



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Know Jesus – Grow in the Bible – Excel in Loving God and Others!

Sunday, December 24 at 6 PM
Christmas Eve – 2017



Tonight's service is **Divine Service, Setting Three** (Adapted from Lutheran Service Book, 184-202).

WELCOME:

- **Bethlehem Lutheran:** We are a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church; we believe the Bible is God's Word and, *by God's grace*, we trust in Jesus as our only Savior!
- **Each Week:** We gather, *as the baptized children of God*, to receive His blessings of Word and Sacrament!
- **Visitors:** Welcome! Please introduce yourself to the pastor and take a Visitor Packet from our Narthex!
- **Children:** Use our activity bags (by worship area entrance) and Children's Bibles (in some center pew racks); attend the children's message.
- **Special Needs:** Large print and hearing assistance are available in the Narthex.
- **Please Participate:** C: Congregation; A: All

LORD'S SUPPER PREPARATION:

Self-Examination Questions:

1. Have I been baptized into Christ? *"...all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ"* (Galatians 3:27).
2. Am I sorry for my sins? *"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation"* (2 Cor. 7:10).
3. Do I believe in Jesus as my Savior? *"...whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).
4. Do I desire to follow God's Word? *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path"* (Psalm 119:105).

5. Do I believe I will receive bread and Body, wine and Blood, for the forgiveness of my sins? *"Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?"* (1 Cor. 10:16).

Who Can Receive Today? Those who answered "yes" to the five questions noted above. For others who want to receive, talk to the pastor.

To Receive at Your Pew: Notify an usher.

Not Receiving Today: All ages are invited to receive a spoken blessing; cross your arms.

Non-Members Who Want to Receive Often: Read the short booklet, [A Simple Explanation of Christianity](#) and the brochures (by our main entrance), and enroll in our Bible Basics Course.

DIVINE SERVICE PREPARATION:

1. **Bell:** Take a service folder and be seated. For a service folder on your smartphone: www.BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com/ServiceFolder
2. **Phone:** Please silence at this time.
3. **Prayer by Pastor:** To bless our preparation.
4. **Prelude:** We listen and prepare in silence.

Confession and Absolution

↑ CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION:

- L: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C: **Amen.**

L: Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, begging Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness. Our help is in the name of the LORD.

C: **Who made heaven and earth.**

L: ☩ I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD.

C: **And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

L: O almighty God, merciful Father,

A: **The Bible is Your Holy Word.**

From Your Word I know what is best, but I have sinned against You in many ways.

I know I deserve Your eternal punishment, and have no ability to save myself.

I am sorry for my sins and ask for Your mercy on the basis of Jesus – Your gift of love, and His work to take away my sins.

L: Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of **the Word**, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead *[in the place of]* and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

Please ♦face the entrance and ♦focus on Jesus!

 **Service of the Word** 

ENTRANCE HYMN: LSB 379, sts. 1-3

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him
Born the king of angels: Refrain

ref **O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
Christ the Lord!**

2 Highest, most holy,
Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing! Refrain

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest: Refrain

KYRIE: *Let Us Pray*

L: *Highest, Most Holy,*

C: **have mercy upon us.**

L: *Light of Light Eternal,*

C: **have mercy upon us.**

L: *Son of the Father,*

C: **have mercy upon us.**

HYMN OF PRAISE (sung to Mendelssohn, LSB 380):

Glory Be to God on High

1. "Glory be to God on high!" This is now our joyful cry.
Peace to all who live on earth, grace and favor for new birth.
You we praise and glorify, worship You, O Lord most high.
Gracious Father, heav'nly King. To Your name alone we sing:
Praise and glory of Your name, now and evermore the same!
2. Jesus Christ, the Father's Son.
Sole-begotten, Holy One.
Born on earth from realms on high, Born true Man for us to die.
Lamb of God, you take away this world's sin: Grant peace we pray.
With the Spirit, You alone are most high, O God the Son, And the Father, God above,
praise we now Your glorious love.

SALUTATION and COLLECT:

L: The LORD be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: *Let us pray.* O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

A: Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge;

L: through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen. ↓

Jesus Will Save His People From Their Sins!

HYMN: LSB 392, sts. 1-3

God Loves Me Dearly

All Children – Please Come Forward Now!

1 God loves me dearly,
Grants me salvation,
God loves me dearly,
Loves even me. Refrain

**ref Therefore I'll say again:
God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly,
Loves even me.**

2 I was in slav'ry,
Sin, death, and darkness;
God's love was working
To make me free. Refrain

3 He sent forth Jesus,
My dear Redeemer,
He sent forth Jesus
And set me free. Refrain

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

What Is Christmas?



HYMN:

LSB 392, sts. 4-5

God Loves Me Dearly

4 Jesus, my Savior, Himself did offer;
Jesus, my Savior, Paid all I owed. Refrain

**ref Therefore I'll say again:
God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly,
Loves even me.**

5 Now I will praise You, O Love Eternal;
Now I will praise You, All my life long.
Refrain

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 7:10-14 ESV

L: Since sin brought death and eternal separation from God for all people, *God promised to send His Son to take away the sin of the world.* But how could we identify the Promised Savior?

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³ And he said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary men, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

HYMN:

LSB 383, st. 1

A Great and Mighty Wonder

1 A great and mighty wonder,
A full and holy cure:
The virgin bears the infant
With virgin honor pure!

**ref Proclaim the Savior's birth:
"To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!"**

L: Even though the infant Jesus appeared to be ordinary and weak, David addressed God the Father as “The LORD” and God the Son as “my Lord.”

PSALM 110:1-4 ESV:

L: The LORD says to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand,
C: **until I make your enemies your footstool.”**
L: The LORD sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter.
C: **Rule in the midst of your enemies!**
L: Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power, in holy garments;
C: **from the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours.**
L: The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind,
C: **“You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”**
A: **Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**
L: In the midst of sin, death, and the devil, Jesus ruled, won the victory, continues to rule even now, and offers to freely share His victory with all who will receive Him!

HYMN: LSB 361, sts. 1, 3-4

O Little Town of Bethlehem

1 O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

3 How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts

The blessings of His heav'n.
No ear may hear His coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Immanuel!

EPISTLE: 1 John 4:7-16 ESV

L: In today's world of sin, evil, cancer, terrorism, and death, we can all begin to wonder: Does God really love us? Notice in this reading HOW God demonstrated His love and the great blessing He is offering to everyone!

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

L: We have all sinned and deserve God's wrath, so God sent His Son to propitiate our sins; in other words, Jesus – as our perfect substitute – received the wrath of God in our place. Then, in Holy Baptism, God gave us the benefits of Jesus' finished work.

Now we say, “I am baptized”; that means I am still clothed with the righteousness of Christ and still trust in Him as my only Savior.

¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.

¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God!**

↑ **HYMN:** **LSB 376, sts. 1 & 4**
Once in Royal David's City

- 1 Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed:
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.
- 4 And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heav'n above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25 ESV

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C: **Glory to You, O LORD.**

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame,

resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.** ↓

L: Try to imagine being Joseph: Your fiancé is pregnant, *but you know the child is not yours!* Then an angel appears to explain how she became pregnant – “**from the Holy Spirit.**” Furthermore, the angel tells you that the child is a boy and what to name Him – **JESUS**, which means, “the Lord saves,” because “**he will save his people from their sins.**” Quite a story, *but a true story!* Do you believe it? Do you know of your great need for Jesus? Are you currently in possession of the benefits of His saving work? The Bible says, “**He who has the Son has the life**” (1 John 5:12 NAS).

CHOIR: An Antiphonal Noel

↑ **APOSTLES' CREED** (*Second Article – Redemption, and Luther's Explanation – in the form of questions and answers*):

L: What is the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed?

C: **And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

L: Who is Jesus Christ?

C: **I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.**

L: What has your Lord Jesus done for you?

C: **He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil.**

L: With what did Jesus buy you back?

C: **Not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death.**

L: Why did Jesus buy you back?

C: **That I may be His own, live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.**

L: What makes you certain of such things?

C: **He is risen from the dead, and lives and reigns to all eternity.**

A: **This is most certainly true.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH: *Let Us Pray*

After Each Petition:

L: Lord, in Your mercy.

C: **Hear our prayer.**

- ✦ For thankfulness for Jesus' living, dying, and rising to remove our sins!
- ✦ For Christ-centered Christmas celebrations!
- ✦ For our nation, leaders, and military!
- ✦ For all who need physical healing!
- ✦ For all who do not yet know Jesus!
- ✦ For daily nourishment from God's Word!

✦ For faithfulness in living God's Word!

✦ For desire to tell others the good news!

Conclusion:

L: Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy, through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.** ↓

OFFERING: *We have given you only what comes from your hand" (1 Chron. 29:14 NIV).*

⇒ **Offertory**

⇒ Please complete your attendance slip!

⇒ Before Communing Prayer: Front of LSB.

The Service of the Sacrament

↑ **PRAYER FOR RIGHT RECEPTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:**

L: Dear LORD, in the beginning You created all things by the Word, who is Your only begotten Son; then, *because of our sin* and *in the fullness of time*, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Now, with repentant hearts, as we receive the body He gave and the blood He shed, *make us certain of Your forgiveness*; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER:

L: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

A: **Our Father who art in heaven...**

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD: *On Good Friday*

PAX DOMINI: *The Peace of the Lord*

L: The peace of the Lord be with you always!

C: **Amen.**

HYMN STANZA: LSB 346, st. 3

When All the World Was Cursed

- 3 Behold the Lamb of God
 That bears the world's transgression,
 Whose sacrifice removes
 The devil's dread oppression.
 Behold the Lamb of God,
 Who takes away our sin,
 Who for our peace and joy
 Will full atonement win. ↓

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LORD'S SUPPER DISTRIBUTION:

- † Opportunity: It's available, but not required.
- † Reception: Thoughtfully, not mechanically.
- † Come with Sorrow: Jesus took our punishment.
- † Reception Options: Receive His Body *in your hand* or *on your tongue*, His blood *from an individual cup* or *from the chalice* (the center cups in each tray are alcohol removed wine).
- † Return with Joy: *Your sins are forgiven!*
- † After Communing Prayer: Front of LSB.

SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION MUSIC

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:

L: Gracious God, *heavenly Father*, we give You thanks for assuring us that we are forgiven through *the Christ of Christmas*, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

INDIVIDUAL CANDLES ARE LIT:

Organist – *Bless us with Christmas music.*
Ushers – *Come forward with a candle.*
Congregation – *Tip your unlit candle to light it. Pass the flame to those in your pew.*

HYMN: LSB 363

Silent Night, Holy Night

1 – All: Silent night, holy night!
 All is calm, all is bright
 Round yon virgin mother and child.
 Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
 Sleep in heavenly peace,
 Sleep in heavenly peace.

1 – All: Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!
 Alles schlaeft, einsam wacht
 Nur das traute hochheilige Paar.
 Holder Knabe im lockigen Haar,
 Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!
 Schlaf in himmlischer Ruh!

2 – All: Silent night, holy night!
 Shepherds quake at the sight;
 Glories stream from heaven afar,
 Heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
 Christ, the Savior, is born!
 Christ, the Savior, is born!

Choir – Acapella with Bells

3 – Choir: Silent night, holy night!
 Son of God, love's pure light
 Radiant beams from Thy holy face
 With the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

HYMN: LSB 621

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

1 Let all mortal flesh keep silence
 And with fear and trembling stand;
 Ponder nothing earthly-minded,
 For with blessing in His hand
 Christ our God to earth descending
 Comes our homage to demand.

2 King of kings yet born of Mary,
 As of old on earth He stood,
 Lord of lords in human vesture,

In the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heav'nly food.

3 Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way
As the Light of Light, descending
From the realms of endless day,
Comes the pow'rs of hell to vanquish
As the darkness clears away.

4 At His feet the six-winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence
As with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, Lord Most High!"

Please extinguish your candle

BENEDICAMUS and BENEDICTION:

L: Let us bless the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L: The Lord – *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* – ♦be within you to refresh you, ♦be before you to guide you, ♦be around you to protect you, ♦be beneath you to uphold you, and ♦be above you to bless you.

C: **Amen.**

POSTLUDE and CANDLE EXTINGUISHING

Thanks for Decorating Our Chancel

To God be the glory!



You may take your poinsettia home after tonight's service – HELP YOURSELF:

Waltraud Amels, Tim & Janet Chilton, Doris Chmielewski, Miriam Engelman, Natalia Ford, Phil & Inez Giessler, Pastor & Kathy Green, Gloria Hurka, Stacey Jasulevich, Klaus & Ingrid Kitzler, Eleanor Kuhles (in memory of her husband, Richard), Paul Martens, Wil Mild, Paul & Bonnie Moyer, June Murany, Lilli Riechert, June Russell, Jean Smith, Rand & Deb Stender.

Offering Envelopes for 2018

Since all we need comes from God, we acknowledge Him with our giving. Please pick-up your envelopes from a table in the Narthex; if you want some, just let us know.

OUR UPCOMING SPECIAL DIVINE SERVICE SCHEDULE

- **Monday MORNING**, December 25: Christmas Day Divine Service at 10 AM
- **Sunday MORNING**, December 31: Divine Service at 10 AM
- **Sunday EVENING**, December 31: New Year's Eve Divine Service at 6 PM

Connect With Us

Website:	BethlehemLutheranChurchParma.com	Podcast:	"Benefit from the Bible" (listen to the sermons)
Facebook:	"Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma"	Address:	7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134
Church Office:	Monday – Thursday, 9:30 to 3:30	Kathy Green:	Secretary@blc7500.com ; 440-845-2230
Childcare Center:	Monday – Friday, 6:45-6:00	Tricia Wise:	ChildcareDirector@blc7500.com ; 440-884-0430
Pastor Green:	RevRLGreen@aol.com ; 440-292-5915	Church Body:	lcms.org District: oh.lcms.org