First Sunday in Advent

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Pastor Calvin Konop, Presiding
Jessica Christenson, CYF Director
Karina Roth & The Bluegrass Band
10:00 AM | November 29, 2026



Belonging to Christ, Sharing Christ on the North Shore & Beyond!

Today, we begin the season of Advent with hope.
As we remember Christ's coming,
let us prepare our hearts to welcome him anew.

INTRODUCTION

Stir up your power, and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with stars falling from heaven, it can sound dire and horrible, not like anything we would ever hope for. But when we really look at the suffering of people God loves, we can share the hope that God would tear open the heavens and come.

PRELUDE *There's a Light* by Emmylou Harris

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE The Olsen Family

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You call all nations to walk in your light and seek your ways of justice and peace, for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near. Bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath. Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes and welcome him into our hearts and homes, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God, who calls out to the weary, whose word endures forever. **Amen.**

A voice cries out in the wilderness, "Make straight the way of the Lord!" We are called to confess our sin and turn back toward God's love. *Silence is kept for reflection.*

Comforting God, **we are your people, but we have neglected to call on your name. We are your people, but we have not remembered your ways. We are your people, but we have forgotten your hold on us. We are your people, but now we fade like a leaf, and our sins, like the wind, take us away. Restore us as your people. Cleanse us from our sin, and clothe us in your righteousness. Amen.**

"Comfort, comfort my people!" says your God, who has clothed you with the garments of salvation and wrapped you in the robe of righteousness. God has given you a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. In the name of ✢ Christ, your sins are forgiven: Rejoice in the Lord! Rejoice in the Lord! **Amen. Thanks be to God!**

GATHERING SONG *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* ELW 254

(Alternate tune)

GREETING

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.**

HYMN OF PRAISE *Lumen* by Abbie Betinis

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. **By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME Jess Christenson

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting "Noisy Change" for the "Holy Cow" fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger.

FIRST READING Isaiah 64:1-9

[1] O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the
mountains would quake at your presence—[2] as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your
adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! [3] When you did
awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down; the mountains quaked
at your presence. [4] From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye
has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. [5] You
meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you
were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. [6] We have
all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy

cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.[7] There is no one who calls on your name or attempts to take hold of you, for you have hidden your face from us and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. [8] Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.[9] Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

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

PSALM — Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

[1] Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

[2] **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up your strength and come to help us.**

[3] Restore us, O God; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

[4] **O LORD God of hosts, how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

[5] You have fed them with the bread of tears; you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

[6] **You have made us the derision of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

[7] Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

[17] **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

[18] And so will we never turn away from you; give us life, that we may call upon your name.

[19] **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: — 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

[3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[4] I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, [5] for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind—[6] just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you—[7] so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. [8] He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9] God is faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

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

The holy gospel according to St. Mark. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL — Mark 13:24-37

[Jesus said:] 24 "In those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and
the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and
the powers in the heavens will be shaken. 26 "Then they will see 'the Son of Man
coming in clouds' with great power and glory. 27 Then he will send out the
angels and gather the elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the
ends of heaven.

28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and
puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. 29 So also, when you see
these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. 30 Truly I
tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.
31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven nor
the Son, but only the Father. 33 Beware, keep alert, for you do not know when
the time will come. 34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home
and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper
to be on the watch. 35 Therefore, keep awake, for you do not know when the
master of the house will come, in the evening or at midnight or at cockcrow or
at dawn, 36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. 37 And what
I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

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

SERMON — Pastor Calvin Konop

HYMN OF THE DAY — *O Come, O Come Emmanual* — ELW 257

Verses 1, 2 and 3

PROFESSION OF FAITH

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

In hope and expectation, we bring to God our prayers for the church, the world, and all in need. *(A brief silence.)*

Strengthen your church in this season of anticipation. Nourish all people who gather around word and water, bread and cup. Reassure any whose faith feels dry that you are always near. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Come and restore the earth. Give rest to weary lands and renewed life to species at risk. Make us wise stewards of the places we call home. Protect the people, land and animals affected by the explosion in Iowa. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Bring peace among all nations and communities. Embolden leaders to seek creative and sustainable resolutions to war and conflict. Show us new possibilities in places where peace has been elusive. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Sustain all who are heavy with weariness, grief, illness, or worry. We pray especially these we name before you now for *Denise, Brian, Patty, Bonnie, Gene, Luke, Sarah, & Katrina.* We pray now for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. *(A time of silence).* We lift to You all those dealing with issues of mental health or addiction. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Comfort families who are estranged from one another and any who are separated from loved ones. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Inspire liturgists, preachers, musicians, and all who lead our worship and prayer, especially our choir, the Average Worship Band, Karina and our substitute pianists and organists. May we be prepared as we await Christ's coming this Advent season. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

You embrace all the saints from the far reaches of the earth. We remember with care all who have died and now abide in their eternal home. God, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

We entrust these and the prayers of our hearts to you, most holy God, in the name of Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

OFFERING ***Storm Comin'*** **Wallin Jenny's**

On-line giving is encouraged using this QR Code

OFFERING PRAYER

Holy Creator, **we are the clay and you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Receive these gifts shape them and our lives for your purpose, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

In bread and cup the reign of Christ is breaking in. Come, receive what Christ has prepared. All are welcome!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church believes in the real presence of Christ in Holy Communion, and we practice eucharistic hospitality. ***All persons****, whether visiting or a member, are welcomed to Communion. (Offered in these sacraments are wine or apple juice; and regular or gluten-free wafers.)*

COMMUNION MUSIC *Welcome Table*

Verse 1- I'm gonna sit at the welcome table.
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days.
I'm gonna sit at the welcome table.
Gonna sit at the welcome table one of these days, one of these days.

Verse 2- I'm gonna feast on milk and honey

Verse 3- All God's children gonna sit together

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in grace unto everlasting life. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Providing God, **you feed your flock like a shepherd and gather your people in your arms. We praise you for the care and sustenance you give at this meal and always. As we leave your table, carry us near your heart, and send us with confidence in the way of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

BLESSING

God our provider, God our feast, God our companion, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *Blessed Assurance* ELW 638

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Bring good news the brokenhearted. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE *Shine* Collective Soul

We pray for healing for these members & friends: Denise Murray, Brian Valley, Patty Nelson, Bonnie Hromidko, Shae Lindholm, Gene Erickson, Mary Sanders, Ed Hedstrom, Milly Gestel, Linda Zenk, Stacey Johnson, Nancy Koss, Lois Johnson, Butch & Rhonda Schulte, Luke Gulstrand, Sarah Coe, Char Anderson, Phyllis Olson, Paulina Backstrom, Stacey Schulte, Hank Ferland, Katrina Crouse, Karen Shannon, Tom Christiansen.

Mission of the Month for December: is ELCA Good Gifts! In 2025, our congregation generously contributed $715, helping to address the needs of our neighbors around the globe. As we enter this holiday season, the Church in Society Committee again invites you to participate in Good Gifts, ensuring that your gift through Bethlehem makes a real impact in communities across the world.

"Your unrestricted support will allow the ELCA to respond where and when needed most. With one gift, you have an opportunity to make a widespread impact, reaching far and wide to share God's love."

We also encourage you to visit the ELCA Good Gifts website (goodgifts.elca.org) to learn more about this work and specific giving areas.



Once again, we will be sharing closer to home with a mitten, hat, and scarf tree which will be in the narthex during advent. Feel free to also donate warm socks which are a most requested item. The "decorations" on the tree will be given to the Domiano Center in Duluth where they will be distributed to people coming to the center. People of Bethlehem, we thank you for responding with generosity in this season of giving!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
417 First Avenue West, PO Box 638
Grand Marais, MN 55604
218-387-2227
www.sharingchrist.org | blc@boreal.org

This Week at Bethlehem:

Sun Nov. 29	8:40 AM	Bluegrass Practice
	10:00 AM	**Worship Service & Sunday School**
	3:30 PM	Borealis Orchestra practice
	5:00 PM	Borealis Chorale practice
Tues Dec 1	8:30 AM	Staff meeting
	3:30 PM	Girl Scouts
Wed Dec 2	8:00 AM	Church in Society
	12:30 PM	Text Study
	5:30 PM	Meal
	6:00 PM	**Worship**
	6:30 PM	Confirmation
Thur Dec 3	8:00 AM	Men's Bible Study
	9:00 AM	Quilting
	3:20 PM	Children's Choir practice
Fri Dec 4	-----	Clarity Hearing Appts
Sat Dec 5	1:00 PM	Hanging of the Greens
Sun Dec 6	8:40 AM	Choir Practice
	10:00 AM	**Worship Service & Sunday School**
	3:30 PM	Borealis Orchestra practice
	5:00 PM	Borealis Chorale practice

Upcoming Events:

1st Week of December (6, 7, or 8??) Christmas Tree set up and decorating. Date to be determined by Kent Anderson. We'd like to get adults to help with this. Please talk to Pastor or Jess. We may have a short notice for setting up the tree. Stay tuned.

December 5: Hanging of the Greens at 1:00 pm (For information talk to Janet Simonen/Hilja Iverson)

December 11 & 12: Borealis Concerts, 7:00 pm. (Hospitality Teams: Dec. 11th Gwen Lenz & Kris Hedstrom, and Dec. 12th: Joy Oberg)

December 13: No Rehearsal Christmas Program, 10:00am during worship. All are invited to participate.

Help with Sunday Services: sign up to help with worship using this QR Code.

This week we lift up these members: Phyllis Olson; Pastor Bob Stoskopf; Anita Gavic; Linda Zenk; Joyce Drouillard; and Karen Shannon. May God walk with these friends in their journey of peace.

Denise will be out of the office starting November 30th for a few weeks.

Wednesday Text Study: Join us at 12:30 pm on Wednesdays for a study of the scripture lessons for the next Sunday. Zoom available

Men's Bible Study: Every Thursday morning, beginning at 8:00 to 9:15 am. Contact Mike Chmelik for information, 218-387-1790

Quilters are seeking more helpers! Every Thursday morning at 9 to 11:30am. Come as you are able.

Grocery Cards are available from BLCW to community members who need help with food insecurity. Contact the office.

Traveler Cards are available from BLC to members of the community that need to travel out-of-town for medical appointments. Contact the office.

Free Bibles Bethlehem has a supply of bibles for all ages including Lutheran Study Bible for adults and young children's bibles. Please talk to Jess or Pastor if you would like one.

Order a poinsettia for our Christmas Eve Services. Order forms are in the narthex. Plants can be picked up after the 5pm service on Christmas Eve. Cost is $20. We appreciate your help with this.



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