

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.)
4th Sunday of Advent
December 19, 2021 - 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

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

L: Let us worship God.

Look! The young woman is with child;

P: she will call him Emmanuel, for God is with us.

L: The mystery of the ages is now revealed.

P: To God be the glory forever! Amen.

L: A ruler will come from Bethlehem,

P: and he will be the shepherd of peace.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

We light this candle in hope. (*Light candle #1*)

We light this candle for peace. (*Light candle #2*)

We light this candle in joy! (*Light candle #3*)

We light this candle with love. (*Light candle #4*)

Wreath Lighting Song (*Sung to tune Hymn No. 146 "Gentle Mary Laid Her Child"*)
***Shine, four can-dles! Come, O King, See their flame be-fore you.
Beth-le-hem, its bells all ring, Place where Ma-ry bore you:
Hum-ble Child in Da-vid's town, Shep-herd of your peo-ple,
Christ, Em-man-u-el come down! Shout it from each stee-ple!***

Prayer

God of grace, your eternal Word took flesh among us
when Mary placed her life at the service of your will.
Prepare our hearts for his coming again;
keep us steadfast in hope and faithful in service,
that we may receive the coming of his kingdom,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, the ruler of all,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. Amen.

* Call to Confession

Every notion we have about power, success, wealth and achievement,
God takes and tosses out the window.
More importantly, God comes to us,
to upset our idea that we must save ourselves.
In Jesus, God comes to us, removing our sin, our failures,
our expectations, so we might have life.
Please join me as we pray together, saying,

* Prayer of Confession

**Holy God, you promised to do great things for us,
yet we do not trust you.**

You extend your mercy to us, yet we do not trust you.

**You lift up the humble, you fill the hungry with good things,
and yet we still do not trust you.**

**Forgive us, and help us to trust in the promises you have given us.
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.**

* Sung Response No. 551 **“LORD, HAVE MERCY”**

LAND OF REST

Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;

Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.

Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy;

Lord, have mer-cy up-on us.

* Declaration of Forgiveness

God’s steadfast love endures forever.

God remains faithful, even when we do not.

Know that God’s love never ends and is always with you.

The light shines and cannot be extinguished.

You are forgiven, loved, and restored.

As we approach Christmas,

may you be filled anew with wonder and awe,

and know that God’s love is making all things new. Amen.

THE WORD

Prayer for Illumination

Let us pray:

You chose Mary, full of grace,

to be the mother of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Now fill us with your grace, that with her,

we may understand your ways,

rejoice in your salvation, and embrace your will;

through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Readings from Scripture

Prophet Micah 5:2-5a (*The Ruler from Bethlehem*) Pg. 815

Gospel Luke 1:39-45 (*Mary Visits Elizabeth*) Pg. 53

Gospel Luke 1:46b-55 (*Mary’s Song of Praise*) Pg. 53

Sermon “Blessed”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

* Affirmation of Faith

From the United Church of Canada

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.**

* Hymn No. #100 **“MY SOUL CRIES OUT WITH A JOYFUL SHOUT”**
(CANTICLE OF THE TURNING)

*My soul cries out with a joy-ful shout
that the God of my heart is great,
and my spir-it sings of the won-drous things
that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your ser-vant's plight,
and my weak-ness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be a-bout to turn?*

(Refrain)

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your jus-tice burn.
Wipe a-way all tears,
for the dawn draws near,
And the world is a-bout to turn.*

*Though I am small, my God, my all,
you work great things in me.
and your mer-cy will last from the depths of the past
to the end of the age to be.*

*Your ver-y name puts the proud to shame,
and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight,
for the world is a-bout to turn.*

(Refrain)

*From the halls of power to the for-tress tower,
not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king be-ware for your jus-tice tears
ev-ery ty-rant from his throne.
The hun-gry poor shall weep no more,
for the food they can nev-er earn;*

*there are ta-bles spread; ev-ery mouth be fed,
for the world is a-bout to turn.*

(Refrain)

*Though the na-tions rage from age to age,
we re-mem-ber who holds us fast:
God's mer-cy must de-liv-er us
from the con-quer-or's crush-ing grasp.
This sav-ing word that our fore-bears heard
is the prom-ise that holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God,
who is turn-ing the world a-round.*

(Refrain)

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

The Prayers of the People

The Lord's 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 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.**

Invitation to the Offering

In these moments, God who comes,
remind us of those who are yearning to be lifted to their feet,
those who hunger for hope, those who look for peace,
and may our gifts be used to serve them.

In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Offertory

* Hymn No. 606 “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” OLD 100TH

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

* Prayer of Dedication

THE SENDING FORTH

* Hymn No. 110

“LOVE HAS COME”

BRING A TORCH

*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 un-to you, a Sav-ior!
Love! Love! Glo-ry to God on high!*

*Love is born! Come, share in the won-der.
Love is God now a-sleep in the hay.
See the glow in the eyes of his moth-er;
what is the name her heart is say-ing?
Love! Love! Love is the name she whis-pers.
Love! Love! Je-sus, Em-man-u-el.*

*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!*

* Benediction

* Sung Response **“COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS”** (Verse 1)

*Come, Thou long-ex-pect-ed Je-sus, Born to set Thy peo-ple free;
From our fears and sins re-lease us; Let us find our rest in Thee.
Is-rael's strength and con-so-la-tion, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear de-sire of ev-ery na-tion, Joy of ev-ery long-ing heart.*

* Postlude

MUSIC ATTRIBUTIONS

“Wreath-Lighting Song”

Text: Dwyn M. Mounger, 2021

Music: Piae Cantiones, 1582; arr. Ernest C. MacMillan, 1930

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“Lord, Have Mercy”

Text: Trad. Liturgical text

Music: American folk melody; adapt. Marcia Pruner, 1980; arr. Richard Proulx, 1984

Music Adapt. © 1980 Church Pension Fund

Music Arr. © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

“My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout”

(Canticle of the Turning)

Text: Rory Cooney, 1990

Music: Irish melody; arr. Rory Cooney, 1990

Text and Music Arr. © 1990 GIA Publications, Inc.

“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

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“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

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