

# Bethlehem Lutheran Church

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

**Saturday, December 14 at 4:00**

**Sunday, December 15 at 9:00**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent – 2019**

Divine Service, Setting One (Lutheran Service Book, 151-166).



When your life is  
difficult -  
*because*  
*of Jesus...*  
**DON'T GIVE UP!**

## WELCOME

**PRELUDE:** Christmas Pastorales Rathgeber  
*Let us listen, think, and prepare to receive!*

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

### ↑ GOD'S WORK of SORROW and ASSURANCE:

- L: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C: Amen.**
- L: Beloved in the Lord, it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which He strengthens our faith by giving us His body to eat and His blood to drink. Therefore, it is proper that we diligently examine ourselves, *as St. Paul urges us to do*, for this holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who ♠are troubled because of their sins, ♠humbly confess their sins, ♠fear God's wrath, and ♠hunger and thirst for righteousness. May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish those things in us.
- C: Amen.**
- Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.
- L: Let us confess our sins to God, imploring Him for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

- A:** O almighty God, merciful Father, I confess unto You all my sins and iniquities, and I pray for Your boundless mercy on the basis of the finished work of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ.
- L: Let it be done for you as you believe. In the stead 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.**

## SERVICE OF THE WORD

**HYMN:** *God Loves Me Dearly*

**Sunday** – *Please face the entrance!*

See the words below / LSB 392

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

## KYRIE:

- L: In peace let us pray to the Lord.
- C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

L: Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**C: Amen.**

### SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY:

L: The LORD be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

L: *Let us pray.* Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.** ↓

*All Children! Please come forward now!*

**HYMN:** *God Loves Me Dearly*

See the words below / LSB 392

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

**Refrain:**

**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**

### CHILDREN'S MESSAGE:

Pastor's Blue Stole



**Dear Friends in Christ:** This service will not include a normal sermon, *but some additional information about each reading.*

Whenever we hear or read the Bible, let us keep asking two key questions: (1) What does this mean? (2) How does this apply to me? *May God bless our understanding and applying!*

**HYMN:** *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*  
Sing to the tune of LSB 367

Refrain: Robert Green

See the words below / TLH 60 / LSB 345

1 Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding!

“Christ is near,” we hear it say.

“Cast away the works of darkness,  
All you children of the day!”

**Refrain: Hear and listen, hear and listen;  
Jesus Christ, is near today.**

### OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 35:1-10 ESV

See Below / Pew Bible Page 1111 / Own Bible

This is a brief summary of what Dr. Luther wrote about the BOOK of Isaiah: “...**you must divide the prophet Isaiah into three parts.**

**In the first part**, like the other prophets, he handles two things. **First** he preaches a good deal to his people and rebukes their many sins... [He also] **keeps the people in check with threats of punishment and promises of good.** **Second** he prepares... them to expect the coming kingdom of Christ, of which he prophesies more clearly and in more ways than any other prophet.

**In the second part** Isaiah has to do especially with the empire of Assyria and the Emperor Sennacherib.... [BTW: Assyria was the world power at that time, and defeated the northern kingdom of Israel during the lifetime of Isaiah.]

**In the third part** Isaiah has to do with the empire at Babylon. Here he prophesies of the Babylonian captivity, whereby the people were

to be punished and Jerusalem destroyed by the emperor at Babylon” (TLSB).

What does today’s OT reading mean?

Isaiah wrote about the first coming of the Messiah – *when He would confirm His identify with many miracles, and remove the sins of the world.* Today’s reading is also pointing ahead to Jesus’ second coming – *when those who trust in Him will experience the FULLNESS of His victory over sin, death, and the devil.*

How do those things apply to us? Let us

✦be sure that Jesus IS the Messiah, ✦trust in Him alone for heaven, ✦tell others the good news about Jesus, and ✦look forward to the much greater blessings which are yet to come!

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees [*stop being afraid*].

<sup>4</sup> Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; <sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

<sup>8</sup> And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools

[*immature in the Scriptures*], they shall not go astray. <sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**HYMN:** *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

2 Startled at the solemn warning,  
Let the earthbound soul arise;  
Christ, its sun, all sloth dispelling,  
Shines upon the morning skies. **Refrain**

**Refrain: Hear and listen, hear and listen;  
Jesus Christ, is near today.**

**PSALM 146 ESV**

See Below / Front of LSB / Own Bible

There are a total of 150 psalms; today’s psalm, *number 146*, is the first of the final five, *which are known as Hallelujah psalms.*

What does today’s psalm mean? It instructs us to NOT trust in any man, because he is limited and will die; *then we are called to trust in the LORD who is unlimited and able to bless us now and always! Apply by doing such things!*

- 1 Praise | the LORD! \*  
Praise the LORD, | O my soul!
- 2 I will praise the LORD as long | as I live; \*  
I will sing praises to my God while I  
have my | being.
- 3 Put not your trust in | princes, \*  
in a son of man, in whom there is no  
sal- | vation.
- 4 When his breath departs he returns | to the  
earth; \*  
on that very day his plans | perish.

5 Blessed is he whose help is the God of |  
 Jacob,\*  
 whose hope is in the | LORD his God,  
 6 who made heaven and earth, the sea, and  
 all that is | in them,\*  
 who keeps faith for- | ever;  
 7 who executes justice for | the oppressed,\*  
 who gives food to the | hungry.  
 The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
 8 the LORD opens the eyes | of the blind.\*  
 The LORD lifts up those who are bowed  
 down; the LORD loves the | righteous.  
 9 The LORD watches over the sojourners;  
 he upholds the widow and the |  
 fatherless,\*  
 but the way of the wicked he brings to |  
 ruin.  
 10 The LORD will reign for- | ever,\*  
 your God, O Zion, to all generations. |  
 Praise the LORD!  
**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son\*  
 and to the Holy | Spirit  
 as it was in the be- | ginning,\*  
 is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

**HYMN:** *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

3 See, the Lamb, so long expected,  
 Comes with pardon down from heav'n.  
 Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,  
 One and all, to be forgiv'n; **Refrain**

**Refrain: Hear and listen, hear and listen;  
 Jesus Christ, is near today.**

**EPISTLE:** James 5:7-11 ESV

See Below / Pew Bible Page 1885 / Own Bible

In the first part of James chapter 5, James condemned the wealthy – *people like us* – for living as if this life is all there is and Christ will not return. *Are we living in those ways too?*

What does today's epistle reading mean?

James is calling us to be patient, suffer long, and

not give up no matter what – BECAUSE ♦Jesus' coming is near, ♦Jesus could return at any moment, and ♦the Lord is compassionate— *caring about us*, and merciful—*holding back from us the punishment our sins deserve*.

How do those things apply to us? Knowing the Lord ♦is aware of our circumstances, ♦does care about us, and ♦will come at the right time to take us home, let us keep ♦trusting in Him, ♦benefitting from the Bible every day, and ♦waiting patiently for the FULLNESS of eternal life!

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

L: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God!**

**HYMN:** *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

4 So, when next He comes in glory  
 And the world is wrapped in fear,  
 He will shield us with His mercy  
 And with words of love draw near. **Refrain**

**Refrain: Hear and listen, hear and listen;  
 Jesus Christ, is near today.**

**HOLY GOSPEL:** Matthew 11:2-15 ESV

See Below / Pew Bible Page 1512 / Own Bible

Last week we focused on John the Baptizer preparing the way for Jesus *by calling the people to repent [be sorry and trust in Jesus]*. In today's gospel reading, *Jesus has begun his ministry and John has been locked up in prison.*

What does today's GO reading mean? In the first part, John sent his disciples to Jesus to *make sure He is the Promised Savior*. As I read, take note that Jesus did not answer by saying "Yes," but *by telling of His many miracles.*

Jesus also spoke a word of encouragement: "**Blessed is he who does not fall away on account of me**" (23). Apply: When our lives become difficult, *even very difficult – like prison*, because of our connection to Jesus, He is saying to us, *don't fall away, don't give up*, and, in time, *you will be blessed forever and ever!*

#### **Messengers from John the Baptizer:**

<sup>2</sup> Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

In the second part of the reading, Jesus spoke to the crowd about John:

♦John was not like a reed blowing this way, and then that way by the wind; instead, *John stood firmly on the unchangeable Word of God!*

Apply: Let us also stand firmly on God's Word!

♦John was not a man who had the finer things and pleasures of this world; instead, he was *THE prophet that was sent by God to prepare the way for the Promised Messiah!*

#### **Jesus Spoke About John the Baptizer:**

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in king's houses. <sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you."

In the third part of the reading, Jesus will mention some difficult things:

**First**, how John is the greatest AND the least – *greatest as he prepared the way for the Christ*, but *least in comparison to those who know of Jesus' suffering, dying, and rising* (people like you and me who know and believe such things).

**Second**, Jesus made a difficult statement about violence and force: It means that those who are brought to the knowledge of the truth about ♦sin, ♦Jesus' saving work, and ♦Jesus' return, are both *enabled* and *moved* to grasp the kingdom of heaven! Think about us: We don't *simply* believe something. Instead, *what we believe on the inside is constantly at work to change our minds, hearts, and lives!*

#### **Jesus Spoke Some Difficult Things:**

<sup>11</sup> Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. <sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. <sup>13</sup> For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, <sup>14</sup> and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup> He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

↑ **HYMN:** *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding*

5 Honor, glory, might, dominion  
To the Father and the Son  
With the ever-living Spirit  
While eternal ages run! **Refrain**

**Refrain: Hear and listen, hear and listen;  
Jesus Christ, is near today.**

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

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

**C: I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

L: Do you have the ability to believe in Jesus Christ?

**C: I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him.**

L: How have you become a Christian?

**C: The Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.**

L: What is the Holy Spirit doing to bless all Christians?

**C: He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.**

L: How is God, through Jesus, blessing all Christians every day?

**C: He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.**

L: What will happen when Jesus returns?

**C: On the Last Day Jesus will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.**

**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.**

**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 give with gratitude because God first gave and continues to give to us!*

**OFFERTORY:** Pastorale Rathgeber

**BEFORE COMMUNING PRAYER:** Front of LSB

**THE SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT**

**Saturday – CHOIR:** LSB 958

Our Father Who Art in Heaven – IIa

↑ **Sunday – LORD'S PRAYER:** *See back of either hymnal!*

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

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

**PRAYER FOR RIGHT RECEPTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER** (LSB Service Builder): *Let Us Pray*

L: O LORD, our God, in Holy Baptism You have called us to be Christians and granted us the forgiveness of sins.

**C: Make us ready to receive the most holy body and blood of Christ for the forgiveness of all our sins,**

L: and grant us grateful hearts that we may give thanks to You, O Father, to Your Son, and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**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.**

**AGNUS DEI:** *When All the World Was Cursed*

See the words below / LSB 346

- 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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**DURING DISTRIBUTION:**

*Special Music by Gayle*

Weihnachts Pastorellen Rathgeber

↑ **POST-COMMUNION COLLECT:** *Let Us Pray*

- L: We give thanks to You, almighty God, that  
You have refreshed us through this salutary  
*[spiritually beneficial]* gift, and we implore You  
that of Your mercy You would strengthen us  
through the same in faith toward You and  
fervent love toward one another; through  
Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives  
and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one  
God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN VERSE:**

*When All the World Was Cursed*

See the words below / TLH 272 / LSB 346

- 4 O grant, dear Lord of love,  
That we receive, rejoicing,  
The word proclaimed by John,  
Our true repentance voicing,  
That gladly we may walk  
Upon our Savior's way  
Until we live with Him  
In His eternal day.

**BENEDICTION:** *Receive and Be Blessed*

- 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:** Noel

Daquin

*Let us apply God's Word to our daily lives!*

**SATURDAY – BLESSINGS FOR YOU:**

- ♦ **Bible Class** (3:00): *Everyone is welcome!*
- ♦ **Refreshments** (5:10): *Join us down the hall!*

**SUNDAY – BLESSINGS FOR YOU:**

- ♦ **Receive Prayer:** Active Stephen Ministers (*Alan C, Jerry H, Dee K, Bill S, Norma S*) and others (*including Millie S*) are available after the service; *make your need known.*
- ♦ **Refreshments** (10:15): *Join us down the hall for coffee, juice, bakery, and more!*
- ♦ **Bible Class and Sunday School** (10:30): You are invited! **BC** (Christian Life Room): *9<sup>th</sup> grade to adults*; **Older SS** (Middle Office): *3<sup>rd</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade*; **Younger SS** (Lower Level Kitchen): *3 years to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.*

**EVENTS – YOU ARE INVITED!**

- ➔ **FREE CHILI LUNCH:** Sunday, **December 15** at 11:30
- ➔ **CHRISTMAS TREE SET-UP:** Sunday, **December 15** at Noon – *Thanks in advance for helping :)*

**OUR FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP:** *Thanks*

- ♦ Weekly Budget Need: **4,684**
- ♦ Received Last Week: **4,168**
- ♦ Year-to-Date Budget: **-28,896**
- ♦ Year-to-Date Actual: **-25,996**

## THANKS FOR SERVING ON 12/14 & 15

**Organist:** Gayle Powers  
**Altar Guild:** Kathy G, Stacey J  
**Financial Team:** Natalia F, Inez G  
**Saturday:** Pastor Team: Alan C; Usher:

**Sunday:** Pastor Team: Matthias M  
Ushers: Jim C, Ray K, John H, Klaus K  
Refreshments: Miriam E and Doris C  
Sunday School: Nicole C, Marci S

## THANKS FOR SERVING ON 12/21 & 22

**Organist:** Gayle Powers  
**Altar Guild:** Eileen K, Nancy B  
**Financial Team:** Natalia F, Dee K  
**Saturday:** Pastor Team: Alan C; Usher:

**Sunday:** Pastor Team: Harold W  
Ushers: Jim C, Ray K, John H, Klaus K  
Refreshments: Miriam E and Doris C  
Sunday School: Angie R, Norma S

## Our December Schedule

- ➔ **SATURDAYS:** Bible Class 3:00; Divine Service 4:00; Refreshments 5:10
- ➔ **SUNDAYS:** Divine Service 9:00; Refreshments 10:15; Bible Class and Sunday School 10:30
- ➔ **WEDNESDAYS – December 4, 11, and 18:** Services at 11 & 7; Free Meals at 12 & 6
- ➔ **CHRISTMAS EVE:** Divine Service at 6
- ➔ **CHRISTMAS DAY:** Divine Service at 10
- ➔ **AFTER CHRISTMAS – December 28 and 29:** Saturday at 4, Sunday at 9 (no food or classes)
- ➔ **NEW YEAR'S EVE:** Divine Service at 6 (a good way to end 2019 and begin 2020)

## Our Wednesdays in Advent: Come Lord Jesus...

- ➔ **Week 1 – December 4:** **Come to Us through the Word...** *It is vital, both weekly and daily, to receive and understand God's Word! Use one of more of these resources for your daily time in the Bible: Bible, Portals, Meditations, Advent Devotional, or A Closer Look at the Evidence*
- ➔ **Week 2 – December 11:** **Come to Us to Change Our Hearts...** *It is vital to be serious about and open to God's Word to actually receive the great benefits!*
- ➔ **Week 3 – December 18:** **Come to Us to Change Our Behavior...** *It is vital to know God's Word is true and best before we can actually apply it to ourselves and others!*



## Connect With Us

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