

Bethel Notes

Sunday, December 3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

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INTRODUCTION

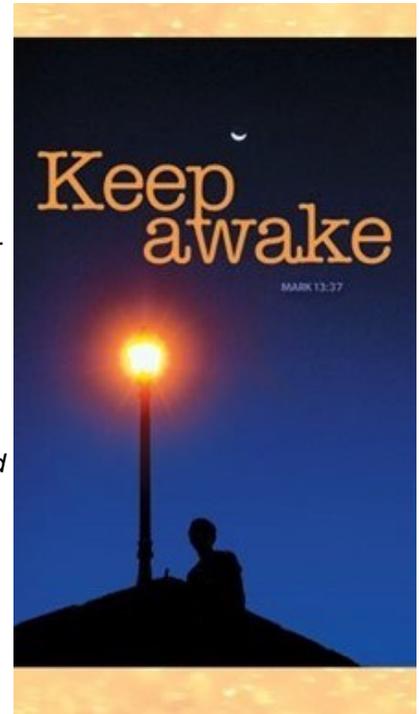
Stir up your power and come! The psalmist's plea in Psalm 80:2 has become familiar to us in the Advent prayers. Isaiah wants God to rip the heavens open. Both cry out for an apparently distant, angry God to show up, to save, to restore. When we hear Jesus describing the coming of the Son of Man with 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.

First Reading: Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Second Reading: Corinthians 1:3-9

Gospel: Mark 13:24-37



Serving This Sunday

Musicians:

Lynn Ryan, piano

Lay Assistant:

Mindy Leach

Usher:

TBD

Tech:

Gabe Smith

Children's Church:

Tyler Grosenick

Julia Elkin

Counters:

Pam Dougherty

Shannon Marr

Hospitality:

Judy Johnson

**Join us Sunday 9:30 AM
in person or online at
bethelmt.org**

THIS SUNDAY AT BETHEL...

We celebrate the **First Sunday of Advent.**

Today we welcome guest speaker **Carrie Parker from Helping Hands** to share with us the changes that have happened and what the future holds for this wonderful serving charity.

Next Sunday is our **LOGOs Children's Program and worship.** Afterward stop at our Christmas Bazaar and grab a goodie or cute craft item, all proceeds go toward funding our Vacation Bible School Day Camp next summer.





Requesting Your Prayers

- ✝ Prayers of healing for **AnneRose Rogers** as she recuperates at home after a recent hospitalization.
- ✝ Prayers of health for **Don Bisgard** as his living center is under quarantine for Covid infections.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **John Korpela** who is home managing his health.
- ✝ Prayers of strength and healing for **Tim Olson**, as he prepares for upcoming outpatient surgery in December.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Eric Peterson**, former *Bethel member*, as he recovers from surgery.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Dick Seim** as he continues regaining his strength.
- ✝ Prayers of healing and answers for **Anna Boucher** as they determine a cause and treatment for seizures.
- ✝ Prayers of healing and support for **Diane Young**, *Sandy Pecos' aunt*, recovering at home after a stroke.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Renate Weldele**, *Christy Virts' mother*, who is home recovering after a recent hospitalization.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Georgia Miller**, *cousin of Amber Erickson's*, as she has been diagnosed with aggressive breast cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of continued healing for **Travis Cushman** his response to cancer treatment has been positive, however some complications has developed as a result of the treatment.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Harper Spurzem**, 8 year old student at Ulm School, receiving chemotherapy treatment for Hodgkin's Lymphoma.
- ✝ Prayers of support and comfort for **Pastor Jessie and Jade** as they mourn the loss of their precious baby boy, **Kai Wilder Metzler**.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Kristin, Bobbie Bowen's daughter**, as she is manages a cancer diagnosis.
- ✝ Prayers of support for **Caleb Pottratz** who is struggling with depression.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lynn Klaasen**, *sister of Jan Robitaille*, receiving treatment for cancer.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Lindy Coon**, *sister of former Bethel member Laura (Wandke) Overturf*, as she continues to slowly make progress as she recovers from a serious injury after a fall.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Alex Bostic** as he continues to manage his health.
- ✝ Prayers of strength in leadership for **Gustavo Driau**, Regional Representative of South America.
- ✝ Prayers of healing for **Ed Pottratz** as he continues cancer treatment.

join us after worship

**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 10TH** for...



A Christmas Bazaar



GOODIES AND CRAFTS GALORE!

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO OUR

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL DAY CAMP,

JULY 23RD THROUGH 27TH, 2024



1st Monday Night

Quilters

The 1st Monday Night Quilters will meet Monday, December 4, 2023, 6-8 p.m. at New Hope Lutheran Church, 3125 5th Ave. So. Please use the alley entrance.

All the quilts we made this past year were picked up Nov. 20 and taken to Lutheran World Relief in Minneapolis and to be packed into bales of 30-35 each. When the need arises, these bales are loaded onto shipping containers. Last year 220,000 quilts traveled to 19 countries.

Come join us December 4, 6 p.m. for 2 hours of quilting and conversation. If you have questions or want to help at home, call 406-799-0100.

Daily Text 2024

Now Available

2024 Daily Texts are available in the Narthex.

Please take a copy for free. If you would like to pick up additional copies, a suggested donation

of \$10.00 per copy is appreciated to help cover the cost of the text, but it is **NOT** expected.



Giving Tree 2023

Lack of access to safe water is one of the biggest challenges to overcoming poverty. It's also one of the most powerful opportunities to create change. **With a simple water well, spring box or other water point, as many as 500 families gain access to clean, safe water.** Communities are healthier. People spend less money on medical expenses and more on food and education. And instead of spending hours each day gathering water for the family, women and children have time for work and school. Talk about a future filled with hope!



At Bethel, donations for our Giving Tree will go toward the construction of a simple water well. Our goal is \$2500.00 to make this happen. When you donate any amount to this project, take an ornament from the Giving Tree to hang on your tree at home. These simple ornaments were made by our LOGOs Youth Ministry and read "Christmas 2023. This year I gave the gift of clean water."

There are other needs that can be met through the Good Gifts Program from ELCA World Hunger. If you would like to donate to Good Gifts for other items such as goats, chickens, bibles, etc. pick up a Good Gifts catalog located in the Narthex and you can donate directly to ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts.

If you have any questions about this project you may contact any member of the ELCA World Hunger Committee Colleen Walker-Nelson, Judy Johnson or Shirley Cayko.

For questions about donating to this Giving Tree Project, see Tami Grosenick in the Bethel Office.

Merry Christmas.

An infographic titled "WATER" featuring a photograph of four women in traditional Brazilian attire standing near a simple water well. The infographic includes text about the cost of water projects and a quote from a woman in Brazil.

WATER

At an average cost of \$2,500, a spring box is one of many types of water projects supported by your gifts. Water wells can range from \$2,500 to \$10,000 or more, depending on the location and cost of materials.

Simple water well

One of the biggest challenges to overcoming poverty is lack of access to clean water. **With a simple well, or spring box, as many as 500 families gain access to clean, safe water.** Communities are healthier. People spend less money on medical expenses and more on food and education. And instead of spending hours each day gathering water for the family, women and children have time for work and school. Talk about a future filled with hope!

\$2,500 Simple water well

\$250 Share of a safe water project

“With this new well... the water is better and clear, clear. This water fountain brought relief to us. We are isolated, and with this good water, we can help families who are without.”
—Sirlói, Brazil

Gifts on these
ELCA.or

Thank You To Our Own Christmas Decorating Angels



Calling All Bell Ringers!

The Bethel Bell Choir will be playing Sunday, December 17th. *Rehearsal* will be Saturday, December 16th from 10 am to Noon.

If you would like to play in the Bell Choir that Sunday, email Sharon Mueller at oboecclar@gmail.com by Tuesday, December 12th.

Happiness is ringing handbells!!



GOSPEL MESSAGE

December 3, 2023

First Sunday of Advent

Winds of Grace

Have you ever experienced a powerful storm in which the sky grew increasingly dark and winds swirled the clouds or broke branches off trees? Our modern technology often allows us to prepare for storms like blizzards and hurricanes that develop slowly as they move toward us. Perhaps you've taken part in hastily boarding up windows, securing pets or farm animals, and gathering groceries and supplies in anticipation of being shut in or without power for a time.

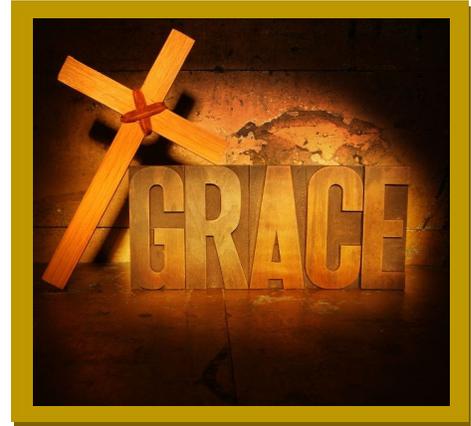
The coming of the Son of Man will apparently not include advance warnings like those of meteorologists and weather apps, for Jesus says, "About that day or hour no one knows." It may be more like a tornado or thunderstorm, where we see that the conditions are right but can't be sure precisely when or where it will materialize. Our preparations for that type of storm are different, primarily focused on where and how we'll take shelter should lightning or a funnel cloud be spotted nearby. Many of us practiced tornado drills in school as kids; such practices, as well as storm watches and warnings, keep us aware of how to respond and alert about when to do so.

It is easy to hear Jesus' words and sound an alert for the end times. We might even spend time and energy worrying about the end and what it means for us. At the same time, the urgency of this proclamation is focused on the present, on what we can do here and now to be open to God's rule in our lives. This is a different kind of preparation, focused on loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves.

In the sacraments of baptism and communion we are invited into regular practices of anticipating the presence of God with us. In Advent we bring a particular focus to this expectation. We are invited to think about the ways the winds of grace gather us in, and then send us out for the sake of the world.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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Life After Suicide and Traumatic

Loss Support Group Details

What: 10-week program for those who have lost a loved one to suicide or trauma

Who: Open to adults of any age/background. Group size is limited to 10-12.

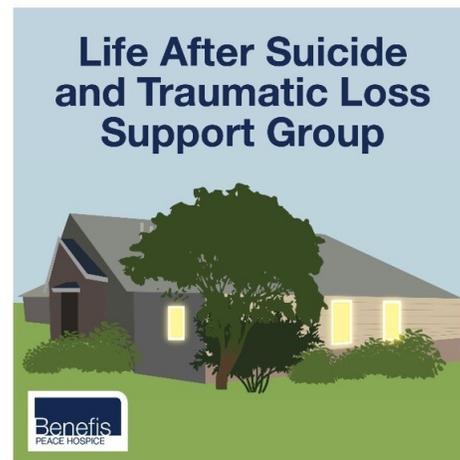
Leader: Jeanne [Dussault](#), LCPC

When: 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Mondays

Where: Benefis Peace Hospice Administration Office at 2600 15th Ave. S.

First Step: Screening interview by Wednesday, Jan. 10. Call (406) 455-3040.

Cost: Free



Just for *YOUth*

Keep awake! Jesus is coming soon!

Mark 13:24-37

Sometimes it is very hard to wait, and it is especially hard to wait for Jesus to come. It seems to take such a long time! Jesus reminds us that God is with us in all of our waiting. Thanks be to God for that!

Look at this picture, find the hidden symbols and discover new ways to wait for baby Jesus.

I see a crown made of candles, an advent wreath, an angel, a tree with a gift underneath.



I see straw in a manger, a shoe filled with treats, and two people walking with sandals on their feet.



St. Nicholas Day, December 6:
Surprise a neighbor and leave a bag of sweet treats outside their front door.



Create Jesus is Coming! greetings for friends and relatives.



Add pieces of straw or colorful strips of fabric to an empty manger made of a small cardboard box.



First day of Advent: Find 4 candles to light—one on each of the 4 Sundays of Advent.



Wrap gifts together.



St. Lucia Day, December 13: Eat a candlelight breakfast.



Move these pieces of the nativity closer to the manger as Advent progresses.

This Week...

Practice watching and waiting at home. Plant an amaryllis bulb and watch the new growth appear during the days of Advent.

Advent words

Advent is here. Jesus is coming, and we know that God will always take care of us. Look hard and find the following Advent words and phrases in the puzzle.

WATCH WAIT WONDER ADVENT STAY AWAKE
BE ALERT JESUS IS COMING LIGHT CANDLES

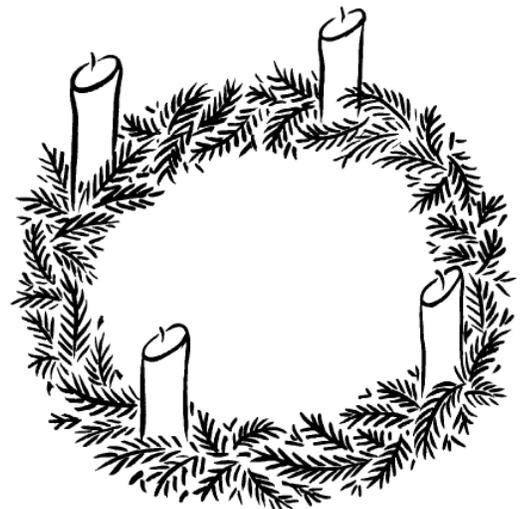
J K A T O P L B M A R C J
N E S I Z J W Q U F X M B
O V S T A Y A W A K E L F
R Y W U B Q Z A H R U C I
E N Z A S L W I P K E M D
D S O V H I L T H U R W P
X G R C E G S O L F W T Y
A K T J Z H N C E D A L X
G A U H B T E W O N D E R
W R I T S C L K B M Y D A
T N E V D A N T S Z I B L
U F J W E N P K M O V N Q
N X I B H D A B R E N T G
V L B E A L E R T F J U C
O C Y G I E N L B O D R W
F Q U V D S J S I R K P D



God, sometimes it's really hard to watch and wait. Be with us in these Advent days. Amen.

Welcome to worship. Today is the first day of Advent, the time when we watch and wait for baby Jesus to come.

In the advent wreath shown below, color one of the candles, draw any new decorations you see in your worship space, and finally, draw a picture of you waiting for something really exciting to happen.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday 12/5

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Men's Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 am

Wednesday 12/6

- Bible Study on Zoom led by Pastor Jessie
- LOGOs Youth Ministry 5:30 pm; High School LOGOs 6:30 pm

Thursday 12/7

- Exec Board Zoom Meeting 5:30 pm

Friday 12/8

- Bethel office is closed.

Saturday 12/9

- LOGOs Youth Christmas Program rehearsal 10:00 am

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday 12/10

- LOGOs Youth Christmas Program and Worship led by Pastor Jessie Obrecht and LOGOs Youth in-person and live stream 9:30 am
- World Hunger Sunday
- Christmas Bazaar to follow worship

Tuesday 12/12

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Men's Breakfast in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 am
- Council meeting in the Fellowship Hall 6:30 pm

Wednesday 12/13

- Bible Study on Zoom led by Pastor Jessie
- LOGOs Youth Ministry Christmas Party All Ages 5:30 pm

Thursday 12/14

- TLC Holiday program in the Gathering Place 6:00 pm

Friday 12/15

- Bethel office is closed.

Saturday 12-16

- Bethel Handbell Choir rehearsal 10:00 am

Fellowship Ministries

Electric City Bible Study—online

What a great way to connect with one another! Join our bible study via Zoom, Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Laurie Turner at lolli51gus@icloud.com for a link to join the meeting.

Men's Breakfast

Join us for a fun and engaging conversation, and insightful discussion of each week's lectionary texts as we meet in the Fellowship Hall Tuesday mornings at 7:00 am. Contact Dave Scholten at dscholten@dlsconsulting.net for more information.

Hope Circle—in person

This group meets once a month usually on Thursday evenings. Bible study and fellowship are celebrated with this group of ladies. Contact Terry Korpela to be on the group email for meetings and prayer requests
terry.korpela@gmail.com.

December

Weekly Text Study

with Pastor Jessie

Wednesdays, 10:00 am via Zoom, Pastor Jessie will be leading discussion on the text readings for the upcoming Sunday. Dig deeper in the interpretation of the readings and discuss ways they give us guidance in our daily lives. If you would like to join this meeting, email bethelgf.pastor@gmail.com to be added to the mailing list.