

BETHEL LUTHERAN

E.L.C.A.

G R O V E C I T Y

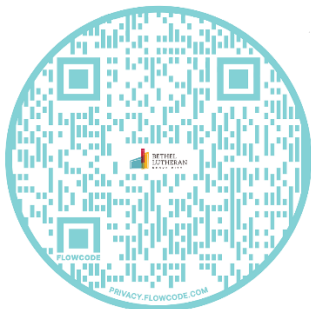
First Sunday in Advent
December 1, 2024

Worship Services 8:30 A.M. & 10:30 A.M.

Welcome
to Bethel Lutheran

We extend special greetings to all our guests who are with us today. Your presence, along with our members and friends, is truly valued. Know that all of God's people are always welcome here at Bethel.

If you would like to know more about Bethel Lutheran, her pastor, the Rev. Peter I. Ray, or any of the parish's programs and activities, please contact the church office (875-0510). You may also check out our website by scanning the QR code below. Again, welcome; and may you have a blessed week!



Worship and young children

All children are welcome in worship. They are a valued part of this faith community.

In addition, Bethel's Nursery (for children up to approximately four years of age) has paid staff at both services. This is available to meet the needs of your family and the worshiping needs of the congregation.

We have a "Parentseeker" paging system for optimal communication between nursery and parents worshiping in the sanctuary.

Children's bulletins are also available in the narthex for younger children to help them make age-appropriate connections with our weekly themes.

Bethel has video monitors in the narthex and hallways if your child gets restless.



Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

- ❖ Quiet reverence before the liturgy allows prayer and meditation.
- ❖ Please do not bring food or drinks into the sanctuary during worship.
- ❖ Throughout the service, **C** means the congregation responds as the **bold print** indicates.
- ❖ As a worship courtesy, **please silence or turn off** all cellular phones and other communication devices during the service.

Gathering

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

(please stand and face the baptismal font)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
alive in the world,
reviving creation,
arriving soon.

C **Amen.**

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of mercy,

C **We confess that we have sinned.**

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

Amen.

P God of might,

C **We confess that we have sinned.**

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

P God in our midst,
C **We confess that we have sinned.**
We plead: come to us.
Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P A righteous branch springs forth:
it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,
in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
receive the grace and forgiveness of God
through † Christ Jesus,
whose day draws near.

C **Amen.**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

ELW #244

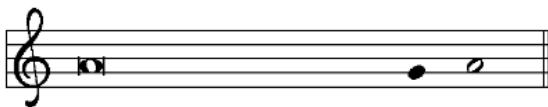
APOSTOLIC GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C **And also with you.**



KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



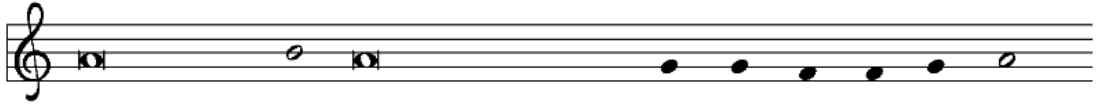
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

(please be seated)

rites of passage/lighting of advent wreath

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emanuel

ELW #257, v.1



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 nigh: 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,



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

Word

FIRST READING (10:30)

Jeremiah 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name—“The Lord is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

¹⁴ The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

P The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

PSALM (10:30)

Psalms 25:1-10

¹ To | you, O Lord,

I lift | up my soul.

² My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.

³ Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴ Show me your | ways, O Lord,
and teach | me your paths.

⁵ Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

⁶ Remember, O Lord, your compassion and love,
for they are from | everlasting.

⁷ Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your
goodness, O Lord.

⁸ You are gracious and upright, O Lord;
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.

⁹ You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

¹⁰ All your paths, O Lord, are steadfast | love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your | testimonies.

(please stand, as able)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to Luke.

C Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL

Luke 21:25-36

God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

[Jesus said:]²⁵ "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves.²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.²⁷ Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory.²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees;³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near.³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place.³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ "Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly,³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth.³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

(please be seated)

SERMON

Rev. Peter I. Ray

(please stand, as able)

HYMN OF THE DAY

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying

ELW #436

APOSTLES CREED (10:30)

**C I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.***

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

**P As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places
that long for God's presence.**

A brief silence.

**P God of righteousness, your people live in hopeful expectation of your coming.
Fill your church with renewed passion for our shared mission, and deepen
our relationships with other Christians and other faith traditions in our
local community and across the world. Lord, in your mercy,**

C Receive our prayer.

P God of the cosmos, all creation shows that your presence is near. Help us sense your goodness and love in the sun and moon, in sprouting leaves and bare branches, in the roaring sea and quiet breeze. Lord, in your mercy,

C Receive our prayer.

P God of the nations, your reign extends over all principalities and powers. Give leaders and all in authority hearts for justice and peace. Encourage efforts to enact policies that benefit the common good. Lord, in your mercy,

C Receive our prayer.

P God of change, you accompany us through life's transitions. Be near to all who are changing jobs, moving, welcoming children, or facing the loss of loved ones. Sustain those who are ill or suffering (*especially*). In times of change, remind us of your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy,

C Receive our prayer.

P God of community, your Spirit holds us together. Sustain our care for one another (*especially through [local ministries] supported by this congregation*). Inspire us to seek new ways to live together and to embrace the diversity of thought and identity in our communities. Lord, in your mercy,

C Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

P God of memory, we give you thanks for faithful ones who have died (*especially*). Tend to our grief and sorrow with renewed trust in your promise of abundant and eternal life. Lord, in your mercy,

C Receive our prayer.

P Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.

C Amen.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

(You may share a sign of God's peace such as a handshake, wave, hug or other appropriate greeting.)

(please be seated)

OFFERING

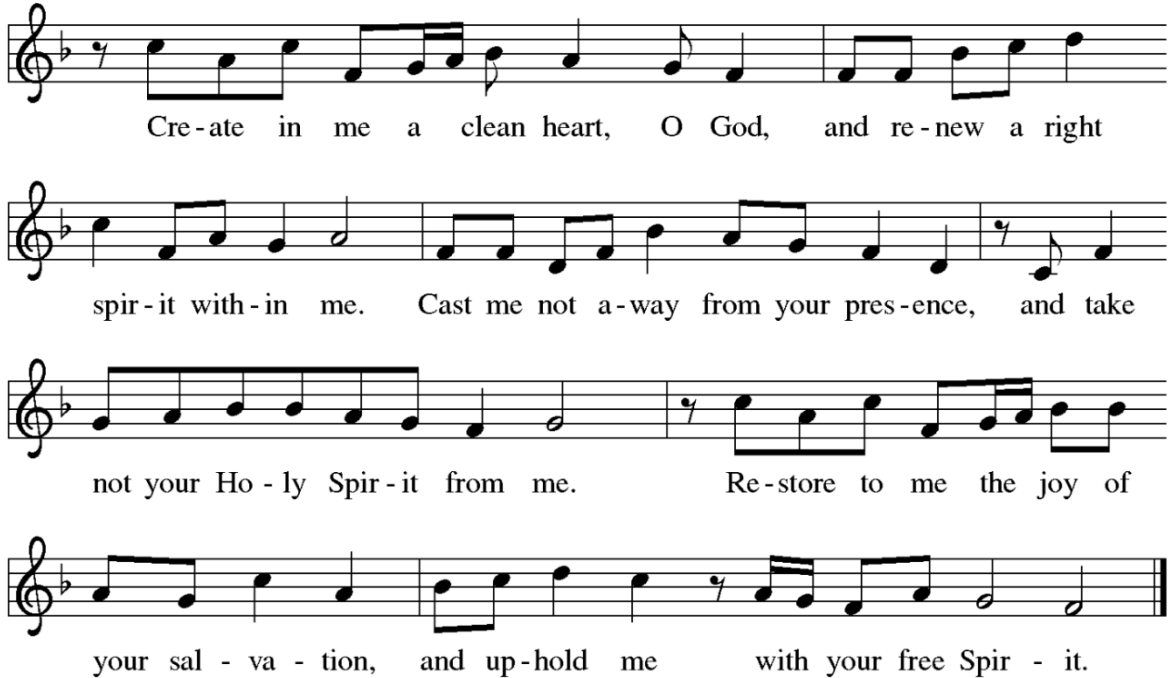
An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, and the care of those in need. If you are a first-time visitor, it is our privilege to have you worship with us. Please do not feel the need or obligation to give a financial offering. Your presence is gift enough to God and to us.

Our members and friends have the privilege to participate in faithful financial stewardship. Scan the QR Code below where you can give electronically.



(please stand, as able)

OFFERTORY RESPONSE



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new a right
spir-it with-in me. Cast me not a-way from your pres-ence, and take
not your Ho-ly Spir-it from me. Re-store to me the joy of
your sal-va-tion, and up-hold me with your free Spir-it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Creator God,
you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



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.



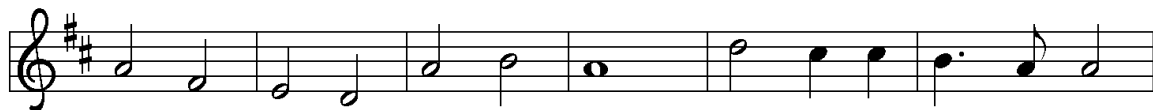
It is right to give our thanks and praise.



PREFACE

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

SANTUS (Holy, Holy, Holy)



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,



heav'n 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.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:

Blessed are you for the birth of creation.

Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you for your promise to your people.

Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.

Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.

Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

P In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

P Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

C **Christ has died.**
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

P With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

C **Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

C **Come, Holy Spirit.**

P All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in 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**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P God feeds us with tender mercy.
Come to the table.

C Amen.

(please be seated)

COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

Bethel welcomes to the Lord's table all baptized Christians who believe that Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of this meal. Children and adults who want to receive a blessing instead of bread and wine may cross their arms over their chest as they come forward. All are welcome!

AGNUS DEI (Lamb of God)



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION HYMN

We Are Waiting for Jesus

ACS #905



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

(please stand, as able)

PASTORAL COMMENDATION

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A Generous God,
we thank you for the gift of life,
for the bread of salvation.
We thank you for coming among us,
for leading us into peace.
We thank you for showering us with mercy,
for sending us into the world.
Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us
as we feed the hungry in your name.

C Amen.

Gathering • Word • Meal • Sending

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission out into the world.

BLESSING

P God of endings and beginnings,
God in the darkness and the light,
God, our hope for the journey,
✠ bless and keep you now and forever.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

The King Shall Come

ELW #260

DISMISSAL

A Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

Bethel's Staff

Lead Pastor: The Rev. Peter I. Ray

Care & Visitation Pastor: The Rev. Jeffrey N. Wise

Organist/Director of Music: Ward Matthias

Pianist/Associate Musician: Ruth Hiles

Director of Choirs: Bree Johnson

Youth Coordinator: Jennifer Bueter

Nursery Director: Crystal Smith

Pre-School Directors: Jennifer Bueter & Cathy Tallman

Church Administrator: Cathy Tallman

Custodian: Jennifer Horvath

Retired/Resource Pastors: The Rev. Wil Hallman

The Rev. Andrew Mazak

The Rev. Joe Stark

A Land Statement

"We acknowledge that we gather as Bethel Lutheran Church on the traditional land of the Shawnee and Ofo and Kaskaskia Peoples past and present, including the Adena/Hopewell Cultures, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded

it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well."