



4th Sunday in Advent

Worship with Holy Communion

December 17, 2023

Welcome to Bethel Lutheran Church



We are glad you are here, and we pray God will be real to you as you worship with us. Bethel is a Reconciling in Christ congregation; therefore, we invite all people, including those of all races, ethnicities, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, ages, economic levels, and abilities. God loves all creation and holds us all, so we welcome you who walk through our doors and you who are outside those doors. We honor and appreciate the rich diversity of age, sexual orientation, race, belief, emotional and physical health, gender identity and expression, marital status and station in life bring to the Bethel family and our relationships. We commit ourselves to embracing the work of anti-racism, social and economic justice, and environmental care.

Communion - We will celebrate Holy Communion together via Zoom, as well as gathered in person. Please have bread/cracker(s) and a cup of wine/grape juice ready if you and those with you would like to participate. If you do not have access to wine or grape juice, you may receive Communion without the cup—Christ is present in the bread, as Jesus said, “I am the Bread of Life.” (John 6:35)

GATHERING

Prelude

12 Short Pieces for the Organ: No. 9

By Samuel Wesley



Restrooms are located in the basement on the east side of the building. An all gender restroom is 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.

Address 5658 North Denver Avenue • **Portland, Oregon** 97217 • **Email** bethel@bethelpdx.org • **Website** www.bethelpdx.org

Children's Time and Lighting of the Advent Wreath

As the candles are lit, the congregation prays:

God of love, you sent your Son, Jesus, to shine bright like the sun, lighting the way for all who walk in darkness. May the light of Christ's hope, peace, joy and love shine bright in us as we approach his coming, that we may be ready to welcome him on Christmas day and every day. Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

Please stand in body or spirit

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
who opens the heavens
and draws near to us with salvation.

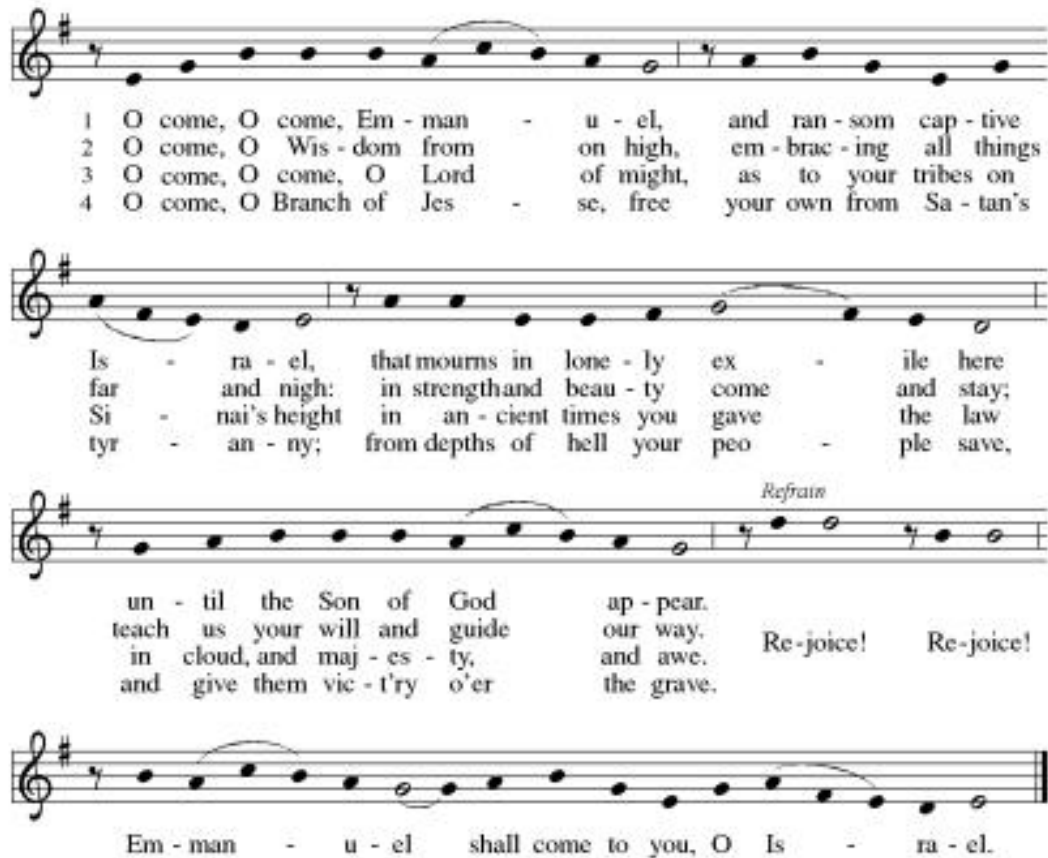
Amen.

God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance.
Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Everlasting God,
you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world.
Amen.

Hear these words of assurance:
God clothes you with garments of salvation
and covers you with robes of righteousness.
In the tender compassion of ☩ Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
God's covenant is eternal,
and God's blessing rests upon us all.
Amen.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and night: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,

Refrain
 un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe,
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.

Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 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. *Refrain*
- 6 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. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:
 refresh the hearts that long for you;
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicorum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
 Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
 Texts: 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

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Prayer of the Day

Let us pray together:

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

Scripture Reading

Romans 16:25-27

A reading from Romans.

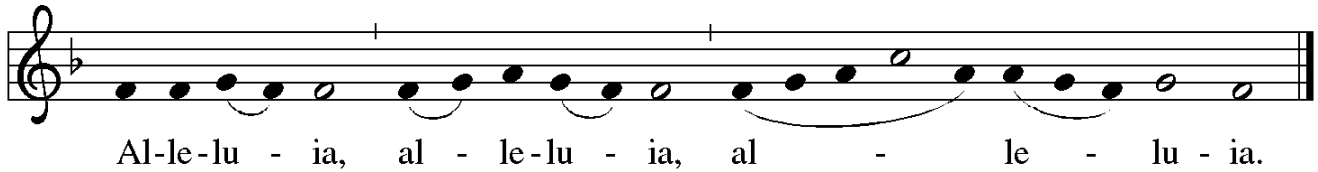
²⁵Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Word of God, Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**



Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit



Gospel Reading

Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord!**

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated

Sermon



Hymn of the Day

Please Stand in body or spirit

Savior of the Nations Come

Savior of the Nations, Come



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
3 Won-drous birth—oh, won-drous child—from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path-way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van-quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

Prayers of Intercession

*The response to each prayer is: Merciful God, **receive our prayer.***

Sharing of Peace — *Take time to share the peace on Zoom and in person*



COMMUNION MEAL

For those worshiping virtually, please gather your bread and wine to participate in Holy Communion.

Offering

You may use one of our options for giving: The offering plate will be passed by the ushers, Venmo @BethelLutheran-Church phone # digits 6064, PayPal, see our website bethelpdx.org for link, online at: <http://bethelpdx.org/donate> Additionally you may give by mail. Thank you for supporting the many ministries of Bethel!

Offertory

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God our provider,

by your merciful hand

abundance springs up from the earth.

Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty.

Let them be a sign of your steadfast love

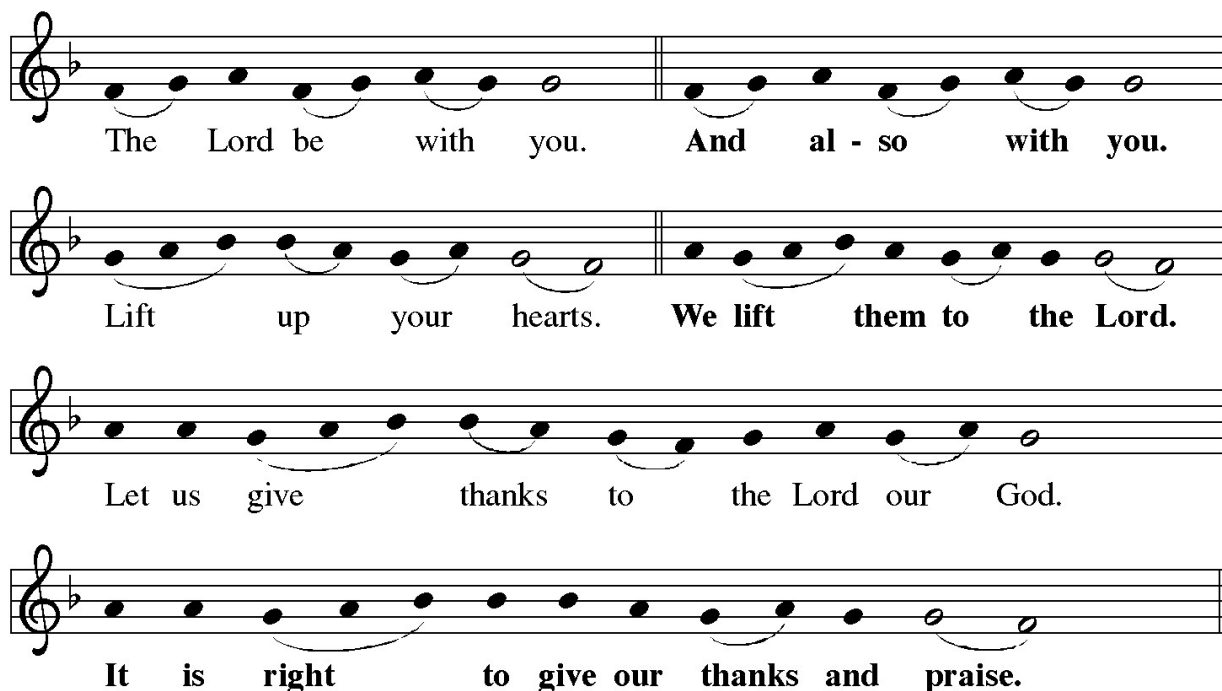
and faithfulness for all people,

through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Pastor will guide you when to take the bread and cup to eat and drink.



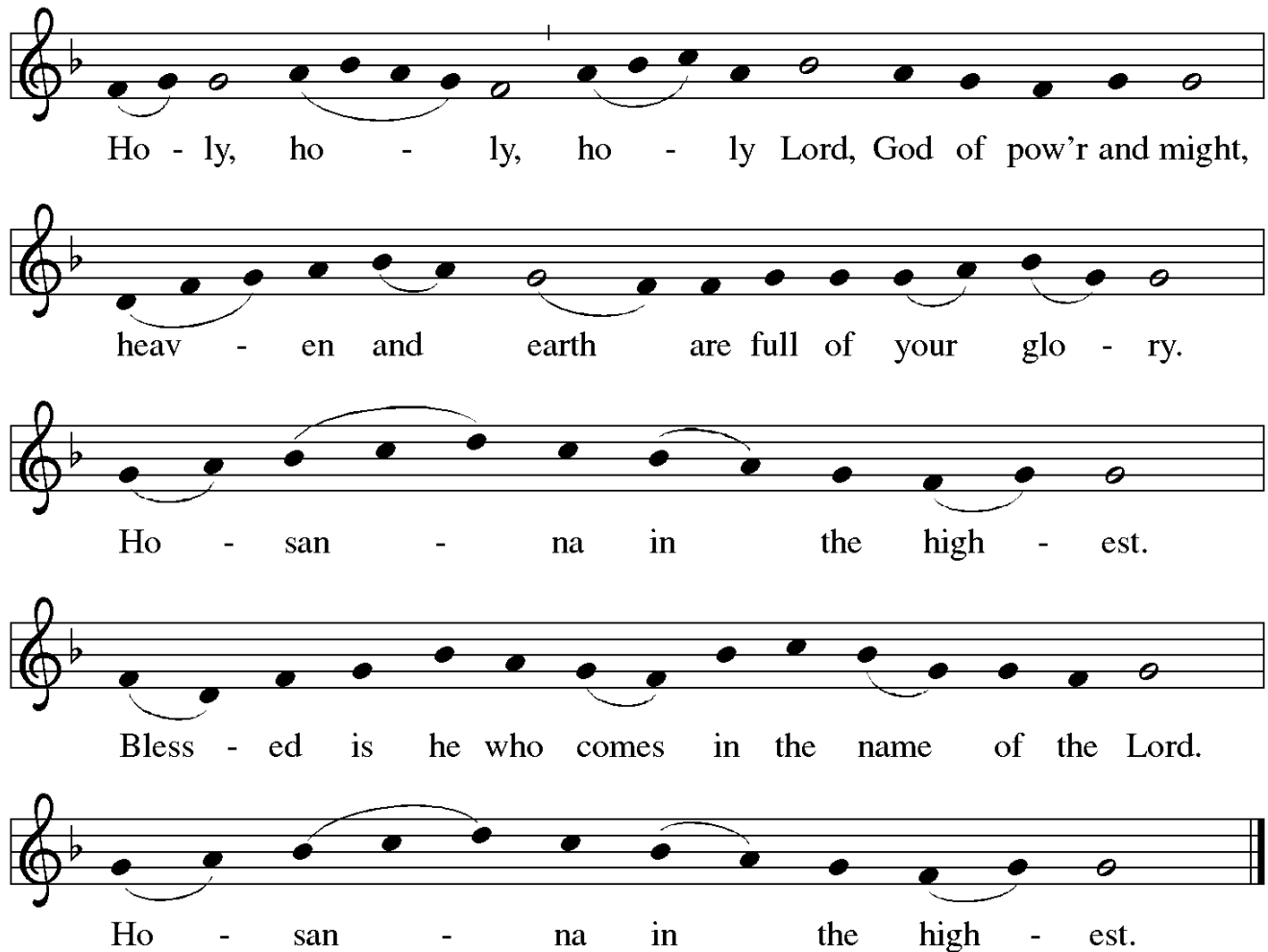
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The Thanksgiving continues with the preface.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The presiding minister continues with the Thanksgiving at the Table. At the end, all say: **Amen.***

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who 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 and ever. Amen.

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Communion Music

Silver Bells
By Jay Livingston & Ray Evans

SENDING

Announcements

Blessing

The God of peace bless you,
the love of Christ sustain you in hope,
and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you
now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Song

Let it Snow
By Jule Styne

The Sending.

Go in peace. Keep awake.
Thanks be to God.



Stewardship of Service	This week – Dec. 17, 2023	Next week – Dec. 24, 2023
Ministers	All Baptized Members of Bethel	All Baptized Members of Bethel
Pastor	Pastor Leon LaCross	Pastor Leon LaCross
Music Director	Shlomo Farber	Shlomo Farber
Reader	Ronda Bard	Holly Redfern
Zoom Host	Joann Knoll	Volunteer needed!

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Pray For:

Pray for the people in Israel, Palestine, and all of the Middle East as they suffer war, violence, terror, and retribution. Show the world a path to peace and justice.

Let us continue to pray for all victims of gun violence.

Pray for peace and justice in Russia and Ukraine, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Pray for peace and justice and safety among our houseless neighbors. Help us understand how we can share your love with them.

Pray for Bethel leaders, including Pastor Leon LaCross, Music Director Shlomo Farber, Admin Assistant Kerry Czuba, the 2023 Church Council members, and for all the members and friends of Bethel Lutheran Church.

Pray for Ju Ju Moody for a successful immigration process.

Pray for the Bethel Youth Drop-In Center Board as they prepare for the Summer 2024 Day Camp. Send us excellent applicants for Director and Staff.

Pray for Shlomo Farber, that his family and friends in Israel may be safe.

Pray for JulieAnn and Marlo Edman as they move into their new home. In thanksgiving for their family as they assist through that process.

Pray for Ella Belle Schwartz, Pr. Leon's cousin's baby, as she is welcomed into the world and getting stronger in the neonatal intensive care unit.

Pray for the young leaders who recently received confirmation, that they grow in faith and gain a deeper understanding of Jesus as a guiding, loving force in their lives.

Pray for our children, while they take time off during winter break to celebrate family and friends.

Pray for those who are ill:

- **Mark Sjostrom**, Svea's uncle, as he recovers from cancer treatments and health complications.
- **Neil Marshall** (Nash's Portland family) as Neil undergoes treatment for a brain tumor.
- **Faith Moser** (mother of Joann Noll) as Faith enters her second century!
- **David Gyles** for his improved lung health.
- **Leo Lawrence** for recovery from neuropathy surgery.
- **John Knight and family** as John continues in memory care.
- **Laura Day**, mother of Natalie Peterson, in her diagnosis and treatment of cancer.
- **Gary Andeen** as he receives treatments for lung cancer.
- **Amy Bishop McDonald** for her diagnosis and surgery for breast cancer.
- **Chuck Huntley**, brother of Marjorie Strieff, for his ongoing health.
- **Glenn Chase**, in thanks for his continued good health.
- **Jackie Calder** for healing and health that allows travel and volunteer work
- **Mary Rix**** as she moves through a possible second surgery and continued radiation beginning Jan. 3 for cancer.
- **JulieAnn Edman*** for continued healing as she undergoes her treatment.

*Send notes to JulieAnn please email her at jedman999@gmail.com.

**Mary would like to say Thank You to all who are keeping her in prayer.

Pray for all those who have passed away that they experience the loving embrace of God's love.

Continuing prayers for well-being for our loved ones Timothy, Elizabeth, Faith, Jim, Rob, Jacob, Miles, Andrew, Nash, and Patricia--may they walk in light and peace.

Pray in thanksgiving for all the blessings received this week.

Pray we know that God is close and that we are open to receiving and sharing God's love.

Pray for Bethel Lutheran Church.

Mark Your Calendars...See what's happening at Bethel and Beyond this week:

12/17 11:15 AM Church Council Meeting

12/21 4:30-5:30 Happy Hour on Zoom

12/24 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Worship: in-person or on Zoom

12/25 No Service

12/28 2:00 PM Meal Prep for Renaissance Commons

12/28 5:00 PM Serve Meal at Renaissance Commons



Bethel will have one service to celebrate Christmas on December 24th at 5:00 PM with festive hymn song at 4:45 PM

Invite friends and family to join us in celebrating the birth of Christ.



Angel Project At Bethel Lutheran

Thinking about others is part of the holiday spirit at Bethel. We hope everyone can contribute in some way to the Angel Project this year. Here are some ways to do it:

-Collect your recyclable bottles and cans in blue bags with the Bethel sticker and drop them at church or take them to your local center. (We don't have a large surplus of funds in our Angel Project account.)

Contribute money for our shoppers to purchase gifts for families and to supply items for hygiene bags distributed by Terrance Moses' project Friends of Ours (misspelling intentional). Donations can be made by check sent to Bethel Lutheran Church, 5658 N. Denver Ave., Portland, Oregon 97217, please note funds for Angel Project. You can also Venmo using this QR Code, add note for Angel Project.



Adopt a family. We usually serve about 10-12 families/individuals.

Other items needed: warm socks, warm gloves and hats (used okay), hotel size lotions, HotHands.

Questions? Contact Joann at joann.noll@gmail.com



Decorating the Church for Christmas!

Please consider ordering a poinsettia to decorate the alter. 6 inch pots are \$10 and 8 inch pots are \$20. **Last day to order is Dec. 20th**

Use Signup genius to place your order and then use Venmo **@BethelLutheran-Church**, confirmation phone # digits 6064, Paypal ([bethelpdx.org](https://www.bethelpdx.org)), or send in a check (mark for poinsettias) to Bethel Lutheran Church, 5658 N. Denver Ave., Portland, OR 97217

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090D4CABAC2CA4F49-poinsettias#/>



This is the last Sunday to pick up an Advent Wreath kit from church to use at home. Instructions are provided in each kit.

Check out the Blessings for prayers that will coincide with each week of Advent. Do you need some inspirational music while lighting your candles? Try the album Incarnation by the vocalist group Sister Sinjin, available on Bandcamp for a small donation.

Let this season of preparation give you pause and a moment to deepen your relationship with Christ.