

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.
Please put those in the offering plate.

**The Service for the Lord's Day
Bethel Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
1st Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2017 - 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

"O COME, O COME EMMANUEL"

arr. Lanz

Call to Worship (*L = Leader*)

L: Why do we do this, year after year:

looking heavenward, listening for angels, waiting for the birth?

What are we hoping for? What are we expecting?

Choir

L: Why do we do this, year after year:

praying for peace when war surrounds,

calling for calm when chaos looms,

hoping for the holy in the midst of the ordinary?

What is it we have heard? What are we expecting?

Choir

L: And so it happens – year after year – that when the world least expects it

– in the dark of the night, in times of great chaos,

surrounded by the lowliest and sought by the wise

– that love creeps in and is born to us.

The angels sing the hopeful glory of God.

Congregation joins the choir in singing

Prayer of Invocation

Let us pray:

God of Advent, we live in the promise
that you will fulfill your will for earth.

Yet nations are in chaos and our lives in turmoil.

Gather us together to begin our watch for the coming of your Promised One.

Lead us through the chaos by a watchful heeding spirit.

In the name of the One who is to come, we pray. Amen.

* Hymn No. 82 **“COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS”**

HYFRYDOL

* Call to Confession

Like a faded, dry leaf that the wind blows away, our sins dry us up;
faded and brittle, we are carried off by the wrongs we have done.

Yet God loves us still

and is able to restore and renew us with the water of life.

* Corporate Prayer of Confession

**God-with-us, even in Advent, we confess that you can seem far away.
You are hidden when we need you near.**

**In our hurt, doubt, and fear, we do not try to draw closer to you;
instead, we lash out—against you, our neighbor, even those we love.**

Forgive us, we pray, and come to save us!

**Let your face shine until our tears are dried, our sins are faded,
and our hope is restored.**

After all, we belong to you, and in your hands, we can be made new.

...(silent and personal confession) In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

* Sung Response No. 437 **“YOU ARE THE LORD, GIVER OF MERCY!”**

You are the Lord, giv-er of mer-cy!

You are the Christ, giv-er of mer-cy!

You are the Lord, giv-er of mer-cy!

* Declaration of Forgiveness

The grace of God, given to us in Christ Jesus, strengthens us to the end
so that we may be blameless when Christ comes again.

Thanks be to God, who is faithful

and has called us into the fellowship of the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord!

* Sung Response No. 544 **“BLESS THE LORD”**

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God’s ho-ly name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in-to life.

THE WORD

Children’s Moment

Choral Anthem

“HE COMES TO US IN SIMPLE THINGS”

by M. K. Bealle

Prayer for Illumination

Let us pray:

Guide us, O God, by your Word and Spirit,

that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom,

and in your will discover your peace;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings from Holy Scripture

Wisdom Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 *(Prayer for Israel’s Restoration)* Pg. 511

Prophet Isaiah 64:1-9 *(A Pray of Penitence)* Pg. 652

Sermon: “Wilderness Waiting”

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

* Affirmation of Faith

At the advent of Advent,

it's worth remembering who we're waiting for ...

not a child in a manger, all swaddling clothes and innocence,

but a man on a mission –

with an uncompromising agenda –

one that gives the whole world to the meek;

one that asks us to give up all that the world tells us is important;

one that says that true power can be found

housed in the frailty of forgiveness, the virtue of vulnerability –

that says there is freedom

in saddling ourselves to the needs of others.

We are waiting for a rebel. So get ready.

Because if you acknowledge his birth,

if you are on your guard, if you lay a stake in his claim

that God can burst through and change the world,

then he'll have no choice but to begin that change in you.

Remember who we're waiting for.

* Hymn No. 756

“O GOD OF EVERY NATION”

LLANGLOFFAN

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Call to Offering

Trusting in the sure promises of Christ,

and grateful for the Spirit's sustaining power,

let us bring our tithes and offerings to God.

Offertory

“WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS”

arr. Purifoy

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

* Prayer of Dedication

Let us pray:

God of righteousness, you have saved us from the worst the world can do and have promised to redeem the whole creation when Christ comes again.

In faith and hope we offer our gifts of money and self, that we may be part of what you are doing in the world even now, as we watch for Christ's coming in glory. Amen.

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Great Thanksgiving (*L = Leader, P = People*)

L: The Lord be with you.

P: And also with you.

L: Lift up your hearts.

P: We lift them up to the Lord.

L: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

P: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

How can we thank you, O God?

For sun and moon and stars,

for breath and life and all things good,

for your steadfast promise and your faithful love,

for the day that is surely coming when all things will be made new.

With saints, with angels, and with the whole creation,

we join the ancient and eternal hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,

God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We give you thanks, Holy God, for Jesus,
who came to be your living Word,
to baptize us with Spirit and fire,
to feed the hungry, to humble the mighty,
and to announce the good news of your coming realm.

With thanks and praise we offer ourselves to you,
sharing this holy meal,
remembering Christ's dying and rising,
and praying: Come Lord Jesus!

**Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us –
this bread, this cup, these people –
Christ's body and blood, given in love for the world.
Make us one in the Spirit, one in the church, and one with Christ our Lord.

Make us gentle, joyful, thankful people,
serving our neighbors, worshipping you alone.

Keep us in the peace of Christ
until you gather us at your table in glory.

Even now, a voice is crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord!

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor are yours, almighty God,
now and forever. Amen.

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

Words of Institution

