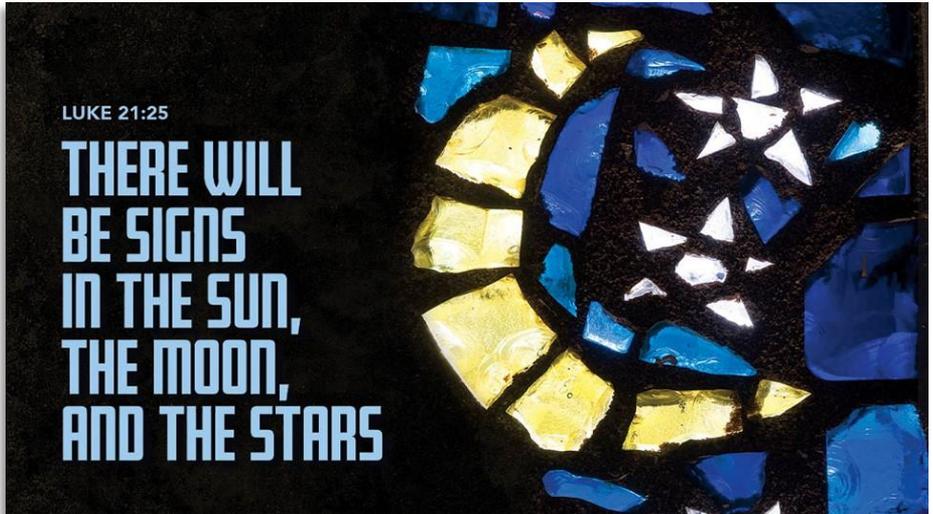




## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

NOVEMBER 28, 2021

9:30 AM



Bethel Lutheran Church

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Great Falls, MT 59404

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Pastor Jessie Obrecht

A congregation of the Montana Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*Large print bulletins are available, please see the ushers for a copy.*

*As we gather for worship and prepare our hearts, we would ask that you please silence your cell phones for the duration of the service.*

## INTRODUCTION

*Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.*

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GATHERING SONG

BOB 44

*Emmanuel [2x]*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who alone does wonders,  
who lifts up the lowly,  
who fills the hungry with good things.  
**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

God for whom we wait,  
**in the presence of one another,  
we confess our sin before you.  
We fail in believing that your good news is for us.  
We falter in our call to tend your creation.  
We find our sense of self in material wealth.  
We fear those different from ourselves.  
We forget that we are your children  
and turn away from your love.  
Forgive us, Blessed One,  
and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.**

God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you!  
Through the power of the Holy Spirit,  
† your sins are forgiven.  
You are children of the Most High,

inheritors of the eternal promise,  
and recipients of divine mercy.  
God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.  
**Amen.**

## **LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. You call all nations to walk in your light and to seek your ways of justice and peace, for the night is past, and the dawn of your coming is near. Bless us as we light the first candle of this wreath.

Rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes and welcome him into our hearts and homes, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

**Amen.**

*Light the first candle, and sing:*

***Light the candle as a symbol of the Light that leads the way;  
for each candle is a symbol of the hope that's ours today.***

***As we strike the match and light the wick,  
Come Spirit, shine bright.***

***Grant that all may see from the darkness Your Gift,  
Your Truth, Your light.***

*(BOB 146)*

## **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.**

## **KYRIE**

***Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison,  
Kyrie eleison, eleison, eleison.***

*(Haugen)*

## **HYMN OF PRAISE**

WOV 638 *Holy Child Within the Manger [vs 1]*

***Holy Child within the manger, long ago yet ever near;  
Come as friend to ev'ry stranger, come as hope for ev'ry fear  
As you lived to heal the broken,  
greet the outcast, free the bound,  
As you taught us love unspoken,  
teach us now where you are found.***

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come.

**By your merciful protection**

**alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins,**

**and redeem us for your life of justice,**

**for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit,**

**one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 33:14-16

*In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name—“The LORD is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.*

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM 25:1-10

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.

**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me.**

Let none who look to you be put to shame;

rather let those be put to shame who are treacherous.

**Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.**

Lead me in your truth and teach me,

for you are the God of my salvation;

in you have I trusted all the day long.

**Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love, for they are from everlasting.**

Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;

remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your goodness, O LORD.

**You are gracious and upright, O LORD;  
therefore you teach sinners in your way.**

You lead the lowly in justice and teach the lowly your way.

**All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to  
those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.**

## **SECOND READING: 1 THESSALONIANS 3:9-13**

*Upon Timothy's report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.*

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*ELW 715*

*Christ, Be Our Light [vs 1]*

***Longing for light, we wait in darkness.***

***Longing for truth, we turn to you.***

***Make us your own, your holy people,***

***Light for the world to see.***

***Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts.***

***Shine through the darkness.***

***Christ, be our light! Shine in your church***

***Gathered today.***

The holy gospel according to Luke the twenty-first chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

## **GOSPEL: LUKE 21:25-36**

*God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.*

[Jesus said:] "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

Then he told them a parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

"Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

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

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE AND SERMON**

Pastor Jessie Obrecht

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*ELW 731 Earth and All Starts [vs1,2,5]*

## **PROFESSION OF FAITH**

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**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 THE CHURCH**

Hear us, O God.     **Your mercy is great.**

## **THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **OFFERING**

We are so very blessed with the continued support of this congregation during this time of physical distancing. For those who are gathering in worship today, the offering plate is placed on the table as you entered. For those who are joining us from home, you are encouraged to mail in your pledge to the church, to give on-line, if you aren't already, or to give through an arrangement you can set up through your bank. Thank you for your faithful support.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God of our waiting and watching,  
**we offer the gifts of our hearts and our lives  
to the service of all your people.**  
**Prepare the way before us  
as we meet you in this simple meal,  
through Christ Jesus, our pathway and our peace. Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give our thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,...and join their unending  
hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

***Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning our song shall rise to thee.  
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!  
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity.***  
*(ELW 413)*

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus first  
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**

**Come to Christ's banquet.  
Feast on God's gift of grace.**

*The Lord's Table is open to believers of all Christian traditions. We believe that Christ comes to us in the bread and cup for the forgiveness of sins and new life. Today we will be coming forward for communion. The usher will help guide you. Please keep the six-foot physical distancing in mind as we move forward. We will begin with the south side of the sanctuary. Families may come up together. Use the hand sanitizer provided. The you may choose to have the bread put in your hands by Pastor or take one of the covered cups with bread, gluten free wafers are marked with a "GF". A garbage is by the table for you to drop the cup and lid into. The table also has the wine and white grape juice offered. You may choose from the unlidded cups in the tray or a lidded option. A garbage is available for your use. Hand sanitizer is provided should you desire to use it.*

## **COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION**

*ELW 542      O Living Bread from Heaven  
W&P 23      Broken for Me  
W&P 156      What Have We To Offer?  
BOB 236      We Remember You [2X]*

## **COMMUNION BLESSING**

Now may the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God's grace.      **Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray, Most High God,  
**you have come among us at this table.  
By the Spirit's power,  
form us to be bearers of your word,  
sharing gifts of mercy and grace with all,  
through Christ Jesus, our host and our guest.      Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

The God of hope  
fill us with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that we may abound in hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.  
**Amen.**

## SENDING HYMN

*LH 148*

*Holden Final Blessing*

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, Christ is near.

**Thanks be to God.**

And all God's children said:

**Amen.**

## SERVING TODAY

**Accompanist**

Lynn Ryan, piano;  
Pastor Steve Nelson, guitar

**Lay Assistant**

John Blank

**Usher**

Sandy Pepos

**Tech**

Kaleb Stringer

**Counters**

Stephanie Cummings and Anne Vannatta

**Children's**

**Church**

Isabelle Grosenick and Olivia Violett

**Flowers are given** by Sandy Pepos in celebration of her mom,  
Cheri Schmidt's 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Today at Bethel** we celebrate First Sunday of Advent.

Today after worship we **need your help** to decorate the church  
for Christmas. Putting up the trees and setting up the nativity.  
Some lights and decorating the narthex. If you have about an  
hour and would like to help, we will be playing Christmas Carols  
and have some coffee and cookies!

# THIS WEEK

## Tuesday 11/30

- Electric City Bible Study, Zoom meeting 7:00 am
- Men's Breakfast Zoom & in the Fellowship Hall 7:00 am
- Last day of Silent Auction for Youth Gathering Fundraiser

## Wednesday 12/1

- Bible Study with Pastor Jessie on Zoom 10:00 am
- Logos 5:30 pm; HS Logos 6:30 pm

## Thursday 12/2

- Church Council Exec Board Zoom meeting 5:30 pm

## Friday 12/3

- Bethel office is closed.
- Aitz Chaim Shabbat and Hanukkah service 6:00 pm

## Saturday 12/4

- Close Knit meets in the Fellowship Hall 9:00 am

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Sunday 12/5

- Logos Family Worship led by Pastor Jessie and Logos Youth Ministry in-person and live stream 9:30 am.
- Adult Education with Pastor Jessie, Advent Wreaths immediately following worship in the Fellowship Hall

## Tuesday 12/7

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

## Wednesday 12/8

- Bible Study with Pastor Jessie on Zoom 10:00 am
- Logos 5:30 pm; HS Logos 6:30 pm

## Friday 12/10

- Bethel office is closed.

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