

*Welcome to  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*November 27, 2022  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent*

**MISSION**

To worship God, to learn and live the Word of God,  
to engage in Christian fellowship and service, to invite others  
to join us on our faith journey in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

## ***First time guests, welcome!***

*We are so glad you are worshiping with us this morning.  
Please sign our guest book in the Narthex and identify yourself to one of our  
ushers or Welcome Team members.*

*A comfortable space for families is available under the balcony.  
All are invited to stand for sections marked with a cross (✝);  
however, some may choose to remain seated.  
Congregational responses are in **bold**.*

### **IN PERSON ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY**

11/20/2022 - 58



**10:00 am Worship is available via  
Live Stream (access from the church website:  
<http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org>  
and Radio Broadcast on WAAM 1600 am**



**Order of Worship  
November 27, 2022  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**WELCOME & SHARING PARISH LIFE**

**PRELUDE**                      *"From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" –  
Old Netherlands Melody/ Arr. Gordon Young  
Gail Jennings, Organ*

**† CALL TO WORSHIP RESPONSIVE**

Pastor Diane

One: Wait upon the Lord.

**All: Be strong and courageous.**

One: Wait upon the Lord. That's what Abraham did, even though he was about a hundred years old.

**All: And Sarah's womb was barren.**

One: Still, Abraham waited in faith.

**All: Fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.**

One: Wait upon the Lord.

**All: Be strong and courageous. Wait upon the Lord!**

**† HYMN OF GATHERING      #119 – O Come, O Come Emmanuel**

## The Holy Fire of Advent

The fire of hope awakes our hearts  
when in despair we're sleeping.  
It speaks of light while through the night  
the shadows swiftly creep in.  
Come, see the sparks of life  
that burn against the pow'r of strife;  
Come, stand within its glow,  
the holy fire of Advent.

*Tune: Greensleeves, English Ballad, 16th cent. – the same tune as “What Child is This?”  
Lyrics by Rev. Elana Keppel Levy, 2022 used with permission*

### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Pastor Diane

O Lord, tear apart the heavens and come down. Be our strength every morning and our salvation in the night of despair. Show forth your power and might, just as you did in the days of Abraham and Sarah; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit—God forever. Amen.

### PRAYER OF CONFESSION - Unison

Pastor Diane

We admit that we have become impatient with ourselves, each other, and sometimes with you. We have turned to our own way and have gone astray from your will. Lost in sin and needing to become strong and courageous, we ask you, O Lord, to forgive our sin, cleanse our hearts, and keep us patiently waiting for the promised coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Silent Prayers may be offered  
(let us observe 30 seconds of silence to breathe and reflect)*

### ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND GRACE

Pastor Diane

Believe and receive the good news! God sent God's Son, the Babe of Bethlehem, to show God's infinite love and forgiveness for all people. Your sins are forgiven in the holy name of Christ who came and indeed, will come again. Amen.

† **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Pastor Diane

*(please say in the way most familiar to you)*

**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 debts (sins/trespasses),  
as we forgive our debtors (those who sin/trespass 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.**

† **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Pastor Diane

ONE: May the Peace of Christ be with you!

ALL: **And also with you!**

ONE: Let us share a sign of Christ's peace.

† **SONG OF PRAISE #28 - In the Name of the Lord**

**There is strength in the name of the Lord;  
There is pow'r in the name of the Lord;  
There is hope in the name of the Lord!  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

**SPECIAL MUSIC**

*"Comfort Ye, My People" and "Ev'ry Valley Shall Be Exalted" from Messiah - George Frideric Handel*

Ian Pathak, tenor

**CHILDREN'S MOMENT**

**SCRIPTURE READING -**

Pastor Diane

**Genesis 17:1-9**

When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall

be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” And God said to Abraham, “As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations.

### **Romans 4:13-21**

For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah's womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

### **Matthew 1:16-25**

Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just



† PRAYER OF DEDICATION - UNISON

Pastor Diane

**Because of You, Abundant God, we have blessings to offer to others. May You use our gifts to restore hope to the despairing, to feed the hungry, and to fill the empty hearts of the lonely. This we ask in the name of Jesus. Amen.**

† HYMN OF SENDING #171 – God’s Love Made Visible

† BENEDICTION

Pastor Diane

May God give us the faith of Abraham, the hope of Isaiah, the joy of Elizabeth, and the gratitude of Zechariah. God will make us strong and courageous.

† POSTLUDE

*And the Glory of the Lord (Messiah) by GF Handel*  
Gail Jennings, Organ



**HELPING IN THE SERVICES TODAY**

**Pastor:** Pastor Diane White

**Director of Music:** Dr. Naki Kripfgans

**Piano / Organ:** Gail Jennings

**Sound Technician:** Kurt Schmerberg

**Video Director:** Dan Blakeney

**Liturgists:**