

YOUR PASTORS

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Welcome the Darkness Seeing in the Darkness

November 25, 2018

Welcome to Bethel Lutheran Church

We are glad you are here and we pray God will be real to you as you worship. Bethel is a Reconciling in Christ congregation. Knowing God loves all creation and holds us all, we welcome you who walk through our doors and you who are outside those doors. We welcome everyone and honor the rich diversity and giftedness that age, sexual orientation, race, belief, emotional and physical health, gender identity, marital status and station in life bring to the Bethel family and our relationships.

Prelude

We Gather Together

Welcome

For the Darkness Litany (Adapted from an Anglican Litany, 1986)

For the darkness of waiting Of not knowing what is to come Of staying ready and quiet and attentive, We praise you, O God.

For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

For the darkness of staying silent For the terror of having nothing to say And for the greater terror Of needing to say nothing, We praise you, O God.

For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

For the darkness of loving In which it is safe to surrender To let go of our self-protection And to stop holding back our desire, We praise you, O God. For the darkness of choosing When you give us the moment To speak, and act, and change, And we cannot know what we have set in motion, but we still have to take the risk, We praise you, O God.

For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

For the darkness of hoping In a world which longs for you, For the wrestling and laboring of all creation For wholeness and justice and freedom, We praise you, O God.

For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

For the darkness and the light are both alike to you.

Restrooms are located in the basement on the east side of the building. A gender neutral restroom located behind the worship space next to the church office. Please ask the Usher or Greeter for assistance. There is also a rocking chair in the rear of the Sanctuary. Please use it as you wish.

Gathering Song

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in Ionely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel.

Greeting

The grace of our Redeemer, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.



Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory



Salutation

God be with you. And also with you.

Prayer of the Day (from Night Visions by Jan L. Richardson)

"These days bathe us in images of abundance and happiness, but we pray for those who do not find in this time a season of goodness and light. Give us eyes to see into the shadows cast by the millions of blinking lights; ears to listen beyond the carols to hear the anguished weeping; and hearts that long for the liberation your advent truly brings." Amen

We Hear God's Word

First Reading

Revelation 1:4b-8

Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.

To him who loves us and freed us from our sins by his blood, and made us to be a kingdom, priests serving his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him,

even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

P: Hear the Word of God.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

from Learning to Walk in the Dark

by Barbara Brown Taylor, New York: Harper, 2014

"The first time you speak of these things in a full solar church, you can usually get a hearing. Continue to speak of them and you may be reminded that God will not let you be tested beyond your strength. All that is required of you is to have faith. If you still do not get the message, sooner or later it will be made explicit for you: the darkness is your own fault, because you do not have enough faith.

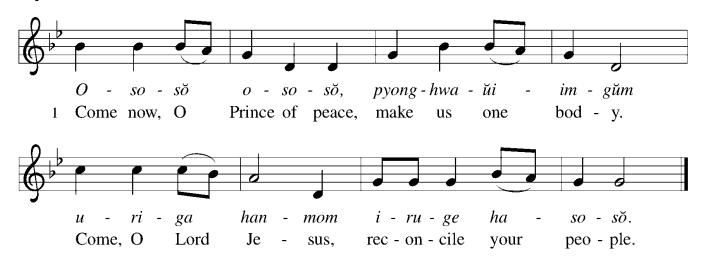
"Having been on the receiving end of this verdict more than once, I do not think it is as mean as it sounds. The people who said it seemed genuinely to care about me. They honestly offered me the best they had. Since their sunny spirituality had not given them many skills for operating in the dark, I had simply exhausted their resources. They could not enter the dark without putting their own faith at risk, so they did the best they could. They stood where I could still hear them and begged me to come back into the light.

(Pause)

"If I could have, I would have. There are days when I would give anything to share their vision of the world and their ability to navigate it safely, but my spiritual gifts do not seem to include the gift of solar spirituality. Instead I have been given the gift of lunar spirituality, in which the divine light available to me waxes and wanes with the season. When I go out on my porch at night, the moon never looks the same way twice. Some nights it is as round and bright as a headlight; other nights it is thinner than the sickle hanging in my garage.. Some nights it is high in the sky, and other nights low over the mountains. Some nights it is altogether gone, leaving a vast web of stars that are brighter in its absence. All in all, the moon is a truer mirror for my soul than the sun that looks the same way every day.

(Pause)

"After I stopped thinking that all these fluctuations meant something was wrong with me, a great curiosity opened up: what would my life with God look like if I trusted this rhythm instead of opposing it? What was I afraid of, exactly, and how much was I missing by reaching reflexively for the lights? Did I have enough faith to explore dark instead of using my faith to bar all my doors? How much more was in store for me if I could learn to walk in the dark? **Gospel Acclamation**



The Holy Gospel according to John, the eighteenth chapter.

Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."

P: This is the Gospel of Christ.

C: Thanks be to God.

Children's Message

Adult Message—JulieAnn Edman and Pastor Moe



Hymn of the Day



Prayers of the People (We respond after each petition.)

God of darkness and light, hear our prayer.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. And also with you.



WE CELEBRATE THE MEAL

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of life, you give us these gifts of the earth, these resources of our life and our labor. Take them, offered in great thanksgiving, and use them to set a table that will heal the whole creation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Light. Amen

Advent Eucharistic Prayer

May God be with you. And also with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to God.

Let us give thanks to our God. It is right to give God thanks and praise.

It is our duty and delight to offer our thanks and praise in this Advent season of lengthening nights and increasing darkness reminding us that there is nowhere you are not, that darkness is as light to you. **We praise you, God of day and God of darkness.**

God of day and God of darkness, you offer us the gifts of darkness hidden from our eyes. We praise you for the gifts of night.

God of chaos and God of creation, in the beginning your Spirit brooded over the darkness bringing all that is into being.

Brood over our present darkness with your power.

God of stars and God of candles, Abraham and Sarah lay in the barren sand pondering the stars of heaven to hear the promise: so numerous shall your descendants be. We praise you for the gifts of promise hidden in the stars.

God of sleep and God of dreams, Jacob lay his head upon a rock at Bethel and dreamed of angels ascending and descending on a ladder to heaven. Surely God is in this place and we did not know it!

God of night and God of liberation, our Hebrew ancestors fled Egypt in the dark led by a pillar of fire and a cloud. Through the dark sea, you led your people on foot while walls of water stood on either side. **We praise you for your Passover from death to life.**

We praise and thank you, God of day and God of darkness for your gifts in this season: (All sing from "Slowly, Slowly the Evening Falls")

Praise the God of the evening, Mother of the fertile dark. Praise the God of the silence in the void between the stars. Send your Holy Shadows, cover us O God of might. Make us whole and keep us in the womb of the night.

In the darkest of time you sent bright angels to shepherds watching their flocks by night announcing good news of great joy.

We praise you for the advent of your son, Jesus.

He shared our days and our darkness. He brought sight to the blind and life to the listless. He preached good news to the poor. He brought the empire of the heavens near. He planted the seeds of our presence in the dark soil of history.

We praise you for the mystery of life germinating in our midst.

In the night in which he was betrayed it was dark. Our Lord Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his friends saying, "Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this to remember me."

Come, Lord Jesus. Feed us with this bread of heaven.

In the same way he took a cup, gave thanks and gave it to them saying, "Take and drink. This is my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin and the healing of the world. Do this to remember me."

Come, Lord Jesus. Nourish us with this cup of salvation.

We praise you for raising Jesus from the dark tomb bringing life and light to our world. **Our souls awaken in our tombs at your coming.**

Send your Holy Shadow. Cover us, O God of night. Come, Holy Spirit, make us whole and keep us in the womb of your love.

Join our prayers with all who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who **sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.**

We join our voices in the prayer Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer (alternative version by Parker J. Palmer, 1991)

Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother, Holy and blessed is your true name. We pray for your reign of peace to come, We pray that your good will be done, Let heaven and earth become one. Give us this day the bread we need, Give it to those who have none. Let forgiveness flow like a river between us, From each one to each one. Lead us to holy innocence Beyond the evil of our days Come swiftly Mother, Father, come. For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy: Forever your name is All in One.



Our welcome extends to the Communion Table. We recognize that this is Christ's Table and Christ's invitation. Please come forward as you are invited. If you prefer not to receive Communion at this time, you are welcome to come forward for a blessing – just fold your arms across your chest so that we know you prefer a blessing. Wine is served from the first chalice; grape juice is served from the second. We also offer gluten-free bread and individual cups of wine.

Invitation to Communion

Speak to us, O God, in the breaking of the bread and make us one with you.

Communion Distribution

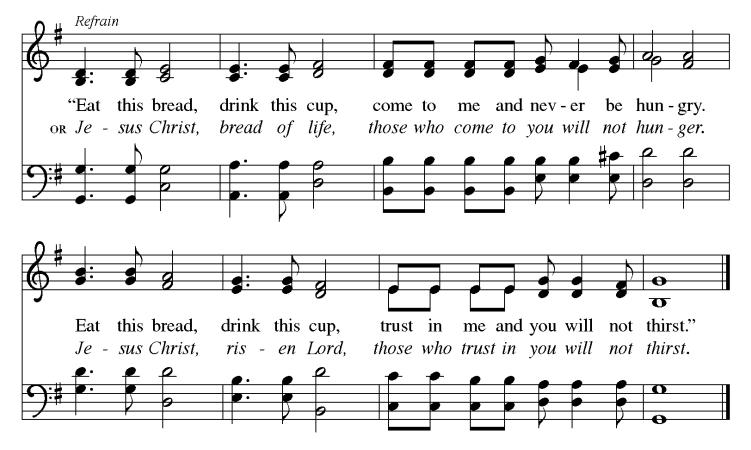
All are welcome to come to the feast.

Communion Hymn

Now the Silence

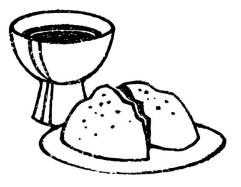


Eat This Bread



Prayer After Communion (from Night Visions by Jan L. Richardson)

Holy One, You meet us in our hungering with manna not of our making, and in our thirsting you surprise us with unexpected wine. You are the source of our desiring and the end of all our longing. O Giver of the feast, and ever-present guest, blessed be.

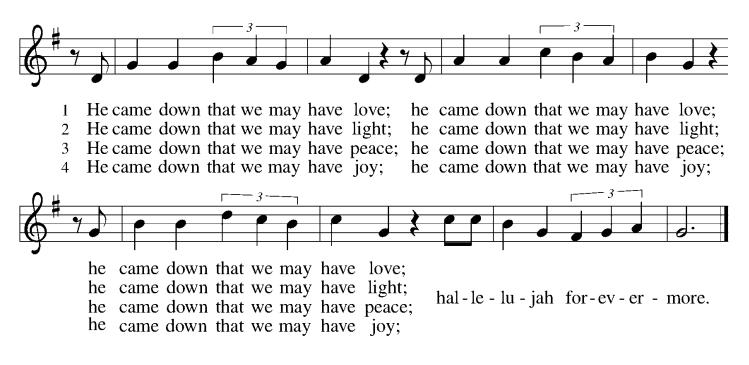


Announcements

Blessing

Sending Hymn

He Came Down



Dismissal

Go in peace to dispel the darkness. Thanks be to God.



Prayer Requested for:	Prayer Concern:	Prayer Contact:
For all people who walk in the darkness, searching for meaning and treasures of the spirit.	Prayers of peace and comfort.	The People of Bethel
Vance	Prayers for healing.	Gabe Moody-Burghard
Jan Kimble	Prayers for healing and effective treatment for breast cancer.	Tammy Gover
Richard VanDyke	Prayers for healing and peace.	Jim VanDyke
Lori Fields	Prayers for courage and strength after stage 4 liver cancer diagnosis.	Karen Anderson
Steve Stoner	Prayers of peace and comfort.	Pastor Christine
Marlo Edman	Prayers for continued healing for following surgery.	Pastor Christine
Pepe Rochon	Prayers for healing and comfort.	Faith St. John
Kyler Barret	Prayers for comfort. Kyler, Paul Govers nephew has Type 1 Diabetes.	Paul Gover
Family and Friends of Brenda Cordway, Shirley Kolpin's Daughter	Prayers for comfort and peace following her death last Sunday.	Cate Milburn
The Delcambre Family	Prayers of peace and comfort as they await test results of an amniocentesis on Baby Delcambre.	Pastor Christine
Jerome Hershey	Prayers of healing and comfort following a diagnosis of acute myloid leukemia.	Pastor Christine

Our prayers continue for many among us: for Bertha Anderson, Dale Tersey, Timothy Collins, Elizabeth, Rob, Jacob Bard, Miles Bard, Annalu Lingnau, Ben Lingnau, Jr., Ben Lingnau III, David Lingnau, Mary Rix, Patricia Connor, Bob & Nancy Leon.

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Stewardship of Service	Today - Nov 25	Next Week - Dec 2
Ministers:	All Baptized Members of Bethel	All Baptized Members of Bethel
Pastor:	Pr. Christine Core	Pr. Christine Core
Pastor:	Pr. Terry Moe	Pr. Terry Moe
Musician:	LeAnn Michaels	LeAnn Michaels
Usher:	Ruth and Dorian Bentley	Joe T
Reader:	Marlo Edman	Meghan Cyr
Communion:	Mary and PJ Bentley	
Preparation of the Altar:		Jackie Calder

Bethel News

Coming Up:

- Dec 1 | Bethel Hygiene Program
- Dec 1 | Super Service Saturday / Tree Fetching / Party (see details below
- Dec 5 | Advent Book Group | (3 Wed.)12/5, 12/12 &12/19 from 7 to 8:30 pm (Fireside Room)
- Dec 23 | Christmas Program
- Dec 24 | Children's Christmas Service 5 pm & Adult Christmas Service 7 pm

Other News

The Big Bethel Christmas Extravaganza | Saturday, December 1

Please join the Fun Committee by kicking off the Christmas season with tree fetching, sanctuary decorating, add a little Super Service Saturday and, of course, FUN!

This year, we are topping off the sanctuary decorating with a Super Service Saturday (sandwich making), then food, carols and White Elephant gift exchange at the Parsonage.

Please join us for any or all of these events!

- 9:00 am | Pick out trees at Furrow Farm 25877 NW West Union Rd. Hillsboro, OR. 97124
- 11:00 am | Decorate the Sanctuary, make sandwiches for Super Service Saturday, and eat lunch.
 2:00 pm | Break
- 3:00 pm | Kids Christmas party at the parsonage: hot cocoa, snacks, cookie decorating.
- 5:00 pm | White Elephant gift exchange, potluck, movie in the basement for the kids.
- 8:00 pm | Start clean-up.

Questions? Contact Stephanie 503-327-5144 or PJ 503-313-7431

Advent Book Group | (3 Wed.) 12/5, 12/12 & 12/19 from 7 to 8:30 pm (Fireside Rm)

We'd like to invite you to an Advent Book Club. We will be reading selections from Barbara Brown Taylor's book Learning to Walk in the Dark.

One critic writes of Taylor's book "Taylor has become increasingly uncomfortable with our tendency to associate all that is good with lightness and all that is evil and dangerous with darkness. Doesn't God work in the nighttime as well? In Learning to Walk in the Dark, Taylor asks us to put aside our fears and anxieties and to explore all that God has to teach us "in the dark." She argues that we need to move away from our "solar spirituality" and ease our way into appreciating "lunar spirituality" (since, like the moon, our experience of the light waxes and wanes). Often, it is while we are in the dark that we grow the most.

While the entire book is worth exploring, we know this time of year produces busy calendars. We've picked a just a few pages to concentrate on. We urge you to purchase this book if you are able. It is for sale at your favorite on-line retail behemoth for as little as \$12.74 and at other retail behemoths in used conditions for as little as \$1.99. We can provide copies of the selections if you need them. Let one of the leaders know if you require them. Also check your local library.

- 12/5 | Introduction and Chapter 1 "Who's Afraid of the Dark?"
- 12/12 | Chapter 4 "The Dark Emotions"
- 12/19 | Chapter 7 "The Dark Night of the Soul"

And of course, extra credit & a Hershey's Kiss will be awarded to anyone who manages to read the entire book during Advent.

Pastor Christine will lead the 12/5 gathering; JulieAnn Edman is the leader on 12/12 &12/19.

Shop Amazon Smile and Raise Money for Bethel

Did you know your purchases can make a difference? AmazonSmile donates to Bethel Lutheran Church when you do your holiday shopping at smile.amazon.com/ch/93-0509108 Go to https://smile.amazon.com, select Bethel Lutheran Church as your charity of choice and Amazon will donate a small percentage for every dollar spent.

Bethel Choir | Rehearsing every Sunday at 9 am in the Bethel Sanctuary – JOIN US!

Angel Project 2018

The Annual Bethel Angel Project is underway. Through the generosity of Bethel members and friends, we provide Christmas gifts for the children, something nice for Mom and/or Dad, and the fixings for a Christmas dinner for families who are in need.

We are adopting 12 families this year. These are families who have been identified either by the Pastors or by the Drop-In Center Director as possible recipients based on their economic situation.

In the past, an individual has adopted a family, a Bethel family or two have joined together to adopt a family, a group from your place of work might want to adopt a family, your extended family might want to adopt a family ... the possibilities are endless.

If adoption isn't up your alley, maybe you'd like to supply part of the Christmas Food Box. You can do this is in a number of ways, **see the sign sheet on the easel at the back** of the Sanctuary: A donation one or more of the needed supplies; or a donation of \$\$ always works.

Other ways you can help:

- Organizing Food Baskets the on December 14, 15 and 16
- Donation of a \$25 Gift Card for Fred Meyer (each family will receive a card so that they can supplement their Christmas needs as is right for their family)
- Grocery Shopping for additional food items as needed
- Delivering Packages & Food Boxes to families the weekend of December 16.

Pastor Christine is Out of Town | 11/21-11/27.

Please contact Pastor Moe if you require any assistance; **email:** tmoex1@gmail.com or **phone/text:** 503-702-5453



Jan L. Richardson's Night Visions: searching the shadows of advent and Christmas.

Many of the prayers and images used in worship for this Advent Season are taken from the work of Jan L. Richardson's Night Visions: searching the shadows of advent and Christmas. All images reproduced on the walls of the nave are from Night Visions.

Worship Notes continued

Welcoming the Darkness | Advent, 2018

I will give you the treasures of darkness and riches hidden in secret places, so that you may know that it is I, the LORD, the God of Israel, who call you by your name.— **Isaiah 45:3**

Treasures in Darkness?

So much of our culture focuses on light, and so much of our thoughts about darkness are fearful and foreboding. But in our biblical and spiritual traditions, there are treasures to be discovered in darkness. Where best to be hide these treasures than in dark places where we often do not want to look? Advent is a time to welcome the darkness! We invite the Bethel Community to journey together to discover the gifts of darkness, to uncover the hidden treasures of night, to welcome the darkness!

Jan Richardson, **Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas**. She writes: "The season of Advent means there is something on the horizon the likes of which we have never seen before. It is not possible to keep it from coming, because it will. That's just how Advent works. What is possible, is not to see it, to miss it, to turn just as it brushes past you. So stay,. Sit. Linger. Tarry. Ponder. Wait. Behold. Wonder.

There will be time for enough for running. For rushing. For worrying. For pushing. For now, stay. Wait. Something is on the horizon."

Come, join the search and be enriched by the dark!

A Word About today's Translation of he Lord's Prayer

Parker J. Palmer is a world-renowned writer, speaker and activist who focuses on issues in education, community, leadership, spirituality and social change. He has reached millions worldwide through his nine books, including Let Your Life Speak, The Courage to Teach, and A Hidden Wholeness. Parker Palmer holds a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California at Berkeley, as well as eleven honorary doctorates and numerous other academic awards. He is a member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quaker).

A bit of his spirituality can be found in a recent meditation published in On Being, March 6, 2018:

Today is a good time to remind ourselves that — in places around this country and around the world — people wake up empty and frightened every day because of the non-stop violence in their lives. Our hearts must go out to them.

As we grieve terrible events — and do what we can to make our families, neighborhoods, communities, nation, and planet a safe place for all beings — it is equally important to celebrate the beauty of life and express our gratitude for it.

So today, I am asking myself this question: This day, and every day, what might it mean for me to "kneel and kiss the ground"?

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened. Don't open the door to the study and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument. Let the beauty we love be what we do. There are a hundred ways to kneel and kiss the ground. — Rumi (Sufi mystic, 1207-1273)

A Vigil of Remembrance and Solidarity On the Longest Night of the Year and the National Homeless Person's Memorial Day

Join us as we...

- Gather to name and remember the people who died on Portland's streets in the last year.
- Show support for the Foster Street Shelter and commit to collaborative care of our shared space.
- Call on our civic leaders to end punitive sweeps and over-policing.
- Commit as a community to ensuring equitable access to
 - bathrooms,
 - garbage services,
 - safe overnight camping areas.

When: December 21st 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Where: St. Mark's Lutheran Church 5415 SE Powell Blvd. Portland, Or 97206

We will gather at St. Mark's for 3/4 mile silent procession to the Foster Street Shelter, where we will hold the vigil.

Follow this link for updated information and details on options for those who are not comfortable walking. *www.smpdx.org/vigil.html*



Our growing list of sponsors: Southeast Organizing and the Southeast People of Faith, Right to Survive, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, and Operation Nightwatch.

For more information contact Katy Rustvold (<u>katyrustvold@mac.com</u>) or Bonnie Beadles-Bohling, (<u>bbeadlesbohling@gmail.com</u>)