



Welcome the Darkness Singing in the Darkness

December 16, 2018

Welcome to Bethel Lutheran Church

YOUR PASTORS

Pastor Christine Core

email: ccore@comcast.net

phone/text: 503-805-3653

Pastor Terry Moe

email: tmoex1@gmail.com

phone/text: 503-702-5453

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 and the light are both alike to you.

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.

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

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.

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

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.

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.



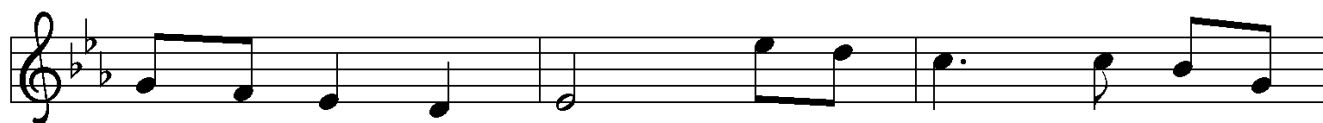
Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory



1 Joy - ous light of heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov-ing glow of God's own
2 In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of
3 You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev-'ry danc - ing star of



face, you who sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, shine on
dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can
night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us



ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -
hear your qui - et song. Love that fills the night with
each re - flect your light. Might - y God of all cre -



round us, we shall raise our songs to you. God of day - break,
won - der, love that warms the wea - ry soul, love that bursts all
a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our way, lov - ing Spir - it



God of shad - ows, come and light our hearts a - new.
chains a - sun - der, set us free and make us whole.
of sal - va - tion, lead us on to end - less day.

Salutation

God be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day - Adapted from Jan Richardson's Night Visions

Holy God, Guardian of the seasons, keeper of every time, tune us so to your rhythms that we may know the occasion for stillness and the moment for action. May we be so prepared, so aware, so awakened in our waiting that when you prompt us into motion, our hands may be your hands, our song may be your song, and our purposes your own. Amen

We Hear God's Word

First Reading

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

The Lord has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away your enemies.

The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

The Lord, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory;

He will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love;

He will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.

I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

I will deal with all your oppressors at that time.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,

And I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you;

For I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,

When I restore your fortune before your eyes, says the Lord.

P: Hear the Word of God.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading

From Learning to Walk in the Dark

By Barbara Brown Taylor

"I wish I could turn to the church for help, but so many congregations are preoccupied with keeping the lights on right now that the last thing they want to talk about is how to befriend the dark. Plus, Christianity has never had anything nice to say about darkness. From earliest times, Christians have used 'darkness' as a synonym for sin, ignorance, spiritual blindness, and death. Visit almost any church and you can still hear it used that way today: 'Deliver us, O Lord, from the powers of darkness. Shine into our hearts the brightness of your Holy Spirit, and protect us from all perils and dangers of the night.'

At the theological level, however, this language creates all sorts of problems. It divides every day into two, pitting the light part against the dark part. It tucks all the sinister stuff into the dark part, identifying God with the sunny part and leaving you to deal with the rest on your own. It implies things about dark-skinned people and sight-impaired people that are not true. Worst of all, it offers people of faith a giant closet in which they can store everything that threatens or frightens them without thinking too much about those things."

Musical Interlude



Gospel Acclamation



O - so - sŏ o - so - sŏ, pyong - hwa - ŭi - im - gŭm
1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.



u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sŏ.
Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.

The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the third chapter.

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

P: This is the Gospel of Christ.

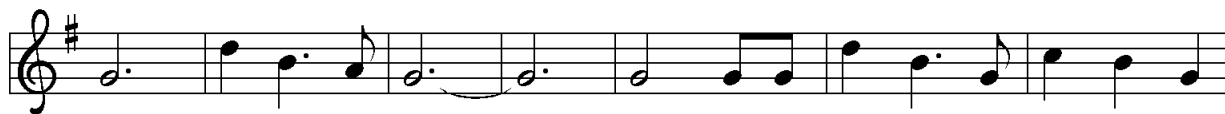
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Children's Message
Adult's Message



Hymn of the Day

We Are Called



1 Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the
2 Come! O - pen your heart! Show your . . mer - cy to all those in
3 Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be



Lord! We are called to be light for the king - dom, to
fear! We are called to be hope for the hope - less so
one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each oth - er as



live in the free - dom of the cit - y of God.
ha - tred and blind - ness . . . will be . . . no more.
sis - ters and broth - ers . . . u - nit - ed in love.



We are called to act with jus - tice, we are called to



love ten - der - ly; we are called to serve one an -



oth - er, to walk hum - bly with God.

Prayers of the People

We respond after each group of prayer petitions by singing a verse of Silent Night while the soloist simultaneously sings the words of Night of Silence.



Note: Choir and congregation responses are sung simultaneously

Night of Silence (Choir Response)

1 Cold are the people, winter of life;
we tremble in shadows this cold endless night.
Frozen in the snow lie roses sleeping
flowers that will echo the sunrise;
fire of hope is our only warmth:
weary, its flame will be dying soon.

2 Voice in the distance, call in the night;
on wind you enfold us, you speak of the light.
Gentle on the ear you whisper softly
rumors of a dawn so embracing;
breathless love awaits darkened souls:
soon will we know of the morning.

3 Spirit among us, shine like the star;
your light that guides shepherds and kings from afar
shimmer in the sky so empty, lonely,
rising in the warmth of the Son's love;
star unknowing of night and day:
Spirit, we wait for the loving Son.

Silent Night, Holy Night (Congregation Response)

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,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

3 Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

WE CELEBRATE THE MEAL

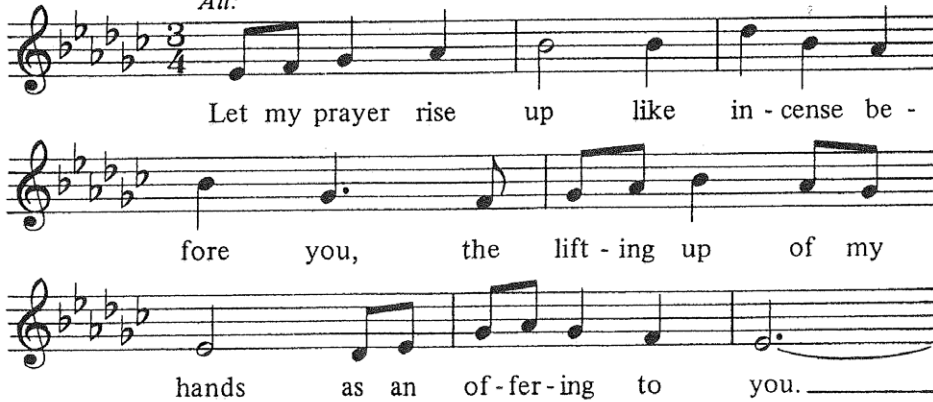
Offering

Offering Music/Prayer

Let My Prayers Rise Up

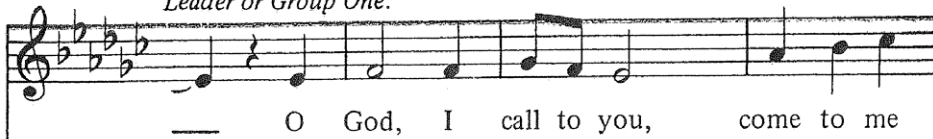
Psalm 141

All:



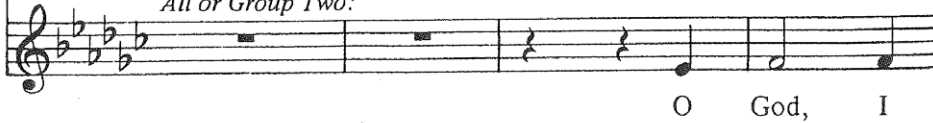
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -
fore you, the lift - ing up of my
hands as an of - fer - ing to you.

Leader or Group One:




O God, I call to you, come to me

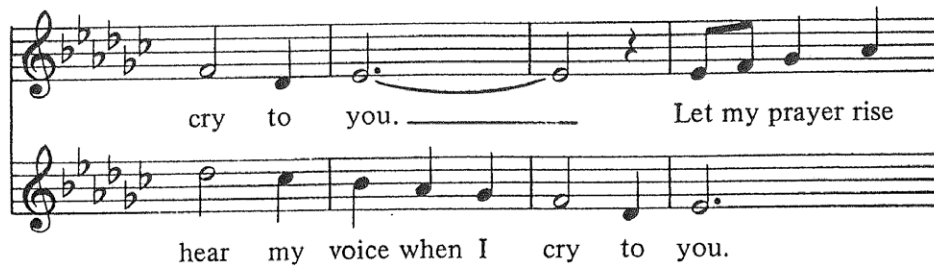
All or Group Two:



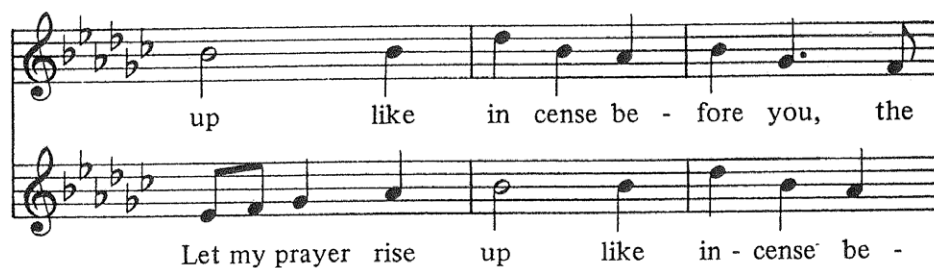
O God, I



now; O hear my voice when I
call to you, come to me now; O



cry to you. Let my prayer rise
hear my voice when I cry to you.



up like in cense be - fore you, the
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to
fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an

you. Keep watch with - in me, God;
of-fer-ing to you. Keep

burn - ing bright. Let my prayer rise
light of your love be burn - ing bright.

up like in - cense be - fore you, the
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -

lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to
fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an

you. All praise to the God of all- Cre-
of-fer-ing to you. All

a - tor of life; all praise be to Christ and the
praise to the God of all— Cre - a - tor of life; all
Spir - it of love. Let my prayer rise
praise be to Christ and the Spir - it of love.
up like in - cense be - fore you, the
Let my prayer rise up like in - cense be -
lift-ing up of my hands as an of-fer-ing to
fore you, the lift-ing up of my hands as an
you.
of - fer - ing to you.

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.

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.

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

In the Singing



1 In the sing-ing, in the si-lence, in the hands ex-pect-ant, o-pen,
2 In the ques-tion, in the an-swer, in the mo-ment of ac-cept-ance,



in the bless-ing, in the break-ing, in your pres-ence at this ta-ble,
in the heart's cry, in the heal-ing, in the cir-cle of your peo-ple,



Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the wine of grace;



Je-sus Christ, Je-sus Christ, be the bread of peace.

Let Us Break Bread Together



1 Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees;
2 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees;
3 Let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees;



let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees.
let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees.
let us praise God to - geth-er on our knees.



When I fall on my knees, with my face to the ris - ing



sun, O Lord, have mer-cy on me.

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. Amen

We Go Out to Serve

Announcements

Blessing

Sending Hymn

Sung by Bethel Kids

Dismissal

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

Go Tell It on the Mountain



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
Jan Kimble	Prayers for healing and effective treatment for breast cancer.	Tammy Gover
Richard VanDyke	Prayers for healing and peace.	Jim VanDyke
Pepe Rochon	Prayers for healing and comfort.	Faith St. John
Barbara Lynch	Prayers for healing and peace while. Barbara continues recovery at the home of her daughter and you may send your get well greetings to her at 803B NE 166th Ave., Vancouver, WA 08684	Pastor Christine
Barbara Horne	Prayers of healing and comfort.	Tammy Gover
June Hassebroek	Prayers of healing and comfort.	Pastor Christine
Bob Leon	Prayers of thanksgiving. He has healed well.	Pastor Christine
Carl Olson, Ryan Olson's father	Prayers of healing and comfort as Carl recovers from surgery.	Pastor Christine
John Houdeshell	Prayers of comfort for John Houdeshell and his family	Pastor Christine
Our prayers continue for many among us: for Bertha Anderson, 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, Lori Fields.		



Stewardship of Service	Today - Dec 16	Next Week - Dec 23
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:		Joe Tancredi
Reader:	Lisa Siems	Brady Burdick
Communion:		Brady Burdick
Preparation of the Altar:	Jackie Calder	Jackie Calder

Bethel News



Coming Up:

- Dec 17** | Food Ministry Team Meeting — 6:30 pm, Fireside Room
- Dec 19** | Advent Book Group — 7 to 8:30 pm (Fireside Room)
- Dec 21** | Longest Night of the Year — 5-7 pm, St. Mark's Lutheran Church
- Dec 22** | Christmas Program Rehearsal — 10 am-noon
- Dec 23** | Christmas Program — “Fumbly Bumbly Angels”
- Dec 24** | Family Christmas Service — 5 pm & Christmas Service 10 pm
- Jan 5** | Bethel Hygiene Program

Other News

Angel Project 2018

Many thanks to all who helped with the Angel Project this year. The shopping, wrapping and organizing elves were hard at work all week and the mountains of packages and food boxes are being delivered this weekend to adopted families. We could not do this project without the organizational skill and dedication of Joann Noll. My goodness! Joann can bring order out of total chaos. She's perfect for Bethel!



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

Christmas Program - *The Fumbly, Bumbly Angels*

- 12/22 | 10 am-noon**, Saturday, Costumes and play rehearsal
- 12/23 | 9 am**, Sunday, Gather to get costumes on and run through the play final time
- 12/23 | 10 am**, Worship and play



The Fumbly, Bumbly Angels have set their sights on singing in the glorious Heavenly Choir (after their last gig in the desert filled with scorpions and lizards). But instead, they find themselves singing in this tiny village of Bethlehem, a tiny town filled with scurrying people. Just as it starts to get dark and very cold, the Angels discover where they have been called to sing the best concert of all time.

Volunteers Needed For Sandwich Making

Marjorie would like to increase the pool of volunteers she can call on for preparing sandwiches for our Sunday Community Breakfast guests. If you can fit in a fit or week or two of making sandwiches here or there, **please contact Marjorie Strieff, at 503-679-1083.**

Pastor Schedule

Pastor Core is away from Bethel 12/26 to 1/5. P Moe will be available during this time for any need that arises.

Advent Book Group | 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*, led by JulieAnn Edman.

- **12/19 | Chapter 7 “The Dark Night of the Soul”**

Food Ministry Team | Monday, December 17 at 6:30 pm

Please join us at the next meeting of the Food Ministry Team in the Fireside Room. Like many things Bethel, our Food Ministry program to the community started small, and has morphed into something we could not have envisioned – breakfast, hygiene, assistance for Drop-In families and many others who come to us for food assistance. But now it's time to put ourselves "on the balcony" and take a look, have authentic discussions and come to some consensus about what we can do as a congregation.

We will start with a bit of biblical work and discussion, and then move into the difficult tasks of envisioning for ourselves our long term goals for this out reach program. We expect to disagree and struggle and ponder how we best go forward in doing God's work in this world. We will also be chipping away at the "technical" challenges before us, but at this stage the bulk of our work is doing the adaptive work, including meaningful conversations with all of our stakeholders, necessary to provide the best programs possible. Please join us.

Please phone Team Leader Cate Milburn for more information: 971-269-9899.

A Vigil of Remembrance and Solidarity | 12/21

On the Longest Night of the Year and the National Homeless Person's Memorial Day

December 21st, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

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



- 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.

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.

Worship Notes

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**

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

Note: 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. Many of the images reproduced on the walls of the nave are from Night Visions.