

# 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.)**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
**December 4, 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 are you afraid of?" From the voices of different generations, hear their answers:

... ..

Adult: Today we light the candle of peace, because we so desperately need God's peace in the midst of all we fear.

*(We light the candle of Peace)*

Adult: May this light be a reminder that Christ is coming.

God was with generations before, God is with us today,  
and God will be with us tomorrow.

Even now, God is on the way. Amen.

Call to Worship

L: My soul magnifies the Lord.

**P: My spirit rejoices in God my savior.**

L: For the mighty one has done great things,

**P: And holy is God's name.**

Prayer of Invocation

God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation.

Make us ready for the message that prepares the way,

that with uprightness of heart and holy joy

we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ,

who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

\* Hymn No. 82

**“COME, THOU LONG-EXPECTED JESUS”**

HYFRYDOL

*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.*

*Born thy peo-ple to de-liv-er,  
born a child and yet a king,  
born to reign in us for-ev-er,  
now thy gra-cious king-dom bring.  
By thine own e-ter-nal Spir-it  
rule in all our hearts a-lone;  
by thine all-suf-fi-cient mer-it  
raise us to thy glo-rious throne.*

\* Call to Confession

Fear can be a good thing. It can help us be attentive while driving down the highway. It can alert us to possible accidents. It can motivate us to do our best.

However, fear can also be harmful.

For so many of us, fear of the other, fear of failure, or fear of the unknown has led us to make sinful choices in our lives — choices such as building walls or tearing others down.

Today, in confession, we ask for mercy and pray for guidance.

As we confess, we come before an entirely merciful and loving God who says to us, “Do not be afraid.”

Let us pray:

\* Prayer of Confession

**Patient God, you know just how often**

**we make decisions from a place of fear rather than love.**

**You know just how often we allow fear to take the place of logic,  
fanning unhealthy fires in our lives.**

**You know just how often we tuck your words, “Do not be afraid”  
on dusty shelves and in the back of closets,  
stubbornly holding onto our own point of view.**

**Forgive us for giving fear the microphone.**

**Silence the voices of scarcity, shame, and rejection,  
which spark and feed so much of our fear, to recenter us in love.**

**With hope 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

Family of faith, even when we forget God's words,  
God does not forget us.

Even when we lose our way, God does not lose us.

Even when we fall short or make mistakes,  
God forgives and holds onto us.

We are known, forgiven, and loved. Thanks be to God! Amen.

\* Sung Response No. 89 (*Refrain*)

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

THE WORD

Children's Moment

Choral Anthem

Prayer for Illumination

Let us pray:

Holy God, whether it's through angels or music,  
friendships or sermons, study or nature —  
when you speak, we long to hear it.

In a world as chaotic and broken as ours,  
we could use your words of hope and healing.

With gratitude we pray, Amen.

Readings from Scripture

|         |                     |                                      |         |
|---------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|---------|
| Prophet | Isaiah 11:1-10      | <i>(The Peaceful Kingdom)</i>        | Pg. 602 |
| Wisdom  | Psalm 72:1-7; 18-19 | <i>(Prayer ... for the King)</i>     | Pg. 504 |
| Gospel  | Luke 1:26-38        | <i>(The Birth of Jesus Foretold)</i> | Pg. 53  |

Sermon

“God Meets Us in our Fear”

## RESPONSE TO THE WORD

### \* Affirmation of Faith

**We believe in a God who knows our fears.**

**We believe in a God who says, “Be not afraid.”**

**We believe in a God who kicks off her shoes  
and wades into the muck of our lives with us.**

**We believe in a God who stitches herself to our heels,  
and invites us to dance.**

**We believe in a God who hemmed stars into the night sky  
so that we can find our way home,  
and who sends us friends with open doors,  
so we can find our way to love.**

**We believe in a God who finds us in our fear  
and does not leave us alone.**

**Thanks be to God for a love like that. Amen.**

## THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

### Invitation to Give

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 peace amidst our tribulation and fear.

Let us give our gifts now to God  
so that God’s peace may seep into our chaotic world  
and continue to live on in generations to come.

### Offertory

### \* 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

God of peace, 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 peace  
in the midst of our chaotic and distressed world.

Bless all of us here, that we may embody your peace  
and be your partners in peacemaking. Amen.

ADVENT COMMUNION

by Rev. Gord Waldie

Invitation to the Lord's Table

God's Banquet is coming — the time we await  
when all will gather from East and West and from North and South.

A banquet where the rich and powerful  
will sit with the weak and poverty-stricken.

A table where young and old will learn from each other.

A time when all will sit together in peace,  
and the wolf will lie down with the lamb.

Here at this table we get a foretaste of God's banquet.

This is indeed God's table, and all who seek to follow The Way  
are welcome to eat and drink.

Come and taste the grace eternal, come and see that God is good.

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

L: God is with us.

**P: We are not alone.**

L: Christ is present here.

**P: The Spirit moves within us.**

L: Let us give thanks to God.

**P: In memory and in hope.**

Blessings be to you, Creator God,  
who in the beginning brought light and life to the world  
and who continues to bring love and light everlasting.

Your song of wisdom echoes through the ages,  
your ancient promise still brings us hope.  
Over the ages you have called people  
to embrace your hope and share your love.  
But even when they have closed their ears to the song  
you did not stop singing.  
You sent prophets and messengers to your people,  
reminding them of the promised time of peace and justice  
that would surround the world.  
They came in the midst of our despair and filled us with hope.  
And then you came to a young woman named Mary  
and laid out the promise in a new way,  
promising her a son who would be called Jesus.  
Promising her that through her son the world would be changed.  
And now as we prepare for that child to be born,  
we echo the ancient cry:  
O come, O come Emmanuel.

We lift our voices in praise, and say together:  
**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**  
**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**  
**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.**  
**Hosanna in the highest.**

Yet even now, as we prepare to celebrate his birth,  
we remember the life that this baby came to live.  
We remember how he broke the bonds of human tradition  
to show all what the banquet of hope could be,  
as he ate openly with the despised and the outcast of his world.  
Remembering the birth of the child in the stable,  
we remember also his life, his death and his resurrection.



We remember how he poured his love out to all he met,  
and we look forward to his return  
to bring a reign of peace, love, and justice.  
And in our remembering we speak out the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died;  
Christ is risen;  
Christ will come again!**

God, you poured out your Spirit on Mary,  
and she sang words of defiance and hope.  
In the same way, we ask that you may pour out your Spirit  
upon us who are gathered here.  
As we eat and drink may we know your presence,  
may we be opened to the possibilities of your hope and power,  
and may we be strengthened in our time of waiting for peace and justice,  
so that we will have the courage to make the Christmas promise a reality.

And now, as beloved children of a loving Parent, we pray:

Lord's Prayer (*"sins ...sin against us"*)

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

*(Ushers give out bread and juice to congregation, to choir, to liturgist,  
to pianist, and to presider. Presider gives bread to ushers.*

*When all has been distributed, the presider speaks these words:)*

The body of Christ, given for you. Amen. *(All eat bread).*

The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen. *(All drink juice).*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray:

God of pregnant expectations,

God of Christmas promise, God of child-like hope,  
we have eaten, and we have drunk, from your table.

May the eating and the drinking fill us with hope in a world of despair.

May we be beacons of hope as we wait for the day  
when the world will be changed.

Grant that this taste of your banquet which is to come

would give us the hunger for peace and justice in our community  
and around the world. Amen.

## THE SENDING FORTH

\* Hymn No. 101

“NO WIND AT THE WINDOW”

COLUMCILLE

*No wind at the win-dow, no knock on the door;  
no light from the lamp-stand, no foot on the floor;  
no dream born of tired-ness, no ghost raised by fear:  
just an an-gel and a wom-an and a voice in her ear.*

*“O Mar-y, O Mar-y, don't hide from my face.  
Be glad that you're fa-vored and filled with God's grace.  
The time for re-deem-ing the world has be-gun,  
and you are re-quest-ed to moth-er God's Son.”*

*“This child must be born that the king-dom might come:  
sal-va-tion for man-y, de-struc-tion for some;  
both end and be-gin-ning, both mes-sage and sign;  
both vic-tor and vic-tim, both yours and di-vine.”*

*No pay-ment was prom-ised, no prom-is-es made;  
no wed-ding was dat-ed, no blue-print dis-played.  
Yet Mar-y, con-sent-ing to what none could guess,  
re-plied with con-vic-tion, "Tell God I say, Yes."*

\* Charge and Blessing

As you leave this place, may you go knowing that  
from generation to generation, we have been claimed and loved.  
From generation to generation, God has been by our side.  
From generation to generation, we are not alone.  
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.

\* Sung Response No. 91 “COME, COME EMMANUEL”

*Come, come Em-man-u-el.*

*Come, Em-man-u-el.*

*Come, come Em-man-u-el.*

*Come, Em-man-u-el.*

\* Postlude

## MUSIC ATTRIBUTIONS

“Lord, Have Mercy”

Text: Trad. Liturgical text

Music: American folk melody; arr. Richard Proulx, 1984

Music Arr. © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc.

“For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits”

Text & Music: Marty Haugen, 1982

Text & Music © 1982 GIA Publications, Inc.

“No Wind at the Window”

Text: John L. Bell, 1992

Music: Irish melody; arr. John L. Bell, 1992

Text & Music © 1992 WGRG, Iona Community (admin. GIA Publications, Inc.)

“Come, Come Emmanuel”

Text and Music: James J. Chepponis, 1995

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## Public Domain

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

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