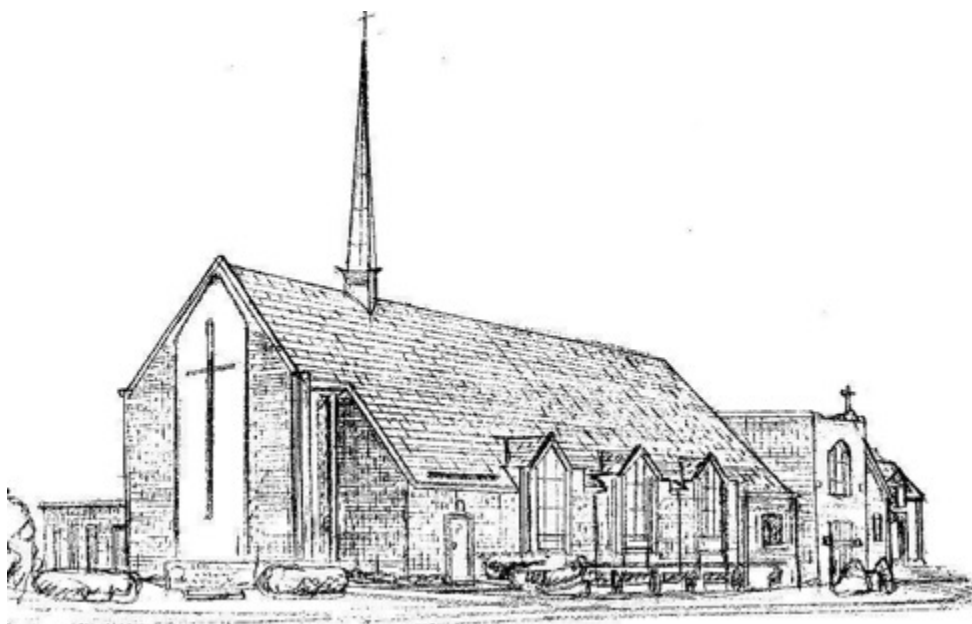


# BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



*Serving, accepting, and loving all.*

**Bulletin**

**January 12, 2025**

**Daniel P. Smail & Ellen S. Lundie, Pastors**  
**Laura M. Henri, Organist and Director of Choirs**

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**Web Page: [www.belc.org](http://www.belc.org)**

**Sunday, January 12, 2025**

**Baptism of Our Lord / Lectionary 1, Year C**

### **Introduction**

*Today's festival rejoices in God's blessings. We recall and celebrate our adoption as God's children, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the promised company of almighty God when we "pass through the waters . . . the rivers . . . fire." On this day the heavens open again for this assembly, and we receive the gift of God's Beloved, Jesus, in bread and wine.*

### **GATHERING**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: In the name of the Father,  
and of the † Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

A: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**C: Amen.**

A: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.  
*The assembly kneels or stands. Silence is kept for reflection.*

A: Most merciful God,

**C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves.**

**We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.  
Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

### **GATHERING SONG NO. 310 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise**

1 Songs of thankfulness and praise,  
Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise;  
manifested by the star  
to the sages from afar,  
branch of royal David's stem  
in thy birth at Bethlehem:  
anthems be to thee addressed,  
God in flesh made manifest.

2 Manifest at Jordan's stream,  
prophet, priest, and king supreme;  
and at Cana wedding guest  
in thy Godhead manifest;  
manifest in pow'r divine,  
changing water into wine;  
anthems be to thee addressed,  
God in flesh made manifest.

3 Manifest in making whole  
weakened body, fainting soul;  
manifest in valiant fight,  
quelling all the devil's might;  
manifest in gracious will,  
ever bringing good from ill:  
anthems be to thee addressed,  
God in flesh made manifest.

4 Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,  
present in thy holy word;  
grace to imitate thee now  
and be pure, as pure art thou;  
that we might become like thee  
at thy great epiphany,  
and may praise thee, ever blest,  
God in flesh made manifest.

Text: Christopher Wordsworth, 1807-1885, alt.

## **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.**

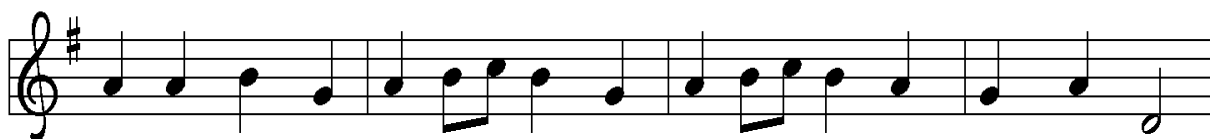
## CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 204)



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.  
2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.  
3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:  
Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;  
Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.  
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.  
Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.  
Hear our prayer; re - store, for-give us; in your prom-ise firm we stand.  
For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at his baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

## **WORD**

### **FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:1-7**

*Near the end of Israel's exile in Babylon, God promises to bring the people home. They need no longer be afraid, because the one who formed, created, and called them by name now redeems them from all their enemies. God declares them precious and honored, and God loves them.*

A reading from Isaiah,

<sup>1</sup> But now thus says the LORD,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name; you are mine.

<sup>2</sup> When you pass through the waters, I will be with you,  
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,  
and the flame shall not consume you.

<sup>3</sup> For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,  
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

<sup>4</sup> Because you are precious in my sight  
and honored and I love you,

I give people in return for you,  
nations in exchange for your life.

<sup>5</sup> Do not fear, for I am with you;  
I will bring your offspring from the east,  
and from the west I will gather you;

<sup>6</sup> I will say to the north, "Give them up,"  
and to the south, "Do not withhold;

bring my sons from far away  
and my daughters from the end of the earth—

<sup>7</sup> everyone who is called by my name,  
whom I created for my glory,  
whom I formed and made."

A: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: 29** (*The psalm will be sung responsively*)

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the | LORD, you gods,

ascribe to the LORD glo- | ry and strength.

<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the LORD the glory | due God's name;**

**worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of | glory thunders;  
the LORD is upon the | mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup> **The voice of the LORD is a pow- | erful voice;**  
**the voice of the LORD is a | voice of splendor.**

<sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the | cedar trees;  
the LORD breaks the ce- | dars of Lebanon;

<sup>6</sup> **the LORD makes Lebanon skip | like a calf,**  
**and Mount Hermon like a | young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup> The voice | of the LORD  
bursts forth in | lightning flashes.

<sup>8</sup> **The voice of the LORD | shakes the wilderness;**  
**the LORD shakes the wilder- | ness of Kadesh.**

<sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe  
and strips the | forests bare.

And in the temple of the LORD all are | crying, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup> **The LORD sits enthroned a- | bove the flood;**  
**the LORD sits enthroned as king for- | evermore.**

<sup>11</sup> O LORD, give strength | to your people;  
give them, O LORD, the bless- | ings of peace.

**SECOND READING Acts 8:14-17**

*Peter and John are sent to support the new Christians in Samaria, a group that was recently baptized after hearing the good news of Christ through the preaching of Philip. Here the Samaritans receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in the laying on of hands.*

A reading from Acts,

<sup>14</sup> Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup> The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit <sup>16</sup> (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). <sup>17</sup> Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 205)



Al - le-lu - ia! Lord and Sav - ior: o - pen now your sav - ing word.



Let it burn like fire with - in us; speak un - til our hearts are stirred.



Al - le - lu - ia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.

## GOSPEL: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

*The reading opens with questions about the identity of the Messiah. John the Baptist insists that he is not the Messiah; instead he points ahead to one who is coming. And whether the voice of God was heard by all or only by Jesus, God settles the matter: Jesus is God's beloved Son.*

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."



<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

P: The gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON - The Rev. Daniel P. Smail**

**HYMN OF THE DAY NO. 304 Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized**

1 Christ, when for us you were baptized,  
God's Spirit on you came,  
as peaceful as a dove, and yet  
as urgent as a flame,  
as urgent as a flame.

2 God called you, "My beloved Son";  
you are God's servant true,  
sent to proclaim the reign of heav'n,  
God's holy will to do,  
God's holy will to do.

3 Straightway and steadfast until death  
you then obeyed the call  
to serve with free and willing heart,  
to give your life for all,  
to give your life for all.

4 Baptize us with your Spirit, Lord;  
your cross on us be signed,  
that likewise in God's service we

may perfect freedom find,  
may perfect freedom find.

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## **APOSTLES CREED**

**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**

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church,  
the world, and all of creation.

*A brief silence.*

You call us by name and form us. We give thanks for the gift of baptism.  
Nurture the baptized and equip people sent to proclaim the good news,  
especially Young Adults in Global Mission and international  
congregations. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

Your voice sounds over the waters. Speak words of healing over the rivers and lakes, seas, and oceans. Heeding your voice, lead us to care for water, and the land and creatures it nourishes. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

You give strength to your people. Uphold all who serve the common good. Guide federal and state legislators, city and county officials, judges and juries. Strengthen our resolve to serve all in need. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

You are with us in challenging times. Draw near to all who are ill, undergoing treatment, or recovering from surgery; especially those we name within our hearts (*a moment of silence...*). Accompany individuals and families affected by addiction or mental health challenges. Uphold each person as your beloved. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

You draw us into community. Embolden ministries of racial reconciliation, nurture work on behalf of immigrants and refugees, and equip each to use their gifts for the sake of neighbors near and far. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

You grant us peace. Comfort all who grieve. Dwell with us in this life and, at the last, join us with the saints whom you have created, formed, and named. God of grace,  
**hear our prayer.**

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.  
**Amen.**

**PEACE**

**P:** The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C:** And also with you.

## **MEAL**

**OFFERING** *Offering boxes are in the narthex and back of the sanctuary*

### **OFFERING PRAYER**

A: Let us pray. God of grace,

**C: your love reaches to the heavens,  
and your abundance to the depths of the seas.**

**Bless what we offer to your service:**

**our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.**

**Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,  
now and always. Amen.**

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING (ELW p. 206)**

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

**C: We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise**

### **PREFACE (ELW p. 207)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

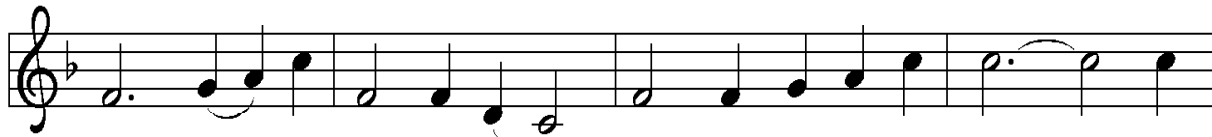
### **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 207)**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er 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, ho - san - na in the high - est.

## **EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

Blessed are you, O holy God:

you are the Life and Light of all.

By your powerful word you created all things.

Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son.

He is your Light, shining in our darkness  
and revealing to us your mercy and might.

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.

Remembering, therefore,

his preaching and healing,

his dying and rising,

and his promise to come again,

we await that day when all the universe

will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal,

that, refreshed with this heavenly food,

we may be light for the world,

revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,

Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church,

both now and forever.

**Amen**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**P:** Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

### COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 208)



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

### SENIOR CHOIR - *LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER*, J. BEHNKE

### COMMUNION HYMN NO. 677 **This Little Light of Mine**

1 This little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

2 Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

3 Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;  
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine,  
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

L: Let us pray.

Nourishing God,

at this table you have refreshed us  
with holy gifts of food and drink.

Strengthen us for service,

and send us out to embody your good news  
of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.

In the name of Christ we pray,

**C: Amen.**

## **SENDING**

### **BLESSING**

The Spirit of the triune God

✠ bless you with joy,

anoint you with compassion,

and send you in love.

**C: Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG NO. 305 When Jesus Came to Jordan**

1 When Jesus came to Jordan  
to be baptized by John,  
he did not come for pardon  
but as the Sinless One.  
He came to share repentance  
with all who mourn their sins,  
to speak the vital sentence  
with which good news begins.

2 He came to share temptation,  
our utmost woe and loss,



for us and our salvation  
to die upon the cross.  
So when the dove descended  
on him, the Son of Man,  
the hidden years had ended,  
the age of grace began.

3 Come, Holy Spirit, aid us  
to keep the vows we make;  
this very day invade us,  
and ev'ry bondage break.  
Come, give our lives direction,  
the gift we covet most:  
to share the resurrection  
that leads to Pentecost.

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## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Live in hope.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

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**Altar Flowers** – The flowers on the altar today are dedicated to the glory of God and the adornment of his house in thanksgiving of the Winter Season and the beauty it gives as it blankets us from time to time with snow, allowing us to slow down and simply appreciate those moments in time.

## **Children's Space**

We encourage children to worship in the sanctuary as much as possible. However, we know that some days, a break may be needed. Please stop in the lounge for shorter breaks where there are coloring activities and snacks provided. All children must be accompanied by an adult. The nursery is also available downstairs in Fellowship Hall with the ability to hear the service.

### **2025 Flower Chart**

The 2025 Flower Chart is posted on the wall in the hallway across from the office. Think of important dates or life events that you and your family would like to honor or remember someone on and sign up for altar flowers on that date or on a date that is open close to it.

### **Stained Glass & Other Crafts**

Mark your calendars for Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The date when the Stained Glass and Other Crafts classes resume here at BELC. We will meet at 10:00am and craft till around noon. We will gather in the downstairs music room as we had been doing. Can't wait to see everyone back again!

**Annual Congregational Meeting - Mark your calendars and plan to attend on Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> following the 10:30am service.**

*See next weekend's bulletin for more details regarding the luncheon that day.*

Monthly Special Offering for JANUARY is: Good Samaritan Fund

## **The Week at Bethlehem**

- Sunday, Jan. 12<sup>th</sup>      8:00 am Worship & Communion  
9:15am Sunday School  
\*10:30am Worship & Communion  
\* Live streaming of worship service  
11:45am L.I.F.T. Faith Salad & Planning Mtg.  
6:30-7:30p Confirmation Classes and  
High School Hangout  
7:30-8:30p Youth Cell Phone Scavenger Hunt
- Monday, Jan. 13<sup>th</sup>      9:00-2:30p PACC (Fellowship Hall)  
11a-2p Passage to Recovery (Library)  
6:30-8:00p Girl Scouts Mtg. (Fellowship Hall)  
7:00pm Fellowship Comm. Mtg. (Lounge)
- Tuesday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>      10:30-11:30a AA (Schmid Hall)  
6:00-8:30pm NA (Fellowship Hall)  
7:00pm Church Council Meeting
- Wednesday, Jan. 15<sup>th</sup>      10:30a & 7:00p Bible Study (Schmid Hall)  
6:00pm Worship & Music Comm. Mtg. (Lounge)  
7-8:30p Boy Scouts Mtg. (Fellowship Hall)
- Thursday, Jan. 16<sup>th</sup>      10:00am Stained Glass & Other Crafts (Music Rm.)  
4:30-6:30pm ACT-1 (Fellowship Hall & classrooms)
- Saturday, Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>      6:00pm Worship/Comm.



Saturday, January 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm

Join us for a fun night to fight off the winter cold with a **Chili Cook Off and Family Game Night!**

Please contact the church office if you would like to bring chili and enter the cook off for your chance to be named Bethlehem's very own **Chili Champ for 2025!**

In addition to great food, we will once again host a **Pictionary** team game, but please feel free to bring along your own game, if you'd like!

If you'd like to attend the event (no cooking required), please RSVP to the church office. This is helpful for planning, but not required.



*Hope to see you there!*



## ***Our Blessing Box***

Our outdoor food pantry has been a blessing to our community providing needed items to those who are food insecure. Your generosity shows your commitment to do God's work but still day after day the box is being emptied by those in need. Here are some of the most desired foods:

Cereals small individual packages or boxes    Pop Tarts    Granola or protein bars

Individual: fruit cups, rice pkg., potato pkg.    Hormel single serve meals

Single serve pkgs.    Peanut butter - crackers small sized boxes (saltines or club)

Hearty soups with lift off tops    Tuna - in foil packages    Ensure individual bottles

Individual packages of cookies or snacks        Single serve Coffee packets

Grab and go items single serve with lift off lids - Cans of spam, beef stew, and soups

Small size Deodorants        small bottles or shampoo        individual bars of soap

**\*NO MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND\***



## **Bible Study in the New Year!**

To start off the year we began heading west. West? Yes, the Christian church at Philippi, at least at the time of its founding, was the westernmost Christian congregation. And Paul had a deep affection for the people of this early Christian church; that affection is present and felt in the words of Philippians. We started taking a deeper dive into the text, as we already gathered on January 8<sup>th</sup> for our first week, but we still have the 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, and 29<sup>th</sup> with sessions at 10:30am and 7:00pm Consider joining us as your schedule allows for these dates and put yourself into some insightful study that will surely inspire you in the new year via this glorious epistle!

# Bethlehem Youth Choir

**Singing at 10:30 am Worship on February 9**

All children and youth are invited to sing!



## Rehearsals

(during the last 15 minutes of Sunday School)

**January 19** 🎵 **January 26** 🎵 **February 2**

We ask that participants attend at least 2 rehearsals

Please detach the form below or email Laura Henri,  
Director of Music ([l.henri@belc.org](mailto:l.henri@belc.org)) if your child(ren)  
will participate. Thank you!

---

Name(s):

will participate in Youth Choir

Attending Rehearsal on:

- January 19
- January 26
- February 2