



1st Sunday of Christmas

Worship with Holy Communion

December 31, 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

Adiemus
By Adiemus



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

Confession and Forgiveness

Please stand in body or spirit

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the Word made flesh,
our life and our salvation.

Amen.

Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior,
let us confess our sin.

God of life,
**you promise good news of great joy for all people,
and call us to be messengers of your peace.**
**We confess that too often we hoard our joy,
our resources, and our security.**
We nurture conflict and build barriers.
**We neglect the needs of our neighbors
and ignore the groaning of creation.**
Have mercy on us.
Where we are self-centered, open our hearts.
Where we are reluctant, give us courage.
Where we are cynical, restore our trust.
Renew us with your grace
and give us again the hope of eternal life in you.
Amen.

Hear the good news:
We are children of God and heirs of God's promises
through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
In ☩ Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed.
Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth
shall know the salvation of God.
Amen.



Gathering Song of Praise

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!



come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray together:

Almighty God, you wonderfully created the dignity of human nature and yet more wonderfully restored it. In your mercy, let us share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

WORD

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

A reading from Isaiah.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

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

Scripture Reading

Galatians 4:4-7

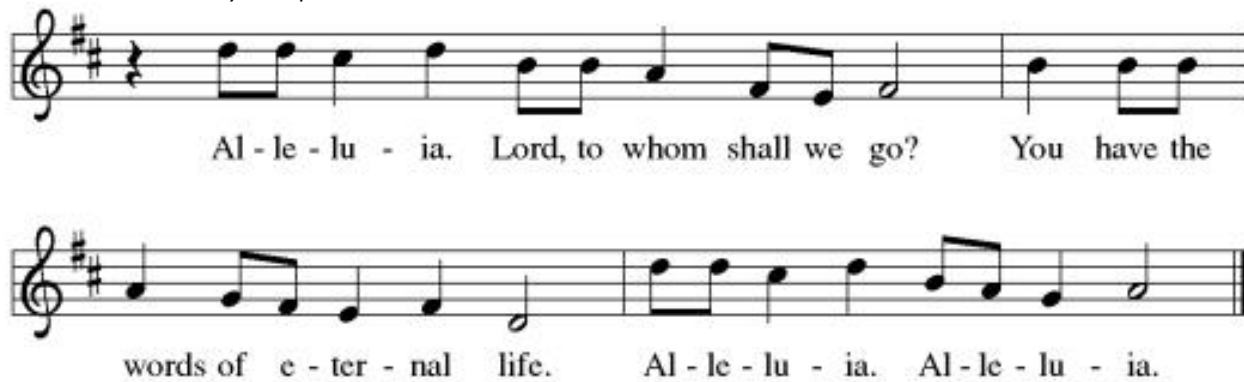
A reading from Galatians.

⁴When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

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

Gospel Acclamation

Please stand in body or spirit



Gospel Reading

Luke 2:22-40

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

²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

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

Please be seated

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Please Stand in body or spirit

In His Temple Now Behold Him

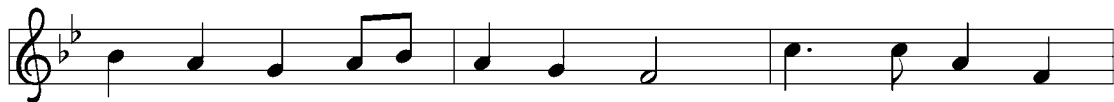
In His Temple Now Behold Him



1 In his tem - ple now be - hold him, see the long - ex -
2 In the arms of her who bore him, vir - gin pure, be -
3 Je - sus, by your pre - sen - ta - tion, when they blessed you,
4 Prince and au - thor of sal - va - tion, be your bound - less



pect - ed Lord; an - cient proph - ets had fore - told him,
hold him lie, while his a - ged saints a - dore him,
weak and poor, make us see your great sal - va - tion,
love our theme! Je - sus, praise to you be giv - en



God has sent the prom - ised Word. Now to praise him,
ere in per - fect faith they die. Al - le - lu - ia!
seal us with your prom - ise sure; and pre - sent us,
by the world you did re - deem, with the Fa - ther



his re - deem - ed shall break forth with one ac - cord.
Al - le - lu - ia! Lo, the in - car - nate God Most High!
in your glo - ry, to your Fa - ther, cleansed and pure.
and the Spir - it God of maj - es - ty su - preme!

Text: Henry J. Pye, 1825–1903, alt.

Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

Prayers of Intercession

The response to each prayer is: Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

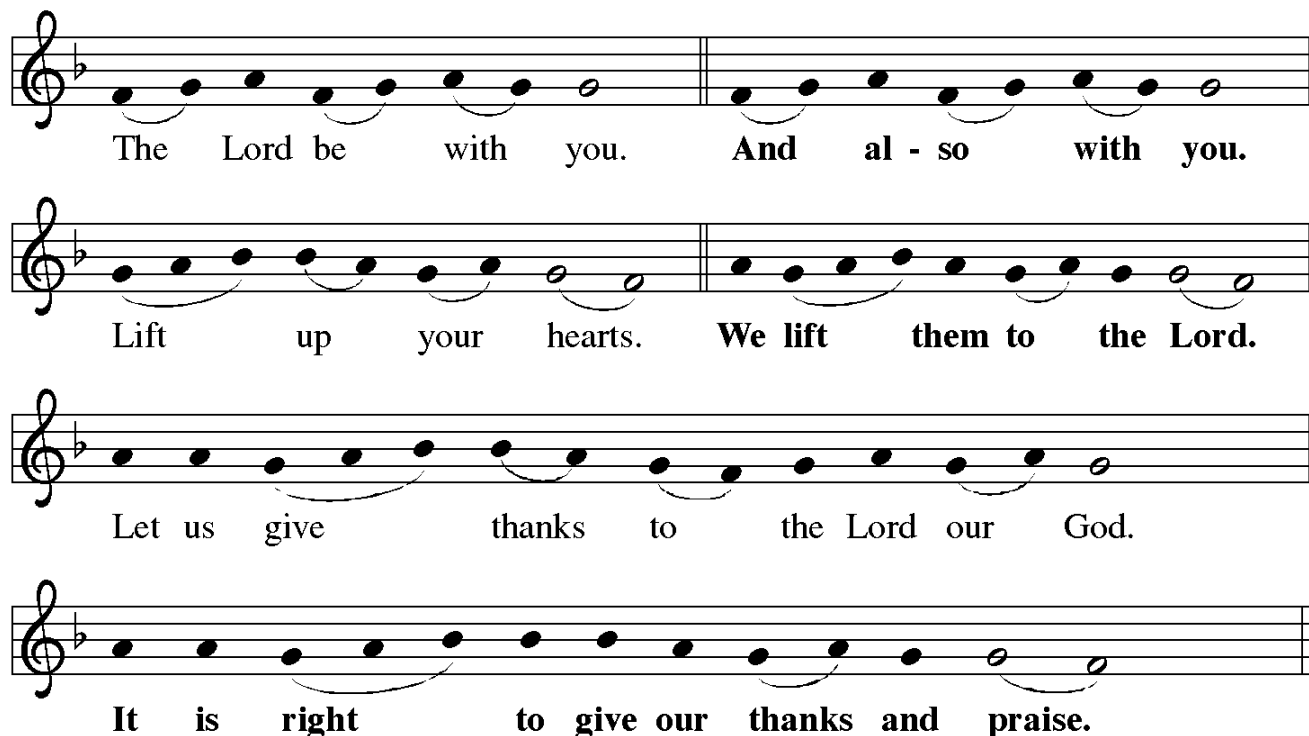
OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

**God of abundance,
receive and bless these gifts we have offered.
Join our hearts with the song of the angels,
and gather us at your table of celebration.
Strengthen us to share with all the world
the abundance of your grace upon grace,
poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.
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.



*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

Down in the River to Pray *Traditional Hymn*



SENDING

Announcements

Blessing

God bless you and keep you,
✠ Jesus grant you grace and truth,
and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts,
now and forever.

Amen

Sending Song

Auld Lang Syne
By Robert Burns

The Sending.

Christ the Savior is born!
Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.

Thanks be to God.



Stewardship of Service	This week – Dec. 31, 2023	Next week – Jan. 7, 2023
Ministers	All Baptized Members of Bethel	All Baptized Members of Bethel
Pastor	Pastor Leon LaCross	Pastor Leon LaCross
Music Director/Musician	Shlomo Farber	Jamie Vandenberg
Reader	Ronda Bard	TBD
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.

We pray for Kerry and her immediate and extended families, as well as for Mary Jo: Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace.

Continuing prayers for well-being for our loved ones Timothy, Elizabeth, Faith, Jim, Rob, Jacob, Miles, Matthew, 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.

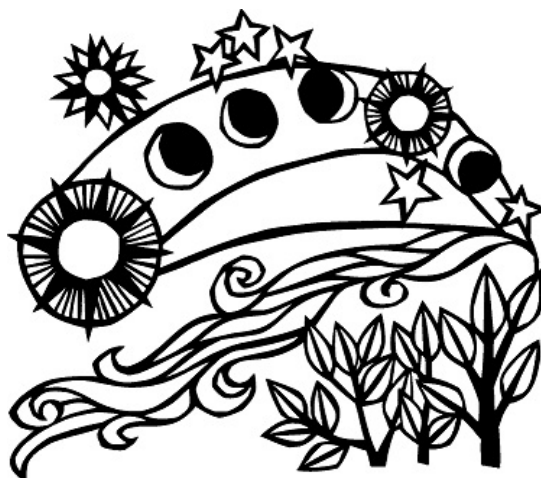
Mark Your Calendars...See what's happening at Bethel and Beyond this week:

01/04 4:30-5:30 Happy Hour on Zoom

01/07 9:00 AM Sunday Coffee Hour on Zoom

01/07 10:00 AM Sunday Worship: in-person or on Zoom

Happy New Year



Send

Go in peace

Jesus has come, and we can live in peace.

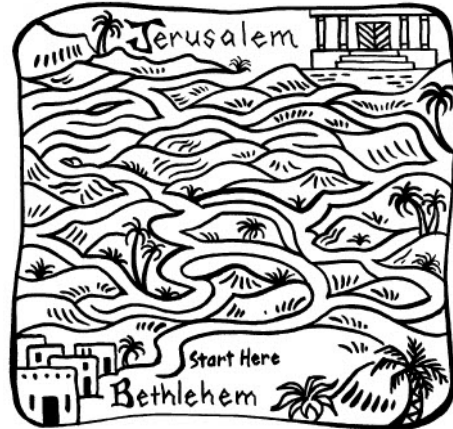
Draw a picture of what you think peace looks like, and hang it up at home.



gather

Welcome to worship.

When Jesus was eight days old, Mary and Joseph brought him from Bethlehem to the temple in Jerusalem for a special ceremony. Help them find their way through the hills to the temple.



Jesus, Thank you for all the people who tell us about you. Amen

This week

Send a note of thanks or a drawing to someone who has talked to you about God.

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How did you get to church today? How long did the trip take you? Who did you come with?

hear & celebrate

This is the Messiah!

Luke 2:22-40

Read the story, using the pictures to help you!

Code: = Messiah = Anna = Simeon = temple
 = Mary = Joseph = blessing = Jesus = peace

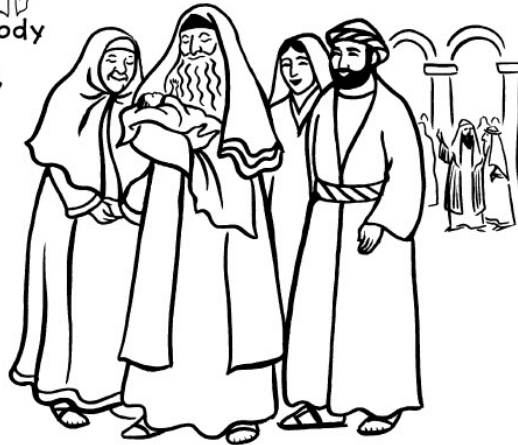
and brought to the when he was a tiny baby and there he received a very special from an old man named .

and a very old prophet named also said something important. They told everybody

in the that baby was the , God's Son, and a special who would save all people everywhere and bring to the world.

After meeting and in the , and and baby returned home to Nazareth in Galilee.

grew and became strong and wise, and God blessed him.



HAVE YOU BEEN IN ANY SPECIAL CEREMONIES AT CHURCH? WHAT WERE THEY? WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT THEM?