**Bethel Lutheran Church**

Rev. Molly Wills, Pastor | Jan Smith, Accompanist

Baptism of Our Lord | Sunday, January 12, 2024

ACS Holy Communion Setting 11

**Mission Statement**

Vibrantly open to the Spirit, Bethel Lutheran Church seeks to serve God

and its neighbors by joyfully living into the good news of Jesus Christ.

**Spirit Art**

**A meditative study of scripture through art.**

**Gathering**

**The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.**

**Meditation time** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* arr. by Marty Parks

*Bring a Torch, Jeanette Isabella* arr. by Marty Parks

*Go Tell It On the Mountain* arr. by Marianne Kim

**Welcome & Announcements**

**Confession, Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting. Amen.
Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. God-with-us, **we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter, claiming there is no room when we have plenty. We have made power and wealth our idols, while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger. We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging. Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace. Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant us the grace to begin again. Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin, through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us. Amen.** Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, + forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy. **Amen.**

**GATHERING SONG *Angels, from the Realms of Glory* (red hymnal #275)**

**Greeting (purple ACS p. 12)**

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

**Kyrie (purple ACS p. 12)**

**Canticle of Praise (purple ACS p. 12)**

**Prayer of the Day**

**Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**CHOIR ANTHEM** *The Celtic Rose* arr. by Sheldon Curry

**Word**

**God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.**

**FIRST Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14**

A reading from Jeremiah. 7 For thus says the Lord: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, “Save, O Lord, your people, the remnant of Israel.” 8 See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor together; a great company, they shall return here. 9 With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back; I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path where they shall not stumble, for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. 10 Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, “He who scattered Israel will gather him and will keep him as a shepherd does a flock.” 11 For the Lord has ransomed Jacob and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. 12 They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. 13 Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them and give them gladness for sorrow. 14 I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the Lord.

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

**PSALM** 147: 12-20 **(read responsively)**

12 Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion,
**13 who has strengthened the bars of your gates and has blessed your children within you.**
14 God has established peace on your borders and satisfies you with the finest wheat.
**15 God sends out a command to the earth, a word that runs very swiftly.**
16 God gives snow like wool, scattering frost like ashes.
**17 God scatters hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against God’s cold?**
18 The Lord sends forth the word and melts them; the wind blows, and the waters flow.
**19 God declares the word to Jacob, statutes and judgments to Israel.**20 The Lord has not done so to any other nation; they do not know God’s judgments. Hallelujah!

**SECOND Reading: Ephesians 1:3-14**

A reading from Ephesians. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. 5 He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight 9 he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, 12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; 14 this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God’s own people, to the praise of his glory.

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

**Gospel Acclamation (purple ACS p. 14)**

**Gospel: John 1: 1-18** The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9 The true light, which enlightenseveryone, was coming into the world.] 10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. 11 He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12 But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. 15 (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’ ”) 16 From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. 17 The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

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

**Children's Sermon**

**Sermon**

**Hymn of the Day *Who Is Like Our God* (purple hymnal #1098)**

**NICENE Creed (purple ACS p. 16)**

**Prayers of Intercession** God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

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

**Meal**

**God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.**

**OfferTORY** *How Great Our Joy* arr. by Stan Pethel (Bethel Brass)

**OfferTORY Prayer**

**God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving (purple ACS p. 20)**

The Lord be with you. **And also 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**

**Holy, Holy, Holy (purple ACS p. 20)**

**Thanksgiving at the Table (purple ACS p. 21)**

…with every breath. **We praise you, O God.**

…into the future. **We rejoice in you, O God.**

…with us now. **We thank you, O God.**

…proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

**…**in your church, without end. **Amen.**

**Lord’s prayer (purple ACS p. 24)**

**Communion (purple ACS p. 25)**

**communion song The First Noel (red hymnal #300)**

**Prayer after Communion**

**Sending**

**God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.**

**Blessing**

The God of love, Father +Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always. **Amen.**

**Sending hymn *Go Tell It on the Mountain* (red hymnal #290)**

**Dismissal** Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly. **Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude** The First Noel arr. by Michael Burkhardt

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**Welcome to Bethel Lutheran Church!**

**We’re glad you’re here! If you are new to Bethel, here is some helpful worship information:**

We use the **Evangelical Lutheran Worship (red hymnal)** and the supplement **All Creation Sings (purple hymnal)**, which contain liturgy and hymns. Liturgy pages are at the front of each hymnal, with the page numbers at the bottom and in the bulletin as **(red ELW p.)** or **(purple ACS p.)** Hymn pages are in the back two-thirds of the hymnals, with the page numbers at the top and in the bulletin as **(red hymnal #)** or **(purple hymnal #).** The songs from the Green Book are in the bulletin as **(green book #).**

**QUESTIONS OR REQUESTS?** Contact the church office at 320-395-2125 or bethellutheranlp@gmail.com. For emergency pastoral care needs, call Pastor Molly Wills at 320-339-8169 or email pastor@lpbethel.org.

**ADDRESS:** 77 Lincoln AVE N, Lester Prairie, MN 55354, **(Mailing USPS: PO Box 207)**

**WEBSITE:** [www.lpbethel.org](http://www.lpbethel.org)

**FACEBOOK**: www.facebook.com/lpbethel

**BULLETIN SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Wednesdays at noon

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:** 25th of the month

**ONLINE GIVING:** scan the QR code

**TEXT GIVING:** To give, text dollar amount to **866-298-7547**

**SIMPLY GIVING** offers convenience for you and much-needed consistency for Bethel! For more information, contact Stacy Meyer, Financial Secretary, at finsec@lpbethel.org**.**

**HEARING ASSIST DEVICES AVAILABLE**—speak to an usher for assistance.

**THIS WEEK AT BETHEL…**

**January 5, 2025…**

* Sunday school & Confirmation: following worship
* *The Chosen* & Fellowship hour: following worship

**Monday, January 6 (Epiphany)**

**Tuesday, January 7**

* Women of the ELCA meeting: 6:30 pm

**Wednesday, January 8**

* Worship & Music Committee meeting: 12:30 pm
* Quilting: 1:00 pm-4:30 pm

**Sunday, January 12 (Baptism of Our Lord)**

* Worship: 9:00 am
* Sunday school, God’s Grace class for 2nd graders, & Confirmation: following worship
* *The Chosen* & Fellowship hour: following worship

**About the Prayer of the Day**

The prayer of the day is inspired by prayer #42 in the seventh-century Gregorian Sacramentary. Echoing John’s gospel, and as daylight lengthens in the northern hemisphere, the prayer asks that God’s light be reflected in our lives.

 **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

* **NOMINATING COMMITTEE SEEKING 2025 VOLUNTEERS:** Open positions include:

Council positions: President, Secretary, Financial Secretary (all 2-year terms),

Finance Board and Education Board (both 2-year terms, they partner with another board member, and only one person from each board needs to attend the council meetings) Committee positions: Cemetery 2-year term, Mission Endowment 3-year term/need two, Audit 3-year term/need one, Nominating 1-year term/need four, Synod Assembly in June/one male & one female. ***Contact Peggy Wick, Ron Foust, or Brian Duncan if you want to serve in 2025!***

* **UPCOMING MILESTONE CLASSES: *God’s Grace for 2nd graders*:** January 12 with a Blessing during worship on January 19. ***Ten Commandments for 4th graders*:** February 2 with a Blessing during worship on February 9. ***Stewardship for 6th graders*:** February 9 with a Blessing during worship on February 16. The classes will be held after worship.
* **REMINDER:** Email your Financial Annual Reports to bethellutheranlp@gmail.com by **January 10!** *(Council Treasurer, 2025 Budget, and WELCA Treasurer)*
* **YOUTH TASK FORCE SOCIAL:** Bethel will host the Youth Task Force Social **on Wednesday, January 15, 12:40 pm-1:40 pm.** We will need volunteers to come early to set up card-making supplies on the tables, pop popcorn, etc., and volunteers to sit at each table to help the students. If you would like to volunteer, contact Pastor Molly.
* **BETHEL’S ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY, JANUARY 26**: The meeting will begin immediately following worship. A potluck meal will follow the meeting.Please make every effort to attend this important meeting for our congregation.
* **A MULTI-LEVEL AGE GIRL SCOUT TROOP** will meet monthly at our church starting January 18 at 1:00 pm. At the first meeting, they will decide which Saturday of the month to meet and what time. Girls K-12 are invited to join. It will be a multi-level age group because it is the only Girl Scout troop available in Lester Prairie. The leader is Deb Riske. If anyone is interested in joining, contact Deb at 612-804-3188 or dwriske@gmail.com.
* **BETHEL BREAKFAST:** Since the annual meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2025, the next Bethel Breakfast at Longhorn’s will be on **January 19, 2025!**
* **RACHEL KURTZ IN CONCERT with the SW MN Synod youth band:** Wed., January 29, Hutchinson Event Center, pizza will be served from 5:45 pm to 6:15 pm (RSVP by Jan. 27 to pastor@riverofhopehutchinson.org), and the concert will be from 6:30 pm to 7:45 pm. Admission is free, and donations are accepted (checks written to River of Hope).
* **FAITH THAT OVERFLOWS 2025:** Registration for GLLM summer programs is open! By registering early, you will not only reserve your place, but you’ll save money too! **The Early Bird Discount ends on February 13, 2025!** Every registration received before then will receive $65 off each registered program (some restrictions apply.) GLLM scholarships are available for any program including youth camps, and retreat programs. Bethel also has scholarships available, contact Emily Koehler or Pete Hallberg if you are interested. Visit gllm.org for more information and register today! If you have questions, contact the office by phone at 320-796-2181 or email camp@gllm.org.
* **CREATIVE SOULS RETREAT, FEBRUARY 7-9, 2025:** Escape the cold and snow and enjoy a cozy weekend of creating! Crafters of all skills and projects are invited to a weekend of dedicated time to create and work on projects. No need to think about meals or dishes, because we have those covered. When you need a break, there is space for a walk, reading a book, or even enjoying a nap. Join us for a weekend filled with whatever your creative soul needs! Register before the deadline - **Tuesday, January 28!** Visit [gllm.org](http://gllm.org/) for more information and register today!