



# ***Bethlehem Lutheran Church***

***December 8, 2024***

***Pastor Calvin Konop, Presiding  
Karina Roth, Musical Director***

*Prepare  
the way  
of the  
LORD*

***218-387-2227 | [blc@boreal.org](mailto:blc@boreal.org) | [www.sharingchrist.org](http://www.sharingchrist.org)***

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

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## **Introduction—The Second Sunday in Advent**

Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the LORD of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

**Prelude**

**Karina Roth**

**Announcements**

**Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*(Silence is kept for reflection.)*

God of mercy,

**We confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.**

God of might,

**We confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst,

**We confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through ✚ Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

## Lighting of the Advent Candle

At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming. O Emmanuel, **Prepare us for your coming.**

We gather together to get ready for what? Only heaven knows. O Emmanuel, **Prepare us for your coming.**

We wait for the day when God will create a prevailing peace on the earth, and natural-born enemies turn into newborn friends. O Emmanuel, **Prepare us for your coming.**

We get ready for God to come close by laying our lives open to Jesus, asking him to sort through all our mixed motives. O Emmanuel, **Prepare us for your coming.**

Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of these candles, whose flames bring warmth to winter and fill this place with the glow of hope. **Amen.**



*Lighting of two candles*

Gathering Hymn:

*“All Earth is Hopeful”*

*ELW 266*

## 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.**

Preparing Our Hearts

Bethlehem Choir

*“Lumen” by Abbie Betinis*

*Lumen accipe et imperti. Do ut des.*

TRANSLATION:

Receive the light and pass it on.

I give that you may give.

## Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Children’s Time

On the way up the aisles, the children will be collecting coins for the “Holy Cow” fund, which will support ELCA World Hunger. *Find that loose change and hand it to a kiddo!*

## First Lesson

**Malachi 3:1-4**

<sup>1</sup> See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—

indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. <sup>2</sup> But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; <sup>3</sup> he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

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

**Psalm:**

**Luke 1:68-79**

<sup>68</sup> Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, you have come to your people and set them free.

<sup>69</sup> **You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, born of the house of your servant David.**

<sup>70</sup> Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save us from our enemies,

<sup>71</sup> **from the hands of all who hate us,**

<sup>72</sup> to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.

<sup>73</sup> **This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:**

<sup>74</sup> to set us free from the hands of our enemies, free to worship you without fear,

<sup>75</sup> **holy and righteous before you, all the days of our life.**

<sup>76</sup> And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

<sup>77</sup> **to give God's people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.**

<sup>78</sup> In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

<sup>79</sup> **to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**Second Reading:**

**Philippians 1:3-11**

<sup>3</sup> I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup> constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup> because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup> I am confident of this, that

the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup> It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup> For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup> And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup> to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup> having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

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

**Gospel:**

**Luke 3:1-6**

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

<sup>1</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.

<sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;

<sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

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

**Sermon**

**Pastor Calvin Konop**

**Hymn of the Day**     *“On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry”*     **ELW 249**

**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 God's People

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence. (*A brief silence.*)

Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people, and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made, and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Ruling God, teach the nations your ways. Strengthen organizations and communities that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering especially *Dick, Darold, Kati, Nathan, Joni, Gene, Joan, Lynn, Bruce & Stacey*. We pray now for those we name aloud, or in the silence of our hearts. (*A time of silence.*) Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you, especially Pastor Erica Foss and Pastor Greg Garmer. Guide us in deep gratitude for their lives, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## Sharing of the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

## Offering

Karina Roth

## Offering Prayer

Creator God, **you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## Great Thanksgiving

*ELW page 107*

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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

## Thanksgiving at the Table

. . . Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## 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

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table. 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.*

## Communion Music

*"In Silence We Wait"*

*ACS 998*

*"O Lord, How Shall We Meet You"*

*ELW 241*

## Post Communion Blessing

### Prayer After Communion

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. Amen.

### Blessing

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever. Amen.

### Sending Hymn

*"Hark the Glad Sound"*

*ELW 239*

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.  
Thanks be to God.

### Postlude



**Karina Roth**

*Thank You*

*Thank you for your thoughtfulness and expressions of sympathy following our daughter, Carly's passing.*

*With Love & Appreciation. Dave & Cathy Hawkinson.*

*Thanks to God and thanks to all you wonderful people who prayed for me. I wouldn't have made it without them (you) Thanks, Chet Lindskog*



**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
Grand Marais, MN  
WWW.SHARINGCHRIST.ORG

## This Week at Bethlehem:

- Sun Dec 8 8:40 AM Choir practice  
10:00 AM Worship Service  
& Sunday School  
1:00 PM Christmas Pageant  
Pictures at WE Farm (see below)  
2:30 PM Borealis Orchestra  
4:00 PM Borealis Chorale
- Mon Dec 9 11:00 AM Staff meeting  
3:15 PM Girl Scouts  
6:30 PM Executive Committee
- Wed Dec 11 5:30 PM Community Meal  
6:00 PM Worship  
6:30 PM Confirmation
- Thurs Dec 12 8:00 AM Bible Study  
9:00 AM Quilting  
9:30 AM Esther Circle  
9:30 AM Borealis Set Up
- Fri Dec 13 7:00 PM Borealis Concert
- Sat Dec 14 7:00 PM Borealis Concert
- Sun Dec 15 8:40 AM Choir practice  
10:00 AM Worship Service  
2:00 PM Care Center  
Worship Service  
3:30 PM High School  
Event: Hot Cocoa & Painting

**Children's Christmas Pageant Picture Day: Dec. 8th 1:00-2:30 pm**, at Brent and Marja Erickson's farm, **WE Farm**, on 1430 Wahlstrom Road. PreK to 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Dress warmly. We will have the Christmas costumes; warm drinks & snacks will be provided. Questions: contact Hilja Iverson at 218-370-1326.

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
417 First Avenue West | P. O. Box 638  
Grand Marais, MN 55604  
218.387.2227 | [www.sharingchrist.org](http://www.sharingchrist.org)

**Calvin Konop, Pastor**  
[blcpastor@boreal.org](mailto:blcpastor@boreal.org) 763-226-5425

**Denise Murray, Office Manager**  
[blc@boreal.org](mailto:blc@boreal.org) 218-370-1058



**Your prayers are requested for healing:**  
Dick Kayser, Darold Rosbacka, Kati Kristenson-Stieler & Family, Gene Erickson, Rhonda Schulte, Shae Lindholm, Joan Bieber, Emily Uhorn, Jody Daugherty, Bruce & Stacey Johnson, Lynn Schulte, Stephanie Radloff, Char Anderson, Hank Ferland, Betty Jones, Stacey Schulte, and Carol Ann. *If you have any updates on these prayer requests, or any new requests, please call the office at 218-387-2227.*

**This week we lift up these members:** Patti Beyer; Linda Zenk; Susan Scherer; Libby Larson & Ben Rasmussen; and Lois Evinck. May God walk with these friends in their journey of peace this Advent Season.

**Borealis Concerts:** Friday Dec. 13 & Sat. Dec. 14 @ 7:00pm. **Looking for kitchen helpers to serve & clean up. Contact Cathi Williams to lend a hand: 218-387-1162.**

**Mission of the Month:** Care for our neighbors experiencing homelessness and poverty by supporting **Chum** (Churches United in Ministry), our December Mission of the Month. **Member Challenge:** Bring warm items to fill up the tree in the narthex (hats, mittens, scarfs and warm socks). Collected donations will be shared with CHUM and Damiano Center in Duluth. The tree will be up until Epiphany, January 5, 2025.

**Traveler Cards** and **Local Grocery Cards** are available from BLC to members of the community that need help. Please contact the office.

**Free Bibles:** Help yourself to a large print English Standard Version Bible, on the counter in the Narthex.

**Coffee An:** Have you taken a turn serving for our Fellowship time on Sundays? Please sign up to bring some treats to share.

**Quilters are seeking more helpers, especially anyone that can sew quilt tops!** Every Thursday morning at 9 to 11:30am. No experience necessary. We have several lovely kits ready for sewing.

*On-line giving is encouraged using this QR Code or through automatic transfer.*