

BETHANY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

You have a place here!

*"Joyfully we profess our faith through God's unconditional love.
Here and now God dwells in all of our lives,
bears our sins on the cross, and forgives us all."*

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

9:00 am Sunday, December 29, 2024

Pastor Steve Solberg

TODAY'S REFLECTION



On the first Sunday of Christmas we find the boy Samuel and the boy Jesus, both in the temple, both growing in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and humankind. We too have returned to the house of God "to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God," who has gifted us with a savior. As the festival continues, "let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." It is Christmas, still.

All baptized and confessing believers are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

*We hope that your worship experience is spiritually fulfilling
and your day begins with our Lord's gifts of peace and joy*

▼ **Prelude Reflections for Meditation**

▼ **Welcome Greeting—Prayers and Praises**

▲ **Opening Hymn**

“Oh Come All Ye Faithful”, page 9

▲ **Confession & Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting. **Amen.**

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

Silence for Reflection

God-with-us,
**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.**

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

▲ Prayer of the Day

Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God,
and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
Amen.

THE WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song

▼ God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)

The First Reading is from 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26

Samuel was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod. His mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year, when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, 'May the Lord repay you with children by this woman for the gift that she made to the Lord'; and then they would return to their home. Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favour with the Lord and with the people.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▼ God's Word from the Psalms (NRSV)

Psalm 148

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded and they were created.

He established them for ever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

**Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
 fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!**

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted;

his glory is above earth and heaven.

**He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful,
 for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the Lord!**

▼ **God's Word from the Scriptures (NRSV)**

The Second Reading is from Colossians 3:12-17

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

▲ **God's Word from the Gospel (NRSV)**

The Holy Gospel according to Luke 2:41-52

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety.' He said to them, 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favour.

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

▼ **Sermon—God's Word Applied to Life**

▼ **Hymn of the Day**

"What Child Is This", page 10

▲ The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

With joy and gratitude for the gift of Jesus, let us draw near to our heavenly Father in prayer, asking his mercy for the Church, the world, and all who need his loving-kindness.

A brief silence

Dear Father, thank you for Jesus. Though your eternal Son, he is also our brother – “flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone.” Thank you for allowing him to share with us every stage of growth, life, and death. Thank you for revealing who Jesus is, and why you sent him. Turn our hearts, eyes, and lives toward Christ, our eternal Dayspring and our heart’s delight. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Make your Church into the true Temple of Jesus. Let it always reveal him as your light and glory for all people. Enthroned him in the Church as your Word, wisdom, and salvation for the world. Unite your persecuted servants to him, so they may confound their tormentors’ scorn and call them to repentance. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant safe passage to all who travel in this joyous season. Give endurance, patience, and a sense of humor to clerks, cashiers, waitstaff, delivery truck drivers, and everyone else who labors at this hectic time. Thank you for co-workers of different faiths who willingly “cover” for Christians during these holy days. Help us to graciously reciprocate, even before we are asked. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We lift up before you, dear Lord, the many people and committees of our congregation. Keep our focus on loving you, caring for one another, and sharing the Gospel with those who do not yet know Jesus. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Our Christmas cards and carols often speak of peace and goodwill. Yet we see anger, suspicion, discord, and hatred all around us. Gracious God, we implore you to touch every life with your peace, forgiveness, and love. Clothe each of us with the festive garments of goodwill, charity, and generosity. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Bring “tidings of comfort and joy” to everyone burdened by suffering, sin, and sorrow, *especially for those we name before you now (either in silence or out loud)*. Gladden the hearts of their loved ones, and give compassion and wisdom to all who care for them. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you, dear Father, for the salvation you have granted to all who have died trusting in you. Ease the grief of those who mourn in this season of joy. Lead us into the New Year and into your eternal Kingdom, with the light of Christ around us; with his peace ruling our hearts; and with his word dwelling in us richly. Gather us, with everyone whom you have redeemed through the merits of your dear Son, at your festal Table. There, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we shall joyfully praise and worship you, forever and ever and unto the ages of ages. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for hearing our prayers, dear Lord. We entrust them, and our lives, into your merciful care. **Amen.**

▲ ***Sharing of the Peace***

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Greet each other with a sign of Christ's peace.

THE MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ

▼ ***Offering and Presentation of the Gifts***

October—December Mission Designation

Adopt-A-Family/Senior

▼ **Offering Prayer**

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.

▼ **The Great Thanksgiving and Words of Institution**

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, 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.

▼ **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 and Distribution of Communion**

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

▼ **Post Communion Blessing**

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in His grace until He comes again.
In the name of the Father, and of the † Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

▼ **Post Communion Prayer**

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. Amen.**

THE SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world

▼ **Closing Hymn**

“Silent Night”, page 11

▼ **Announcements**

Anyone is welcome to make announcements at this time.

▲ **Blessing and Dismissal**

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
In the name of the Father and the † Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

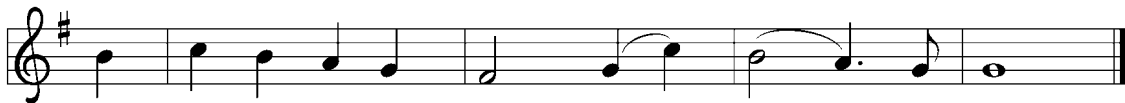


come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?
 2 Why lies he in such mean es-tate where ox and ass are feed-ing?
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas-ant, king, to own him.



Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?
 Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing.
 The King of kings sal - va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him.



This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing;
 Nails, spear shall pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;
 Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

Silent Night, Holy Night!

Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!



Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,



Hold - er Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your



Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church

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MORE SPECIAL WAYS TO GIVE THROUGH YOUR TIME AND TALENTS

Sunday Worship Lectors and Communion Assistants are needed

Service Assistant to advance projected bulletin slides

Maintenance chores around the facility

Christian Education Volunteers

BETHANY WEEKLY EVENTS CALENDAR

Sunday	9:00 am Worship, in the Great Room and Facebook Live-Stream/Video
Tuesday	9:00 am Community Coffee in Great Room 9:00 am Cover Girls in Classroom
Wednesday	10:00 am Women's Bible Study via ZOOM
Thursday	7:00 am Men's Breakfast and Bible Study in Great Room 10:00 am Women's Bible Study in Conference Room

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