

*Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*December 24, 2024
Christmas Eve*



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.

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We are so glad that you are joining your voice with ours in worship today!
Everyone, please sign our green friendship pads, found at the end of each pew.

If you like, a comfortable space for families is available under the balcony.

God put the wiggle in children, and we welcome them in worship!

Children are also welcome to participate in Sunday school, if they prefer.

All are invited to stand, as you are able, for sections marked with a cross ();

Congregational responses are in bold text.

Prayer Requests

Fill out a prayer request card found in the pews.

You may give it to one of the pastors before the service

or to an usher during the Hymn of Response.



BIRTHDAYS

Jesus!

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sundays at 10:00 am

Worship is available in the sanctuary, via Phone Streaming and Livestream

To access the **Livestream** go to our website: <https://www.bethlehem-ucc.org>

To join the **Phone Stream**, call **855-669-8965** prior to the start of worship.

You may **sign up to be called by the Phone Stream** by contacting the church office during regular business hours.

(You'll be called about 5 minutes before worship begins.)

December 24, 2024 – Christmas Eve

7:00 pm

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Bethlehem Brass Quintet

Becky Bloomer & Ryo Morita, trumpets; Connor Monday, horn;
John Gruber, trombone; Phillip Bloomer, tuba

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND SHARING CHURCH LIFE

CENTERING MUSIC

Gesù bambino

- Pietro Yon

PJ Lindemann, soprano; Naki Kripfgans, organ

OPENING WORSHIP

† CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light!

All: Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is our light and life!

One: Let us receive our Savior,

All: and praise God's holy name for this gift of love!

† HYMN OF GATHERIN *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

come and behold him, born the King of angels;

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

2 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!

Glory to God, all glory in the highest; O come, let us adore him, O come, let us

adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!

3 Child, for us sinners poor and in a manger, we would embrace you,

with love and awe; Who would not love you, loving us so dearly?

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,

4 Yea, Lord, we greet you, born for our salvation, Jesus to you be all glory given;

Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing; O come, let us adore him, O come, let

us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ, the Lord! O come let us adore him,

Christ, the Lord!

† **OPENING PRAYER** (unison)

Almighty God, you surprised a world, by coming not in clashing thunder or flashing lights but in the quiet and simple splendor of a child's radiant face. Help us to understand this mystery of love beyond all loves, so that we may be led to a new kind of love: a love that loves not by what we can get but in what we can give, a love that counts not who is worthy to receive but a love that is showered freely on all. Show us the way of Bethlehem's child, so that in seeing, we may believe, and in believing, we may learn again how to truly love. In his name we pray. Amen.

† **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

The Peace Carol
Bethlehem Chancel Choir

- *Bob Beers, arr. Greg Gilpin*

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:14-16

Lighting the CHRIST CANDLE

One: Advent is the period of preparation before Christmas. It is a journey of faith. As people of Hope, we lit the candle of Hope.

All: As people of Peace, we lit the candle of Peace.

One: As people of Joy, we lit the candle of Joy.

All: As people of Love, we lit the candle of Love.

One: As John came many years ago to testify to the light, we also come and testify to the Light of the world. We light the Christ candle so that it may shine through the darkness. The true Light that enlightens everyone is in the world. Some reject the Light, some receive it, and some believe.

All: We come as children of God to witness to the Light and Christ's glory, which is full of grace and truth.

Prayer:

One: Magnificent God, you are here among us, as a sleeping child – Emmanuel, God with us – here at last, unprotected by cherubim, not throned in splendor, unaware of shepherds and animals, needing a warm bed, a mother's care, needing us as we need you to live and grow. You are a great wonder. You are the Light of our lives, the bright shining star of Hope, Peace, Love and Joy, wrapped in swaddling clothes. We give you profound thanks and praise for this glorious gift!

All: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

Sung Response: **NCH # 124** *Away in a Manger v.1*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.**

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

MUSICAL RESPONSE **NCH # 133 v.4** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.**

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;

O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

From the Prophets: **Isaiah 62:6-12**

From the Gospel: **Luke 2:1-20**

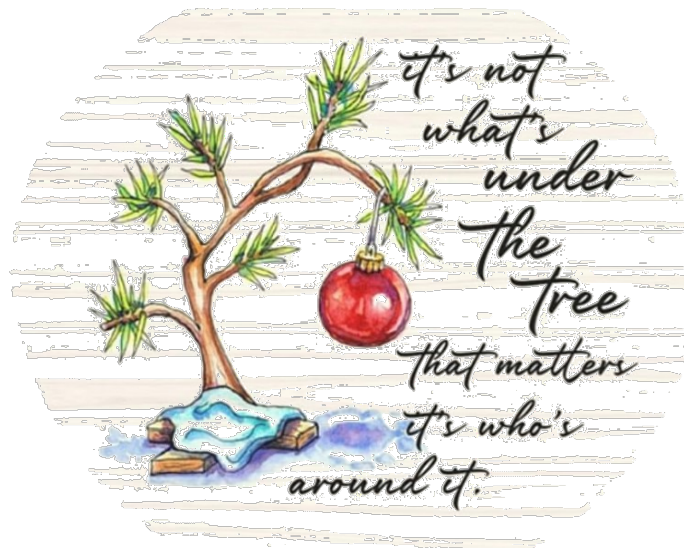
One: The gospel of the Lord for the people of God!

All: **Thanks be to God!**

MESSAGE

That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown

Pastor Dawn



RESPONDING TO THE WORD

† HYMN OF REFLECTION ***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***

1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King;
peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the new-born King!"

† **Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

Holy God, we thank you and praise you for the greatest gift to humankind – Jesus Christ, our Lord. With grateful hearts, we humbly offer you the gifts of ourselves, our time and our possessions. Bless the gifts we offer. And by your grace, through our gifts make your Light and Love shine brightly in the lives of others. In the name of the blessed baby Jesus, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

† **SHARING THE CHRIST LIGHT** *Silent Night, Holy Night*

When lighting candles:

the lit candle is always held upright & the unlight candle is tilted into its flame.

1st verse sung twice, the first time in German, the second time in English

**1 Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Alles schläft, einsam wacht
Nur das traute, hochheilige Paar, Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar
Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh, Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!**

**1 Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.**

**2 Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.**

**3 Silent night, holy night, Child of God, love's pure light,
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace;
Jesus Lord at thy birth, Jesus Lord at thy birth.**

WORDS OF SENDING

† **HYMN OF PARTING** *Joy to the World*

**1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**2 Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

3 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.

POSTLUDE

Rejoice! Christ Is Born! - Larry Shackley/brass quintet arr. by Ernest Brandon
Bethlehem Chancel Choir; Bethlehem Brass Quintet

*Merry Christmas to all!
And God bless us, everyone!*

OUR TEAM:

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dawn Christenson

Associate Pastor: Rev. Diane White

Ministers: All the people

Director of Music & Organist: Dr. Naki Sung Kripfgans

Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan

Ensembles: Bethlehem Chancel Choir & Bethlehem Handbell Quartet

Soloist: PJ Lindemann

Guest Musicians: Becky Bloomer, Ryo Morita, Connor Monday, John Gruber, Phillip Bloomer & Andrew Brandon-Rumman

Liturgist: Jan Eadie

Sound Technician: Jesse Wilcox

Videographer: Dan Blakeney

Streaming Technician: Oliver Kripfgans

Security Volunteer: John Irwin

Reach out to us:

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