

*Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*November 30, 2025
First 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.

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.



CHURCH LIFE

No Bethlehem members were known to be in the hospital as of Wednesday

ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Total: 90 (In Person:73, YouTube:15, Phone:2)

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 will be called about 5 minutes before worship begins.)

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND SHARING CHURCH LIFE

CENTERING MUSIC

It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

-Richard Willis/arr. Craig Phillips

Cary Dumas, organ

OPENING WORSHIP

† **CALL TO WORSHIP** (adapted from Psalm 121)

One: I lift my eyes to the hills; from where will my help come?

**All: Our help comes from the Lord, Maker of heaven and earth.
Let us hope in the Lord always.**

† **HYMN OF GATHERING**

NCH # 46

Hope of the World

† **OPENING PRAYER** (unison) adapted from a prayer by Janet Lees

Holy One, we wait for you and in your Word we hope...your Word made flesh in a tiny infant, who is the Light of the world. How amazing is your steadfast love, O God, to join us in the messiness of this earthly life, and redeemed us. With love so great showered upon us, how can we not have hope? You ARE our hope. With grateful hearts 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 *In The Bleak Midwinter* - arr. Stephen DeCesare
Bailey Tallman, mezzo soprano; Cary Dumas, piano

LITANY OF THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Scripture Reading: Jeremiah 29:11

Lighting the Candle of HOPE

One: Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me?

All: Hope in the Lord; for we shall again praise God.

One: Yes, the Lord is our help and our strength.

All: Let us Hope in the Lord always!

One: We light the candle of Hope, in anticipation of the promises of God coming true. We look forward to Christmas, because of the life and Hope that it promises. Though we live in a world filled with suffering and sadness, we know that a tiny baby will change the world – O Come, Emmanuel! Because of you we are a people who refuse to give up Hope.

All: Yes, we have Hope, for a light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it!

Advent Prayer

One: God of Hope, we wait for you to come to us again, as a baby – small and vulnerable – to grace our poverty and our humanity, with a heart-beat, a breath and a cry. May the guiding Spirit again bring your waiting and our waiting together, to lift up the vulnerable and confirm the beauty of our humanity – each heart-beat, every breath and cry – birthing renewed lives filled with everlasting Hope.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, Come. Amen.

Sung Response: "The Advent Candles"

(to the tune of NCH # 124, *Away in a Manger*)

A candle is burning, a flame warm and bright;

A candle of Hope lights November's dark night.

Together sing blessings, spread Hope everywhere.

Our hearts we prepare now, for Jesus is near.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

MUSICAL RESPONSE NCH # 129 v.2 *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice*

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;

Now you know of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!

God has opened heaven's door, and you are blessed forevermore.

Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!

SCRIPTURE READINGS

From the Prophets: Isaiah 2:1-5

From the Gospel: Matthew 24:36-44

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

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

MESSAGE

Waitin' & hopin'

Pastor Dawn

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

† HYMN OF REFLECTION

NCH # 103

Watcher, Tell Us of the Night

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns

Silent Prayer & Sung Petition *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*

Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your spirit in this place;

**Lord, listen to your children praying; send us love, send us power,
send us grace.**

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Please use these words or those most familiar to you.

Our God in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come; your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING

Invitation to give

Offertory

Conditor alme siderum (Creator of the Stars of Night), Plainsong Mode IV

- arr. Rebecca Groom te Velde

Cary Dumas, organ

† Hymn of Thanksgiving NCH # 780 (lyrics #778)

Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God all creatures here below;

Praise God for all that love has done;

Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.

† Prayer of Dedication (unison)

O God, what can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise one, I would do my part. Yet what I can, I give gladly. And most of all, I give him my heart. Bless our gifts and our hearts given in gratitude for the greatest gift of all – Jesus, our Savior, in whose name we pray. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

† CLOSING HYMN

NCH # 300

Jesus Shall Reign

WORDS OF SENDING

POSTLUDE

Proclamation: Wachet Auf (Sleepers, Wake!)

-Philipp Nicolai/arr. A.D. Miller

Cary Dumas, organ

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

Guest Organist: Cary Dumas

Soloist: Bailey Tallman

Liturgist: Please see [Signup Genius](#) for open dates

Sound Technician: Dennis Huibregtse

Videographer: Dan Blakeney

Streaming Technician: Jennifer Vasquez

Security Volunteer: John Irwin

Community Time Host: Jacquie Katz

Reach out to us:

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a just world for all