

BETHLEHEM EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Serving, accepting, and loving all.

Sunday Bulletin

January 5, 2025

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

1719 Mt. Royal Boulevard – Glenshaw, PA 15116
Phone: 412-486-0550 E-Mail: office@belc.org

Web Page: www.belc.org

Sunday, January 5, 2025
Second Sunday of Christmas, Year C

Introduction

Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

GATHERING

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting.

C: Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
(The assembly may kneel as able)

**A: 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.**

P: Hear the good news and rejoice!
You are God's chosen ones,
holy and beloved,
✠ forgiven in Christ,
and freed to respond in joy.
C: Amen.

GATHERING SONG NO. 300 The First Noel

1 The first Noel the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel!
Born is the King of Israel.

2 They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

3 And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

4 This star drew near to the northwest,
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest;
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay. *Refrain*

5 Then entered in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense. *Refrain*

Text: English traditional

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. 99)



Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.
Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and
Fa - ther, we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we
praise you for your glo - ry. Lord Je - sus
Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world: have mer - cy on us; you are seat - ed at the
right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.
For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a -
lone are the Lord, you a - lone are the Most High,
Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it, in the glo - ry of
God the Fa - ther. A - men.
Glo - ry to God in the high -
est, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray,

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.

C: Amen

WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 31:7-14

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

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.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147:12-20

¹² Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem;
praise your | God, O Zion,

¹³ **who has strengthened the bars | of your gates
and has blessed your chil- | dren 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 a- | gainst 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 judg- | ments 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

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made know as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

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.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

GOSPEL: John 1:[1-9] 10-18

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

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 enlightens everyone, 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.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON – The Rev. Ellen S. Lundie

HYMN OF THE DAY NO. 270 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise;
join the triumph of the skies;
with angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn king!"
2 Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail, incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! *Refrain*
3 Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
Hail the Sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. *Refrain*

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788, alt.

NICENE CREED (ELW Pg. 104)

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Filled with good news of great joy, let us offer our prayers for the church, the earth, and all people.

A brief silence.

O God, you reveal yourself in this assembly. In water, wine, and bread, show us again and again your grace upon grace, that your church boldly testifies to your love. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

You reveal yourself in creation. In seedlings and planets, microorganisms and galaxies, awaken us to the cry of the earth. As you nourish your people like a watered garden, empower us to nourish our creaturely companions. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

You reveal yourself in every land and in the farthest parts of the earth. Deliver peoples who suffer under oppressive regimes. Thwart the foolish plans of unjust leaders. Give wisdom to our elected officials. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

You reveal yourself in every human being. Help us recognize your image in our siblings in Christ who are in the strong grip of addiction, depression, anxiety, hopelessness, or other illness; especially those we name within our hearts (*a moment of silence*). Grant us compassion in our care for your people. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

You reveal yourself anew every day. In this new year, renew this congregation and its ministries in our witness to the good news of the incarnation. Transform the way we have always done things into your new future for us. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You reveal yourself in the lives of your holy ones. We give you thanks for those who set their hope on you, trusting the inheritance we receive in you. God of grace,
receive our prayer.

We commend these prayers to you, O God, trusting your grace made known to all, through the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

MEAL

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

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

**C: 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

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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW P. 108)

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God,

Creator of all and Source of life,
 at the birth of time
 your word brought light into the world.

In the fullness of time,
 you sent your Word, born of Mary,
 to shine in our darkness
 and to make us your daughters and sons.

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 birth and life among us,

his death and resurrection,

we await his coming again

when all things will be restored in him.

By your Spirit bless us and this bread and cup,

that, held and nourished by you,

we may live as your children,

shining with the light 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

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

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

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

COMMUNION

Gluten free wafers and grape juice available. Please ask the pastors or communion assistants.

COMMUNION SONG (ELW P. 112)



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.

SENIOR CHOIR - *LO, HOW A ROSE*, M. PRAETORIUS

COMMUNION HYMN NO. 295 *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

1 Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the source, the ending he,
of the things that are, that have been,

and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore.

2 Oh, that birth forever blessed,
when the virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race,
and the babe, the world's redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore.

3 This is he whom seers in old time
chanted of with one accord,
whom the voices of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord
evermore and evermore.

4 Let the heights of heav'n adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
pow'rs, dominions, bow before him
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev'ry voice in concert ring
evermore and evermore.

5 Christ, to thee, with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving
and unwearied praises be:
honor, glory, and dominion,
and eternal victory
evermore and evermore! Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

Merciful God,
we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food.
Strengthened by this goodness,
send us forth to announce your peace,
comfort the afflicted,
and share the good news of great joy.

C: Amen.

SENDING BLESSING

he God of love,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
lavish you with grace,
illumine your path,
and increase your joy,
today and always.

C: Amen.

SENDING SONG NO. 296 What Child Is This

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,
 on Mary's lap is sleeping?
 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
 while shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 haste, haste to bring him laud,
 the babe, the son of Mary!

- 2 Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce him through,
the cross be borne for me, for you;
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary!
- 3 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!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

DISMISSAL

L: Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

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.

L.I.F.T. 2025 Planning Meeting - Sunday, January 12th

Please plan to join LIFT (Ladies in Fellowship Together) on Sunday, January 12th (following late service) for a FAITH Salad and short planning meeting in Schmid Hall. The 'lettuce' part of the salad + dressings will be provided - please plan to bring a 'salad bar ready' ingredient for the salad. Look for the signup sheet on the bulletin board in the Narthex. We hope you will be able to join us and that you will come with some creative ideas for our LIFT group! If you have any questions, please contact Linda Ulrich at (412-897-1666 or lulrich823@yahoo.com).

Those Serving at worship this weekend

LECTORS

6:00pm - Terri Begenwald
8:00am - Karen Fleischman
10:30am - Myson Robles-Bruce

LAY ASSISTANTS

8:00am- Tom Platt
10:30am- Valerie Martincek

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

6:00pm - Terri Begenwald
8:00am - Karen Fleischman
10:30am - Cheryl Wolosik

Advancing the Slides

6:00pm - Jill Mitchell
8:00am - Dave Rometo or Jim Good
10:30am - Liz Mitchell

Acolytes - 10:30am Hadley Edgerton, Declan Murphy

Monthly Counting Team: Martha Burkett, Bob Evert, and
Eric & Judy Truscott

Monthly Special Offering for JANUARY is: Good Samaritan Fund

Annual Report

Committee Chairs - Start thinking about your committee report for inclusion into our annual report to the Congregation....**All reports are due to the office by January 6, 2025.**

The Week at Bethlehem

- Sunday, Jan. 5th 8:00 am Worship & Communion
9:15am Sunday School
*10:30am Worship & Communion
* Live streaming of worship service
11:45am De-Greening of the church
6:30-7:30p Confirmation Classes and
High School Hangout
7:30-8:30p Youth GRG
- Monday, Jan. 6th 9:00-2:30p PACC (Fellowship Hall)
11a-2p Passage to Recovery (Library)
6:30-8:00p Girl Scouts Mtg. (Schmid Hall)
- Tuesday, Jan. 7th 9:00-2:30p PACC (Fellowship Hall)
10:30-11:30a AA (Schmid Hall)
6:00-8:30pm NA (Fellowship Hall)
- Wednesday, Jan. 8th 10:30a & 7:00p Bible Study (Schmid Hall)
10:30-11:30am - Memory Café (Lounge)
7-8:30p Boy Scouts Mtg. (Fellowship Hall)
- Thursday, Jan. 9th 10:00am Health & Wellness Committee Mtg. (Lounge)
4:30-6:30pm ACT-1 (Fellowship Hall & classrooms)
- Saturday, Jan. 11th 6:00pm Worship/Comm.



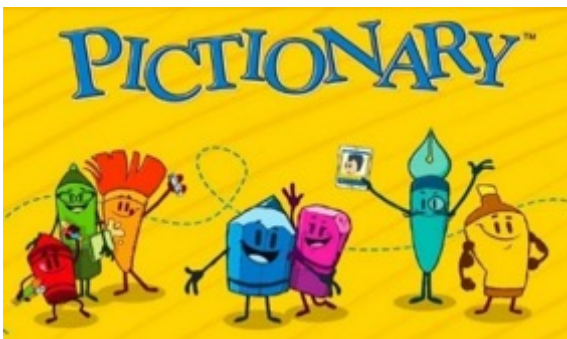
Saturday, January 25th at 7:00pm

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!

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 from now for Thursday, January 16th, 2025. This is the date when the Stained Glass and Other Crafts classes will resume here at BELC. We will meet at 10:00am and craft till around noon. We will gather as we had been doing in the downstairs music room.



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, or soups

Small size Deodorants small bottles or shampoo individual bars of soap

NO MEDICATIONS OF ANY KIND