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# BETHEL NOTES



## First Sunday of Advent

### Readings:

Jeremiah 33:14-16  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13  
Luke 21:25-36

**The Jubilate Choir will be singing “Is Your Heart Prepared for a King”.**

**An additional offering will be received in support of ELCA World Hunger.**

**JoAnn Dullum will be giving a presentation on the Congregational Vitality Survey which will be handed out during the offering.**

## Sunday

Dec 2

### Serving this Sunday

**Accompanist:**  
Mary Seim

**Lay Assistant:**  
Anne Vannatta

**Usher(s):**  
The Erickson Family

**Projectionist:**  
Ava Fossen

**Counters:**  
Tim Lightbourne  
Donna Vinnedge

**Nursery Attendant(s):**  
Adam Elkin



**Jan DeGroot** (sister of Marj Vander Aarde) who is battling cancer.

**Faith Crouch** (granddaughter of Bernice Johnson) who is awaiting a double lung transplant.

Prayers for healing for **Patsy Berkeley Brattain** as she recovers from surgery.

Prayers of healing for **Don Bisgard** as he battles stomach cancer.

**Ed Pottratz** for healing as he resumes cancer treatment.

Prayers of healing for **Lee Klette**, son of Russ & Cheryl.

Prayers for healing for **Terry Korpela** as she recovers from surgery.

**Jeanne Moe (mother of Kris Voorhees)** as she prepares for surgery.

**Terry Ryan** (brother of Patrick Ryan).

**Pat Bosch (Tami Grosenick's sister-in-law's mother)** for healing.

**The family and friends of Dr. William Nuessle (uncle of Walt)** as they grieve his death.

**Alex Bostic** as he recovers from surgery.

**Jean Humphrey** as she recovers from a fall.



If you are interested in becoming a member of Bethel, we will be having a New Member Sunday on December 9th. Contact Pastor Steve at [bethelgf.pastor.steve@gmail.com](mailto:bethelgf.pastor.steve@gmail.com) or call the church office if you are interested in joining the church.



2018 Advent Devotionals are available on the table by the track rack. Both regular print (black and white) and large print (color) are available.

# PASTOR STEVE'S MESSAGE

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## Advent Faith

A new Church Year begins this Sunday with First Sunday of Advent. The word advent comes from the Latin word, *adventus*, which means “coming,” or “arriving.” There are three advents, The first is the coming of Jesus in his birth in Bethlehem. The second is the coming of Jesus among us now. Christ coming among us through the means of grace: in the waters of baptism, in the sacrament of holy communion, through the Word of God (Scriptures) and in the people of God ~ the community of faith. And the third, is the coming yet to come ~ Christ’s coming at the end of time ~which is spoken of in this Sunday’s gospel reading.

This First Sunday in Advent begins with headlines of future events like we see in the headlines today: It is of a world gone awry.... *“Sun, moon, stars, earth, sea, in an uproar...powers of the heavens shaken.... People all over the world in a panic....breathless of what is coming upon the world.”* Why do we have to hear Jesus telling us about a world collapsing into chaos? Why can’t we just skip over texts like these ? Why not ? Because texts like these remind us that our world longs for the hope of redemption. The Greek word which translates, redemption, is unique to Luke’s gospel. It suggests a “loosing or releasing” from anything that constrains. And my-oh-my do we need God to free us...to release us from all that would constrain us, chiefly our sin. But also the fears which would hold us captive. The darkness and despair that would that would keep hope and joy at bay.

The message of Advent is when all is coming apart at the seams, God’s promise of hope is spoken to remind us that “our redemption is drawing near.” Jesus says, *“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”* If the future were not the promise of Jesus Christ but the predictable outcome of present trends, despair would simply overwhelm you and I .

When we least expect it and when there is no evidence for it, God's power comes into this world...into our very own lives in ways the world itself could never predict or foresee. To bring release and freedom from that which constrains us.

Sure, we cannot deny that nations are and will continue to suffer distress. We cannot deny that natural disasters are on the rise. We cannot deny that we are choking on our fears. But we also cannot deny that God is faithful to God’s promises. And God has promised us Jesus Christ, and that our redemption is entwined with his.

Advent faith also invites you and I to dare to yearn for more. It invites us to be alert...expectant...to stand erect with heads raised, a hopeful posture. For our redemption is drawing near, and advent faith, God’s grace at work in us, will lead us, and help us to see the promised Jesus in our midst.

Come, gather for worship this Sunday and welcome the gift of Advent.



# UPCOMING EVENTS



The Great Falls Ministerial Association is once again sponsoring Carols and Beer on Sunday, December 9th from 6:00-8:00 PM at The 'Do Bar (1800 3rd St NW). Come, sing, drink and enjoy fellowship.



Family Promise is hosting a free estate planning seminar on: Assisted Living, Nursing Homes, Medicare, Medicaid, Wills, Trusts, Powers of Attorney and Other Confusing Stuff! This seminar is a discussion; bring your questions. The moderator, Randall Knowles, has over 30 years of practical experience with these topics.

Join us at Central Christian Church on December 19th! This seminar is open to the public. We will be taking a free will offering for our mission to end childhood homelessness, one family at time in Great Falls, MT!

A Blue Christmas Service supports those for whom the holidays are not joyful; they are lonely, filled with grief and feelings of being alienated from celebrations. This service is designed for people who may be experiencing depression and sadness and yet are often compelled to "put on a happy face" for others, denying their true feelings. The service is composed of music, scripture and a candle lighting

ritual to help acknowledge feelings and connect with the light that shines in the darkness during a difficult time in life. **This service will be held at New Hope Lutheran Church (3125 5th Ave S) on Thursday, December 20 at 7 PM.** Please share this with those who may be struggling this Christmas. Or consider inviting someone to come with you. That may be the best gift you can offer- acknowledgment of their feelings.





# UPCOMING EVENTS CONT'D

## CHRISTMAS OPPORTUNITIES



With Christmas right around the corner, there are many opportunities to volunteer at the GFRM. We will distribute wish lists to our guests and those in our Christian Recovery Program. Volunteers and GFRM supporters will have the opportunity to sponsor a Family or Male or Female in our recovery program .

Stay tuned to our website and our Facebook page for more information about how to sponsor Christmas gifts for those at the GFRM. We have many opportunities for volunteers to help us prepare for the holiday.

- December 1st - Decorate the Mission
- December 6th - Christmas Card Party & Caroling
- December 17 - 21st - Wrap Gifts
- January 5th - Undecorate Mission

“So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver”

-2 Corinthians 9:7

### CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

- \$30 MAXIMUM
- TOYS; SMALL & MEDIUM
- SMALLER INEXPENSIVE ELECTRONICS ( NO IPADS OR TABLETS )
- FOOD GIFT CARDS
- HYGIENE ITEMS

### FOOD NEEDS

- HAM
- POTATOES
- STOVE TOP
- CHICKEN BROTH
- DINNER ROLLS
- BAKED PIES
- CANNED VEGGIES

THE DEADLINE TO SPONSOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS IS DECEMBER 14TH. TO SIGN UP TO HELP WITH ANY OF THESE CHRISTMAS EVENTS HELD AT THE GFRM, PLEASE CONTACT THE VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT AT 406-761-2653.

## Fall & Winter 2018 Adult Forums

Session # 4 December 2, 6: Jesus' Face is set towards Jerusalem

Question: Who is Jesus ?

Scripture Focus: Luke 9: 18 - 36

Session # 5 December 9, 13: Parables of the Kingdom: Loosing & Finding

Scripture Focus: Luke 15: 1 - 32

Session # 6 December 16, 20: Theme of Salvation in Here & Now (Today!)

Scripture Focus: Luke 23: 26 - 49

Session # 7. December 30 & Jan. 3

Resurrection Life, Now !

Scripture Focus: Luke 24: 13 - 35 (Road to Emmaus)



### Hope Circle Annual Christmas Party

Saturday December 1, 2018

6:00 p.m.

Jim & Marilyn Carlson - 329 Hylande

Bring a dish to share. And beverage of your choice. Bring an ornament to exchange. Remember guys get in on this gig as well, so they need to bring an ornament also. Usually the guys get a little crazier then the girls, but truly anything is fair game.



### Christmas Eve Candlelight and Holy Communion Worship - Dec 24

**4pm** in the Gathering Place with Jubilate Choir

**6pm** in the Gathering Place with Karolina Pepos



# CONGREGATIONAL VITALITY SURVEY

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The Bethel Strategic Planning Committee needs your help in guiding the direction Bethel Congregation would like to take in the upcoming years. The last plan was developed in 2009 and it was decided at that time that a church remodel was needed among other goals. From that effort, those goals were accomplished and now we are in need of direction.

The Committee has met and decided a survey of the how the Congregation feels about Bethel, our strengths and where we can improve would be a good first step. Linda Bobbit, hired by the ELCA synod, has developed a survey to help guide congregations in their planning efforts. This survey focuses on our relationships in the church: to God, the World, and each other. It is called the Congregational Vitality Survey. We need your help this Sunday to fill it in. The processing and analyzing did cost the Congregation \$300 so we are praying for 100% return rate. Each person, confirmation age and older, is asked to fill it in. Your input is important enough to us that Pastor Steve is setting aside time during the next 2 Sunday services to allow time for you to complete it.

If you're interested in seeing an example of the report, please refer to this link: <http://congregationalvitalitysurvey.com>. In the lower right corner under "Synod Sign-in", click on "View sample report".

This is only the first step. The Committee will use this survey to guide future meetings and will be asking for input throughout the process.

Thank you.

Jo Ann Dullum,

Strategic Planning Committee

# FAMILY PROMISE

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VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Our December volunteer training is coming up on December 5th from 3:30-5pm. Come to the Hub to meet our executive director and learn how you can be a part of the movement to end childhood homelessness, one family at a time, right here in Great Falls! All are welcome-- you do not have to be a member of a church or subscribe to any particular religious belief in order to volunteer!

Also on Dec 5th at 6:00 pm another training will be held at First Presbyterian- they will provide dinner as well so would like to know who is coming. Call Alissa Brown at [406-453-1411](tel:406-453-1411).

Family Promise is in need of gift cards to Walmart or Target for \$20 to give to parents to buy gifts for their children. They need the cards by Dec 18th as their Christmas party is Dec 20th. Target is very supportive of Family Promise and does whatever it can to help our families.





## Bethel Giving Tree Advent & Christmas 2018

Once again this year Bethel will be offering you the opportunity to share your many blessings with others in need through alternative gifts.

This year we have chosen to support two ministries of the Montana Synod and our Companion Synod in Bolivia.

The Giving Tree Ornaments:

\*\$10 – Provides a hank of beads and package of beading needles for Spirit of Life on the Fort Peck Reservation

\*\$30 – Helps provide a much needed new roof for Our Saviors Lutheran Church on the Rocky Boy's Reservation

\*\$40 – Provides a tuition scholarship for one month for a student at a Lutheran school in Bolivia. The Montana Synod is a Companion Synod of the Lutheran Church in Bolivia

Choose an ornament(s) and write a check to Bethel for the amount on your ornament(s), listing the recipients on the memo line (e.g. Spirit of Life beads, Rocky Boy roof, or Bolivia scholarship). After Christmas Bethel will send the donations to the MT synod to be dispersed appropriately.

Join together in doing God's work for the life of the world.

Thank you for your generosity!



Last Sunday Bethel rejoiced with Letty Richardson, daughter of Dan and Stephanie, as she joined in sharing her first holy communion.



NOVEMBER 16, 2018

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



*Thank  
you*



**A huge thank you to our elves who came Tuesday to decorate the church for Christmas. They did a wonderful job and our church looks beautiful!**



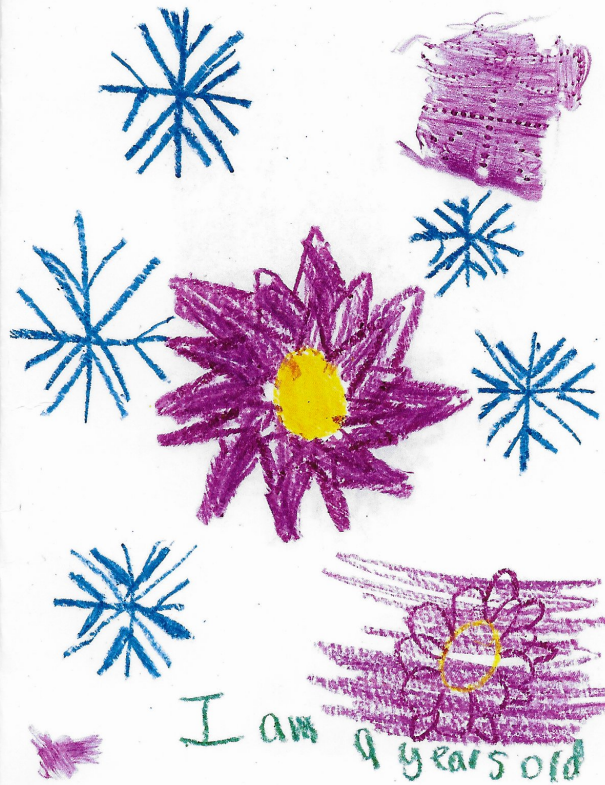




**Mark your calendars!!**  
**Wednesday evening 7:00 PM**  
**Family Worship**  
 January 30th  
 March 6th - Ash Wednesday  
 April 3rd

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
						9am - Close Knit
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9:30am-Worship	6:15pm - Boy Scouts	7am - Men's Breakfast  6:30am-Bible Study @ Electric City Coffee	NO LOGOS  10am - Staff Meeting	LukeBible Study @ 10am	Pastor Off  6-9pm - Aitz Chaim Shabbat Service	
-----Family Promise Host Week-----						
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
9:30am-Worship  Luke Bible Study after worship  New Member Sunday  1-4pm - Synod Open House	6:15pm - Boy Scouts	7am - Men's Breakfast  6:30am-Bible Study @ Electric City Coffee  6:30pm - Church Council Meeting	6pm-Family Worship Night	LukeBible Study @ 10am	Pastor Off	9am - Close Knit  Bethel Bunch at 5:30pm at Earl & Trudy Terwilligers: 141 17th Ave. N.W.
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
				7pm-Blue Christmas service @ New Hope	Pastor Off	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Christmas Eve worship @ 4pm and 6pm				Pastor Off	
30	31					

# Thank You



Created by a 9 year old  
Mercy Home resident

Thank you  
for your generosity.  
- Kristie Sotelo

Thank you  
Shirley

Thank you for  
your support.  
Kim McKeel

Thank you!  
Jenny  
Hicks

Thank you!  
Sabrina C.

I appreciate  
your support for  
women & children in  
our community  
Ari Eckhardt

Thank you for  
your support  
Heather  
Hm

**YWCA**  
**IS ON A**  
**MISSION**