Multilingual.

Older Adult: A work in progress.

Teenager: My story is not just mine, it’s tied to yours.

Older Adult: Tonight we tell the story that we tell every year—the story of Christ’s birth, the story of love made flesh. It’s a story that weaves through every generation. It’s a story that picks up the bits and pieces of our narrative and braids us together.

A reader lights the candle.

Older Adult: So tonight we light the Christ candle, because from generation to generation, our story belongs to God. Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.

Call to Worship (*L= Leader, P=People*)

L: There is good news of great joy for all!

P: Our Savior is born: the Messiah, the Lord.

L: The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: The child has been born for us, a Son has been given to us.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: He is Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: To us is born this day in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

P: Glory to God in the highest!

L: Christ is born.

P: Give him glory!

L: Christ has come down from heaven.

P: Receive him!

L: Christ is now on earth

P: Exalt him!

L: O earth, sing to the Lord!

P: O you nations, praise him in joy, for he has been glorified! Amen.

Prayer of Invocation

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world
has brightened weary hearts with peace.

Teach us to proclaim the birth of your Son Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, forever and ever. Amen.

* Hymn No. 134

“JOY TO THE WORLD!”

ANTIOCH

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth re-ceive her King!
Let ev-ery heart pre-pare him room,
and heaven and na-ture sing,
and heaven and na-ture sing,
and heaven, and heaven and na-ture sing.*

*Joy to the earth, the Sav-ior reigns!
Let all their songs em-ploy,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
re-peat the sound-ing joy,
re-peat the sound-ing joy,
re-peat, re-peat the sound-ing joy.*

*No more let sins and sor-rows grow,
nor thorns in-fest the ground;
he comes to make his bless-ings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the na-tions prove
the glo-ries of his righ-teous-ness
and won-ders of his love, and won-ders of his love,
and won-ders, won-ders of his love.*

* Call to Confession

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to us all
and teaching us to renounce what is evil in this world.
Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin together.

* Corporate Prayer of Confession

**God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light
shining in darkness. We confess that we have not welcomed the light,
or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to the glory
in our midst, expecting little, hoping for less. Forgive our doubt,
and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace,
and live in the truth of Christ the Lord.**

* Sung Response: Refrain from "MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS"

*For you, O Lord, my soul in still-ness waits;
tru-ly my hope is in you.*

* Declaration of Forgiveness

Christ our Savior gave himself for us,
that he might redeem us from our sin and claim us as his own people.
Hear the good news: in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

* Sung response: Refrain from "ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH"

*Glo---ri-a ... In ex-cel-sis De-o;
Glo---ri-a ... In ex-cel-sis De-o.*

Children's Moment

Choral Anthem "SEE AMID THE WINTER SNOW"

Prayer for Illumination

Let us pray:
Gracious God, by the gift of your Holy Spirit,
show us the Word made flesh—good news of great joy for all—
so that we may sing with the angels; glory in the highest
and peace on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading from Scripture

Prophet Isaiah 9:2-7 (*The Righteous Reign of the Coming King*) Pg. 600

Gospel Luke 2:1-20 (*The Birth of Jesus*) Pg. 54

Sermon

* Affirmation of Faith **Apostle's Creed (Trad.)** Hymnal – pg. 35

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen**

* Hymn No. 113 “ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH”

GLORIA

*An-gels we have heard on high,
sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
and the moun-tains in re-ply
ech-o-ing their joy-ous strains.*

Refrain:

*Glo---ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o!
Glo---ri-a in ex-cel-sis De-o.*

*Shep-herds, why this ju-bi-lee?
Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?
What the glad-some ti-dings be
which in-spire your heaven-ly song?*

[Refrain]

*Come to Beth-le-hem and see
him whose birth the an-gels sing;
come, a-dore on bend-ed knee
Christ, the Lord, the new-born King.*

[Refrain]

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Offering

From the fullness of God we have all received grace upon grace.
Let us offer our lives to the Lord.

Offertory *(We bring forward our gifts for the baby)*

* Prayer of Dedication

Let us pray:

We give you thanks, Holy One,
for the world of wonder you have made—
forest and field, sea and sky,
and for the gift of grace that you have given—
a little child, lying in a manger.

Receive these gifts of tenderness and love, of gratitude and praise,
and use them for your glory;
in the name of Jesus Christ, the child of Bethlehem, we pray. Amen.

* Special Music

“O HOLY NIGHT”

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Every Christmas Eve, we gather together in this same room,
to tell the same story of a baby born in a manger.
The plot never changes. There are never any surprise twists.
So why do we do it? Why do we keep telling this same story?
We tell this story because our spirits need to hear it.
Over and over and over again, like water in the desert,
we need to be reminded that God has drawn close to this hurting world.
We need to be reminded that God just couldn't stay away.
This is true on Christmas Eve, and it is true at this Table.
Every time we gather at this Table, we tell the same story—
the story of a Messiah who gathered his friends together
for one last supper,
the story of a Messiah who loved us so much he just couldn't stay away.
So friends, bring the parts of you that feel like the desert.
Bring the parts of you that are aching to hear this story again,
because this good news is for you.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

Author of our lives, we admit that there is something
so marvelous and wonderful about this night:
the glow of the candlelight, and the familiar hymns,
the kids that are wound tight with contagious, joyful energy,
the feeling that something we've been waiting for
just might be within reach.
Joy and hope are in the air— so thick we could almost bottle it up.
But we don't want to bottle up this feeling; we want to share it.
We want to share the joy of this night with the children of this city,
with single parents, with lonely young adults,
with our unhoused neighbors, with those who are grieving,
with people who couldn't quite make it home for Christmas.
We want to share this hope with people
who had imagined that this year would be different,

that this year they would have what they were looking for.
We want to share this night with families
who couldn't afford to put much under the tree,
as well as with those who are new to this country—
fleeing a life that was unsafe or unwelcoming.

We don't want to bottle up the magic of this night; we want to share it.
We want to pour your good news all over this community.

We want to sing like Mary sang,
until all who are looking for you have found their way home.

So help us live like the shepherds—
who weren't afraid to go and tell the good news.

Help us take the words of the angels to heart—to not be afraid.

Help us to be as trusting as Joseph—who chose to believe the impossible.

But more than anything,
give us the courage and conviction to tell this story.

In a hurting world so desperate for hope, we have something to say.

Joy and hope are in the air— so thick we could almost bottle it up.

But we don't want to bottle up this feeling; we want to share it.

So pour out your Spirit on this Table.

Strengthen us from the inside out.

As we tell your story of good news,

let us once again speak the prayer your son taught us to pray,
saying: **Our Father...**

The Lord's Prayer (*sin / sin against us*)

Hymnal pg. 35

**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 sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Words of Institution

(Breaking Bread)

The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
saying: Take, eat. This is my body, given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.

(Pouring Wine)

In the same way, Jesus took the cup, saying:
This cup is the new covenant sealed with my blood,
shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup,
you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
Brothers and sisters, the gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Distribution of the Elements

*While ushers give out bread to congregation,
Pastor does same for choir, liturgist, and pianist.
Then Pastor gives bread to ushers.*

When all has been distributed, the Pastor speaks these words:

The body of Christ, broken for us all. *(All eat bread).*

The same process is used for the juice.

When all has been distributed, the Pastor speaks these words:

The blood of Christ, shed for us all. *(All drink juice).*

Then the pastor says:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

God of grace and peace, as you have shared your life with us through the child in the manger and this simple meal together, let us share your life with others as the body of Christ in the world; through Jesus, bread of heaven. Amen.

Benediction

Go into the night, glorifying and praising God
for all you have seen and heard.

May Christ be your light, this night and forevermore.

Hymn No. 122

“SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT”

STILLE NACHT

As the music plays, a candle lighter will come to the end of your pew. The candle of the first worshiper in each row will be lit and they will light the candle of the person next to them, in that way the light of Christ is passed from person to person.

(To avoid spilling hot wax, please keep your candle upright allowing the person next to you to light their candle.)

After all the candles are lit, we will stand to sing “Silent Night”

** Si-lent night, ho-ly night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon vir-gin moth-er and child!
Ho-ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
Sleep in heav-en-ly peace, Sleep in heav-en-ly peace.*

*Si-lent night, ho-ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight,
Glo-ries stream from heav-en a-far,
Heaven-ly hosts sing: “Al-le-lu-ia;
Christ the Sav-ior is born, Christ the Sav-ior is born.”*

*Si-lent night, ho-ly night! Son of God, love’s pure light
Ra-diant beams from Thy ho-ly face,
With the dawn of re-deem-ing grace,
Je-sus, Lord at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.*

*Si-lent night, ho-ly night! Won-drous star, lend thy light;
With the an-gels let us sing,
Al-le-lu-ia to our King;
Christ the Sav-ior is born, Christ the Sav-ior is born.*

*At the conclusion of Silent Night, please extinguish your candle as we depart
the sanctuary in silence.*

Please deposit the candle & holder in the receptacle in the Gathering Area.



*May the peace and joy of this Christmas night
go with you!*