

Bethel Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

~ a community of faith coming together,
for fellowship, study and service . . .
seeking God's peace, justice and love ~



A SPECIAL WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS:

We extend a warm welcome from Bethel Presbyterian Church!
We invite you to participate in signing the Friendship Folders adding your name
and address and if you desire a church newsletter or a pastoral call.

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

Prayer requests can be noted on the cards provided in the pew racks
and placed in the offering plate.

**The Service for the Lord's Day
Bethel Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Christmas Cantata / Third Sunday of Advent /
December 11, 2022 - 11:00 AM**

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

GATHERING AND GREETING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome and Announcements

Please sign the Friendship Pad found in your pew, passing it down the pew then back.

Prelude

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Worship Leader: Over a hundred people, from the ages of two to eighty years old, were asked the question, "What brings you joy?" From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

... ..

Today we light the candle of joy. May its light remind us of all the good news this season brings. May its light remind us of the many sources of joy in our lives, and may that joy not only draw us closer to one another, but closer to God.

(We light the candle of Joy)

Family of faith, what brings you joy? Amen.

Prayer of Invocation

Let us pray:

God of hope, you call us home from the exile of selfish oppression
to the freedom of justice, the balm of healing,
and the joy of sharing.

Make us strong to join you in your holy work,
as friends of strangers and victims,
companions of those whom others shun,
and as the happiness of those whose hearts are broken.

We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

* Hymn No. 110

“LOVE HAS COME”

BRING A TORCH

(Verses 1 & 3)

*Love has come: a light in the dark-ness!
Love shines forth in the Beth-le-hem skies.
See, all heav-en has come to pro-claim it;
hear how their song of joy a-ris-es:
Love! Love! Born unto you, a Sav-ior!
Love! Love! Glo-ry to God on high.*

*Love has come and nev-er will leave us!
Love is life ev-er-last-ing and free.
Love is Je-sus with-in and a-mong us.
Love is the peace our hearts are seek-ing.
Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christ-mas.
Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!*

Children’s Moment

Prayer for Illumination

Holy God, scripture tells us that you came to Joseph through an angel—
loud and clear, impossible to miss.

Scripture also tells us that Joseph listened.

He rearranged his life to follow your invitation.

God, we long for that—all of that.

We long to hear your voice—loud and clear, impossible to miss.
We long for invitations to something more, something deeper.
And we long to be like Joseph and find the courage to follow.
So clean out our ears. Brush the dust off our hearts.
Trace us back to our roots—back to Joseph—who heard and followed.
With gratitude we listen. Amen.

Readings from Holy Scripture

Wisdom	Psalm 146:5-10	<i>(Praise for God's Help)</i>	Pg. 549
Gospel	Matthew 1:18-25	<i>(The Birth of Jesus the Messiah)</i>	Pg. 1

Reflection “We Can Choose a Better Way”

* Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who offers second chances
and does not hold grudges.**
**We believe in a God who opens the door to new life
and leaves the porch light on for us when we get lost.**
**We believe in a God who believes in us—
believes that we can make a difference,
that we can choose grace over comparison,
love over hate,
peace over war.**
And so we strive to live our lives in love.
**We strive to listen as Joseph listened,
and to be the people that God calls us to be.**
It's all that easy, and it's all that hard.
This we believe. Amen.

Call to Offering

From generation to generation God has been at work within God's people.
From generation to generation the Good News has changed lives
and given us a joy like nothing on earth can give.

Let us give our gifts now to God so that God's joy may overflow
leading us in a better way and continue to live on in generations to come.

* Hymn No. 606 "PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW"

*Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow;
praise him, all crea-tures here be-low;
praise him a-bove, ye heaven-ly host;
praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost. A-men.*

* Prayer of Dedication of Gifts and Self

God of joy, we give you thanks for your faithfulness
that extends beyond this time and place.

Bless these gifts that have been given, that they may help us to bring joy
that bubbles up and overflows like a fountain.

Bless all of us here, that we may embody your abundant joy. Amen.

Words of Introduction for Cantata

CANTATA - Sing Gloria by Lani Smith

"SING GLORIA"

Reader: Liz Singley

"DING DONG! MERRILY ON HIGH"

Reader: Laura Dailey

"ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY"

Reader: Julie Barber

"LITTLE WONDER CHILD"

Reader: Dianne Griffith

“CHRISTIANS, AWAKE!”

Reader: Jim Condon

“THE NAME OF JESUS”

Reader: Kirk Steele

“SHEPHERDS, SHEPHERDS, RUN REJOICING!”

Reader: Peggy Sheppard

“WHERE THE STAR LEADS”

Reader: Gisela Condon

“THE GLORIOUS SONGS OF CHRISTMAS”

* Charge (L = Leader, **P** = People)

L: As you leave this place,
may you go knowing that from generation to generation,

P: we have been claimed and loved.

L: From generation to generation,

P: God has been by our side.

L: From generation to generation,

P: we are not alone.

* Blessing

The God of yesterday and the God of tomorrow
knows you by name, loves you, and calls you forth,
saying, “Go be the person you are called to be,
love wildly, do justice, and come back soon.”

May it be so. Amen.

* Postlude

MUSIC ATTRIBUTIONS

“Love Has Come”

Text: Ken Bible, 1996

Music: French melody; arr. Eric T. Myers, 2012

Text © 1996 LNWhymns.com (admin. Music Services)

Music: Arr. © 2012 Eric T. Myers

Public Domain

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Reprinted / Podcast / Streamed with permission under ONE LICENSE #A-718125

All Rights Reserved