



Thursday, December 24 ~ *Christmas Eve*

On a long winter evening at the end of a challenging year, we gather to proclaim the coming of the light. Isaiah announces that the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Paul reminds us that the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all. In the familiar account of Christ's birth, the evening sky is bright with the heavenly host singing, "Glory to God in the highest." Amid our broken world we proclaim that the prince of peace is born among us. God comes to us in human flesh and moves into our homes and into our hearts, so that we may be bearers of divine light to all the world.

Prelude:

Still, Still, Still

Austrian carol/arr. Paul Manz

Come, You Shepherds

Bohemian carol/ arr. Klaus Uwe Ludwig

Susan DePasquale, organ

O Come, All Ye Faithful

John Wade/arr. Fred Bock

Marsha Gerhardt, piano

I Saw Three Ships

English carol/arr. Sean O'Loughlin

Dick DePasquale, trumpet

The First Noel

English carol/arr. Dennis Alexander

Preston Fuerbacher, piano

Holy Infant's Lullaby

Norman Dello Joio

Katherine Jefferis, mezzo soprano soloist

Jim Jefferis, piano

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Felix Mendelssohn/arr. Fred Bock

Mike Koncilja, piano and organ

Noel No. 10 in G Major

Louis-Claude Daquin

Susan DePasquale, organ

Gathering Words and Welcome

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

As we gather to celebrate in word and song the birth of Christ into our world, prepare a worship space in your home. If you have an Advent log or wreath, light all the candles. Also gather additional candles (one for each person in your household) to light at the end of the service.

Carol:

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold him,
born the king of angels:

Refrain

O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy,
light of light eternal,
born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
in the highest: *Refrain*

Christmas Welcome to Worship:

Jesus Christ is the Light of the world!

The Light no darkness can overcome.

At darkest night we gather to celebrate the great light of our salvation.

With the heavenly host we sing, “Glory to God in the highest heaven.”

In Christ, God’s Word is made flesh and lives among us.

With the shepherds, we will tell of the wonders we have seen and heard.

Carol:

Go Tell It on the Mountain

African American Spiritual

Youth Choir (Director, Annette Finkbeiner; Susan DePasquale, piano)

Greeting and Prayer of the Day:

May the grace and truth of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray. Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus’ presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Children’s Moment

Carol:

Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply,
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria in excelsis Deo;
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
which inspire your heav'nly song? Refrain

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn king. Refrain

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Reading: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

²The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.
On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned.

⁶A child is born to us, a son is given to us,
and authority will be on his shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷There will be vast authority and endless peace
for David's throne and for his kingdom,
establishing and sustaining it
with justice and righteousness
now and forever.

The zeal of the Lord of heavenly forces will do this.

Carol:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

arr. Dan Forrest

Chancel Choir (Director, Jim Jefferis; Piano, Susan DePasquale and Jonathan Madden)

Reading: Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people. ¹² It educates us so that we can live sensible, ethical, and godly lives right now by rejecting ungodly lives and the desires of this world. ¹³ At the same time we wait for the blessed hope and the glorious appearance of our great God and savior Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ He gave himself for us in order to rescue us from every kind of lawless behavior, and cleanse a special people for himself who are eager to do good actions.

Carol:

O Come Little Children

lyrics by Christoph von Schmid, tune by Johann A.P. Schultz and arr. by Tull Glazener
Dulcimers (Director, Rich Towsley; vocalists, Rachael and Clara Parlett)

Reading: Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. ² This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. ³ Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. ⁴ Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. ⁵ He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. ⁷ She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

Carol:

Away in a Manger

arr. Patricia Sanders Cota

Chancel Bells (Director, Annette Finkbeiner)

Reading: Luke 2:8-20

⁸ Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. ⁹ The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people. ¹¹ Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. ¹² This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." ¹⁵ When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." ¹⁶ They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they saw this, they reported what they had been told about this child. ¹⁸ Everyone who heard it was amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹ Mary committed these things to memory and considered them carefully. ²⁰ The shepherds returned home, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. Everything happened just as they had been told.

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all the earth!

How silently, how silently
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
oh, come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Immanuel!

The Prayers of the People:

In the silences of our prayer you are encouraged to remember those whose needs are known to us listed below. You may also lift up the name of someone in need of prayer in the comments of our worship livestream.

Wonderful Counselor, increase our joy as your people gather across the globe on this holy night to sing of our dear Savior's birth. May the story of salvation live in the hearts of all who sing of its wonders. God of grace,

Hear our prayer.

Mighty God, you have broken the yoke of sin's burden through the birth of your Son. Comfort those whose burdens distract them from the deeper peace of this holy night and grant them a restful mind. God of peace,

Hear our prayer.

Everlasting Father, uphold all who are in sorrow or need of your divine goodness and mercy

We pray for those who are grieving, especially the family and friends of:

- Ken Strecker (stepfather of John Perry) who died on 12/9. Prayers are especially with Mary Strecker (John's mother).

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Jerry Stock (brother of Bob Stock) who is recovering from 12/16 gall bladder surgery
- Those impacted by fires, hurricanes and other disasters
- Those who are involved with the ongoing work of caregiving for loved ones
- Those who are infected with or recovering from Coronavirus, and their caregivers

God of love,

Hear our prayer.

Prince of Peace, fill the nations with the peace that only you can give. Turn weapons of war into instruments that secure the wellbeing of all your creation. God of hope,

Hear our prayer.

Gracious God, bathe us always in the light of your Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

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

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

**and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen**

Offering

Though we meet virtually, the ministry of God's people at BLC continues. Our worship is complete when we bring all of our resources to receive God's blessing and fulfill God's purpose. This time of uncertainty and reduced physical contact gives us ever more opportunities to share our abundance – of compassion, of time, and of material resources. If you are able, please continue your financial commitment to BLC.

If you would like to make a one-time gift electronically, scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page. For recurring gifts, download the Tithe.ly app. Checks may also be mailed to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY 14450.



Whatever form your offering takes, we give thanks to God for you and your generosity.

Offering of Music:

A Hallelujah Christmas

music, L. Cohn; text, Cloverton

(Folk Group, Director Rich Towsley)

| | |
|------------|--------------------|
| Offertory: | What Child Is This |
|------------|--------------------|

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby;
joy, joy, for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary!

Gospel of the Incarnation: John 1:1-4, 9-14

¹In the beginning was the Word
and the Word was with God
and the Word was God.

²The Word was with God in the beginning.

³Everything came into being through the Word,
and without the Word
nothing came into being.

What came into being

⁴through the Word was life,
and the life was the light for all people.

⁵ The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light. ...

⁹ The true light that shines on all people
was coming into the world.

¹⁰ The light was in the world,
and the world came into being through the light,
but the world didn't recognize the light.

¹¹ The light came to his own people,
and his own people didn't welcome him.

¹² But those who did welcome him,
those who believed in his name,
he authorized to become God's children,

¹³ born not from blood
nor from human desire or passion,
but born from God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh
and made his home among us.

We have seen his glory,
glory like that of a father's only son,
full of grace and truth.

Christmas Message

At this time turn all the lights off in your home, and distribute the individual candles to those in your household. When the minister lights her candle, light one candle from a candle in your home or from your Advent log or wreath and then distribute the candle light to all those in your home. The lighted candle is never tilted but is always held upright when giving the light to another. Be careful of hot wax that may drip down the side of the candle and be sure to remain a safe distance from flammable items in your home.

| | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Hymn of Light: | <i>Silent Night, Holy Night!</i> |
|----------------|----------------------------------|

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.

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!

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.

(Hum fourth verse)

WE LEAVE TO SERVE:

Benediction:

May the Lord God, who has called you out of darkness to be servants of light, grant you the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, and the peace of the Christ Child. In the name of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The candles are extinguished.

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| Sending Hymn: | <i>Joy to the World</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------|

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her king;
let ev'ry heart prepare him room
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sin and sorrow grow
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Go in peace. Christ is with us!
Thanks be to God.

Announcements – watch for slides during the Postlude

Postlude:

Postlude on "In dulci jubilo"

(ELW #288)

Norman Dello Joio

Susan DePasquale, organ

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*The Christmas tree arrangement in the sanctuary was given to the Glory of God by the **Stocks, Toppings and Berners**. It is dedicated to all front-line health care workers fighting the Corona virus while doing their regular jobs, with professionalism and compassion for the benefit of all in need, without hesitation.*

*The wreaths which decorate our Sanctuary are given to the Glory of God by **Brian Edwards** in memory of his parents Tom and Gert Edwards, his aunt Ann Rasbeck and his grandparents Henry and Charlotte Miiller.*

*The wreaths that adorn our church entrances are given to the glory of God by **Karen Bigenwald** in honor of her family and in memory of her parents Isabelle and Sam Mohr.*

***Contributions were also made to Heritage Christian Services
by the following:***

Cathy Anderson in memory of Kathy Mater and Paula Hitchings

Sherry & Jim Cook in memory of our parents, Jane and Rod Johnson
and Myrtle and Howard Cook

Sandy Goehle in honor of my loved ones

Libby & Katy Howe in honor of Jim Berner

Lilita Lassen-Ward in memory of Bill Ward

Anonymous LYLAS donor in honor of Pastor Amy

Kathy & Jim Moragne in honor of Riley Stevens

and in memory of George T. Stevens

Howard & Janet Sharp in memory of our parents, Gene & Grace Garvey
and Irv & June Sharp

Pastor Amy & Hans Walter-Peterson in honor of the Staff
and Congregational Leaders of Bethlehem Lutheran Church;
and Madeleine, Isabel, Nathaniel, and Micah Hoffman

Desiree Wolfe in memory of Virginia Wolfe

Calendar for December 24 – January 3

Thursday, December 24 Christmas Eve

11:00 am – 1:00 pm Christmas
Eve – Sanctuary open for silent
Meditation & Prayer
4:00 pm Christmas Eve worship
is available on FaceBook
7:30 pm Share in the BLC Watch
Party on FaceBook of Christmas
Eve Worship; watch party
begins at 7:15 with an extended
musical prelude

Friday, December 25 Christmas Day Church Office closed

Saturday, December 26

**Sunday, December 27
First Sunday of Christmas**
8:30 am Service of Lessons
and Carols with the Upstate
New York Synod
No LYO

Monday, December 28
BLC Office Closed
No Virtual Youth Choir
No Confirmation

Tuesday, December 29
BLC Office Closed

Wednesday, December 30
BLC Office Closed
No Bible Study
No Chancel Bells
No Chancel Choir

Thursday, December 31
BLC Office Closed

Friday, January 1
BLC Office Closed
No Folk Group Rehearsal
No Dulcimer Group
Rehearsal

Saturday, January 2

**Sunday, January 3
Epiphany Sunday**
8:30 am Facebook
Livestream
Worship followed by Holy
Communion – the sanctuary
will be open for people to
receive communion until 11 am
7:30 pm Zoom* LYO
([Join](#) or use ID 818 2417 6546)

The church office will be closed on Friday December 25 & Monday, December 28 in observance of the Christmas Holiday. In order to provide additional vacation time for BLC staff this holiday week, the church office will remain closed through January 3. In the event of a Pastoral Emergency (i.e. death, family or individual crisis) please contact Pastor Korey Finstad at 585-402-8451.

For additional details about any of the meetings, events and activities listed above contact the church office!

***To join any of our BLC Zoom meetings, use the ID provided or contact the church office and/or group organizer.**

***Zoom Options:** For recurring meetings, the info will remain the same each time. Participants can join with the link provided (above where applicable, or via email), or by using the Meeting ID and manually enter the password (the 10-digit BLC phone number with area code, no spaces or hyphens). **Please contact the group leader or the church office for assistance or additional details! If you have trouble accessing a Zoom meeting in real-time, you can call or text (585) 364-2129 for assistance.**
