

Romans 8:31-39 NRSVUE

³¹ What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? ³⁶ As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

*This is the Word of God, for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!*

December 21, 2025
Fourth Sunday in Advent



*Mission Statement
Knowing Christ, Growing in Faith, and Showing God's Love*

*Vision Statement
Bethel United Methodist Church continues its unchanging heritage of faith, striving to be a sacred place to know Christ fully, grow spiritually, and show God's love through compassion, service, and generosity.*

Worship

Celebration of

December 21, 2025
8:00 & 11:00 a.m. Service

GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude: "How Great Our Joy" arr. Schrader

Greeting & Announcements

Lighting of the fourth Advent candle (8) Sandy Hunsicker & Barbara Heber
(11) Curt Smith

Advent Candle Response: "Emmanuel, Emmanuel"#204 UMH

*Call to Worship:

Leader: Stop. Listen. Pay attention. Love is coming near.

People: ***We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.***

Leader: The Hope Bringer, Peace Maker, Joy Sustainer grows in a womb, preparing to be born among us.

People: ***We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.***

Leader: With Mary, we long for the coming of the Child who will transform the world, bringing justice where injustice reigns, fullness where hunger persists, and favor to the ones the world calls lowly

People: ***We wait in the love of the coming Messiah that transforms us.***

Leader: So let us join our voices and our lives in magnifying God, our Savior!

People: ***We come to wait and to declare the coming of the Love that transforms us! Amen.***

GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

*Opening Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (stanzas 1, 2, 6, & 7).....#211 UMH

Opening Prayer: *Lord of all life and all seasons, help us open our hearts to hear the words of promise and love that you send to us. Like Joseph, may we trust in your abiding love and power. Prepare us to receive your gift of grace and peace. This we pray in Jesus' name, who taught us to pray...*

DECEMBER 21—DECEMBER 28

Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Live - Sanctuary
	9:15 a.m.	Contemporary Worship -Come Alive Time - Sanctuary
	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School - Various Rooms
	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Live - Sanctuary

Monday		Joyce Mentzer's Sabbath
	6:30 p.m.	Advent Bible Study - PMH

Tuesday	7:00 p.m.	YM ² - Music Room
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Wednesday	3:00 p.m.	Candlelight Communion Service - Sanctuary
	5:00 p.m.	Candles & Pageant Service - BFH
	7:00 p.m.	Candlelight Youth Led Service - Sanctuary
	11:00 p.m.	Candlelight Communion Service - Sanctuary

Thursday		Merry Christmas
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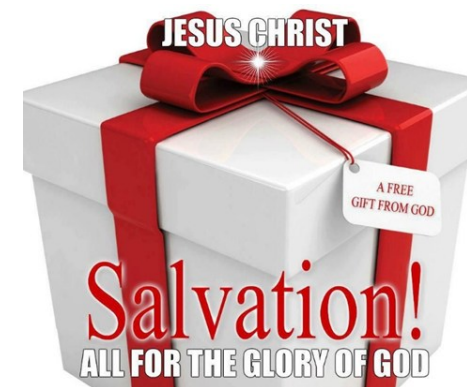
Friday		Office Closed
		Pastor Jim's Sabbath
		Ray Davis's Sabbath

Sunday	8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Live - Sanctuary
	9:15 a.m.	Contemporary Worship -Come Alive Time - Sanctuary
	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School - Various Rooms
	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship Live - Sanctuary

Church Livestream Available Online Sundays
9:15 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.

Or anytime after the services on YouTube

BFH - Bethel Fellowship Hall
PMH - Parsonage Meeting House



BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PRAYER LIST
12/21/2025

Key: ***Bold, Italicized & Underlined*** type indicates a request new this week

Rehabilitation: David Hurlock, Bobby Lane, Paul Webb

Hospital: Joe Daughtery, Dottie Mckain

Hospice: Gary Arrell, Rosemary Bouvier, Goodwin, Jim Kardas, Brenda Keith, Sharon Messinger, Mrs. Sample, Jim Smith

General Concerns: Amelia, Meg Anderson, Andy Baker, Felena Bartlett, Marilyn Battiste, Paula Carridan, Tracy Carson, Kathy Counts, Kathy Crowley, Cathy Crown, Scott Dailey, Bob Dathe, Pat Emmett, Jessi Ferree, Bridget Fowler, Fred Gentry, Bill Gibbons, Giovanna (Sister of Mauro De Mederios), Ida (Sister in-Law of Tina Eaton), Mike Ingerson, Jessica, ***Randy Johnson***, Kelly Jones, Kelsea, Kelly Lahorcek, Paulette Lazzarro, Pat McMillen, Megan, Ann Miller, Whitney Murray, June Myers, Mike O'Neill, Jennifer Nobles, Xavier Nobles, Kelly Pinsky, ***Pauline Powell***, Beth Rampson, Naomi Rickards, Cindi Flahive-Sobel, Janice Skok, Linda Sydell & Family, Theresa Walls

Long Term: Ansavish Family, Bryan Attix, Rev. Gloria Attix, Fran Baker, Matthew Baker, Ruth Ann Baker, Ginny Barney, Wesley Beam, Dave Beddle, Nancy Bektolino, Betty, Daryl Bradley, Inez Brengle, Liz Carrier, John Caycedo, Janette Clavette, Clawson Family, Victor Colon, Rev. Charles Covington, Bill Dell, Delores, Jay Dentino, Bob Dickey, Richard Dickey, Bonnie Ekas, Jim Emanuel, Marilyn Emanuel, Trish Emmett, Tom Engel, Susie Eveland, Olga Fitch, Frank Fitzgerald Sr, Gayle Gibbons, Danny Gillespie, Hazel Gillespie, Junie Grant, Jude Gray, Alex Grove, George Hammond, Kelly Harp, Heather & Indy, Nancy Hecker, Lou Henderson, Sharon Henderson, Jack Henriksen, Connor Hiple, Jim Hooban, Kayla Hottinger, David Jones, Erika Jones, Chubby Joseph, Deb Kellenbenz, Adam Kent, Faye Kintz, Kathy Kroley, Norm Kugel, Janice Kulp, Paulette Lazzarro, Nancy Logan, Bill Lyons, Rob MacArthur, Madison MacElrevey, Matt Kortlyn, & Bodi, Dr. Jim Marvel, Patty Marvel, Janet McGinnis, Claranne Meitrott, Marsha Miller, Chuck Naspinsky, Curt & Melinda Newsome, Ted Niemczyk, Lori O'Day, Brian O'Dell, Thom Pemberton, George Pepper, Earl Peters, Jodi Potter, Steve Rellihan, Beth Rinker, Carla Robinson, Tom Schaich, Mary Louise Scott, John Schulze, Joe Seay, Bill Seitz, Betty Sheats, Logan Smith, Tricia(Spangler)Gracey, Chet Sprague, Judy Stevenson, Bonnie Stevlingson, Margaret Stockslager, Dale Stough, James Taylor, Bonnie Tedesco, Peggy Thomas, Dave Trout, Bob Turcovski, Dawn Vandegrift, Michael Walker, Wanda, Kathy Watson, Kathy Wetherhold-Parrott, Hilda Williams, Trish Wilson, Woody Wilson, Theresa Wise, Jim & Jolie Woodward, Lucretia Y., Glenn Yetter, Marge Zayatz

Up Coming Procedures:

Recovering From Procedures: Bobbie Flynn, Margaret Hitchens, Pam Monti, ***Peter Moyer***

Other:

- ***Shooting at Brown University.***
- ***Terrorist attack of Jewish Community in Bondi Beach, Australia***
- Christian persecution in Nigeria and other parts of the world
- All those caring for family and friends, especially spouses and those that have lost a child.
- Delaware Firefighters, EMS, and State Troopers.
- For racial justice in the United States.

Sympathy to:

- ***Family & Friends of Julie Deppner, who died in a car accident this past week.***
- ***Family & Friends of Jean Babiarz, who passed away peacefully at home on Dec 15th.***
- Family & Friends of Joann Merrick, who passed away on 12/7.
- Family & Friends of Margaret "Peggy" Rollins, Cousin of Don Mitchell, who passed Dec. 9th.

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, the power, and the glory forever. Amen.***

LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

Joys & Concerns and Pastoral Prayer

God's Tithes and our Offerings

Offertory (8) *"Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"* arr. McDonald
(11) *"Gaelic Rose"* by Hayes
Lauren Mentzer, clarinet

*Doxology:.....#94 UMH

Hymn of Preparation: *"Love Came Down at Christmas"*#242 UMH

Scripture Lesson: Romans 8:31-39

Message *"The Christmas Gift of Salvation"* Pastor Jim Penuel

GO FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

*Closing Hymn: *"Joy to the World"*#246 UMH

*Benediction & Final Blessing

Leader: As we depart, may the Love of Christ be with you.

People: May the Love of Christ be with you.

(All are invited to pass the Love of Christ to all as you exit during the Postlude)

*Postlude: *"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"* arr. McDonald

**Those who are able, please stand.*

*The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God
in loving memory of Barbara Plambeck
by the Plambeck Family.*

Hearing assistance devices are located at the sound booth.

Bethel CCLI License #1774982, Streaming License #20110751
Bethel One License (with Podcasting) #A-73619

Come Alive Time WORSHIP



December 21, 2025
9:15 a.m. Service

GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Gathering: *(Please watch the screen for upcoming events)*

Greeting and Opening Prayer

GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

*Opening Song of Praise & Worship: *"O Come All Ye Faithful"*

Lighting of the fourth Advent candle: Thomas & Carol Herrick

Advent Candle Response: *"Emmanuel, Emmanuel"*.....#204 UMH

Children's Message: *"The Gift That Tops All Gifts"*

Joys & Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Offering: *"Christmas Alleluia"*

LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD

Scripture Lesson: Romans 8:31-39

Message *"The Christmas Gift of Salvation"* Pastor Jim Penuel

GO FORTH IN GOD'S NAME

*Closing Song *"He Will Come For Us"*

*Benediction & Final Blessing

Leader: As we depart, may the Love of Christ be with you.

People: *May the Love of Christ be with you.*
(All are invited to pass the Love of Christ to all as you exit)

**Those who are able, please stand.*

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Bethel One License (with Podcasting) #A-73619

ANNOUNCEMENTS



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FOR BOTH CODE PURPLE @THE CAPE SHELTERS

Shelter Season is Mon Dec 1, 2025 – Sat Mar 15, 2026



This vital resource is dependent on volunteers as Code Purple @ the Cape is a 100% volunteer run.

Both of their emergency winter shelters, at St Jude the Apostle and the Lutheran Church of Our Savior, are open every night from December 1st until March 15th.

Volunteer spots include overnight Hosts, intake Assistants & bus Drivers.

They serve single adult men and women. Provided services include a hot meal, a warm, safe and secure bed, weather appropriate clothing, and hygiene. Each guest is uniquely homeless...each vulnerable...each one matters!

To view the descriptions and dates open for each job on their *SignUp.com* page just copy and paste this address into your browser:

<https://signup.com/go/xeVKqQw>

If you have questions about volunteering email Mike Agnew at codepurple@stjudelewes.org

Thank you



Love Inc-Code Purple Shelters:

Our friends at Love INC could also use some helping hands at the **Georgetown** and **Milford** Code Purple shelters. They're looking for overnight volunteers!

If you're able to serve, you can sign up at:

<https://40484.people.myamplify.io/external/form/807a9e0b-3191-48c1-bc4c-f6864db51097> Thank You!!

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Love Offering: The December Love Offering will benefit Lifetime Wells. Their mission is to improve the quality of life for communities in Ghana and Tanzania by providing access to safe drinking water and a new ministry of eyecare in Africa. Love Offerings may be given throughout the month in the “designated” plates

found at the back of Fellowship Hall & the Sanctuary or online by clicking “Choose a Fund” and then by clicking “Communion/Love Offering” in the drop down menu. If donating by check please remember to make payable to Bethel UMC and note love offering.



Lifetime Wells: “We envision a world where death and disease caused by unsafe drinking water are eliminated and communities are lifted out of extreme poverty through the power of clean water.” Lifetime Wells International was formed by the merger of two organizations with a heart to provide safe water to the people of Africa. After working together for several years, it became clear that two like-minded organizations could accomplish more together than each could on their own. In 2017, Lifetime Wells For Ghana (Ken Wood, Founder) and Wells for Relief (David Powell, Founder) combined efforts, and Lifetime Wells International was born. Since 2006, Lifetime Wells International has drilled over 3,300 water wells, rehabilitated dilapidated hand pumps, installed mechanized wells, and extended water mains to deliver clean water. They educate communities on the benefits of clean water and sanitation and educate local leaders who ensure proper maintenance and repairs are performed.



Blood Drive Reminder: It’s hard to believe that we need to mention something going on in March when it is only early December but, for those of you planning on donating at our March 10, 2026 Blood Drive, please note that the last date to give prior to that donation is January 13 to allow the required minimum of 56 days between donations. We encourage everyone who can to donate. Thank you, Elizabeth Circle

BETHEL INFORMATION

To our guests...

Welcome to Bethel! Thank you for worshipping with us. We invite you to experience the love and grace of God in Jesus Christ today. During the announcements we would like to give you a welcome packet—just raise your hand and an Usher will bring you one. We value your feedback. Please fill out the Information Card in the mug and place it in the offering plate. For more information about Bethel, visit our website at www.bethellewes.org or call the Church Office. Thank you.

Worship Opportunities

Traditional Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary, 8:00 a.m.
Contemporary Worship in Fellowship Hall, 9:15 a.m.
Traditional Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary, 11:00 a.m.
Church Livestream Watch Online Sundays @ 9:15 or 11:00
Or anytime after the services on YouTube

Bethel Ministry Staff Contact Information

Jim Penuel, Senior Pastor	pastorjim@bethellewes.org
Earle Baker, Pastor of Visitation	enbaker54@gmail.com
Joyce Mentzer, Director of Music	jkmmentzer@bethellewes.org
Ray Davis, Youth & Family Director	ray@bethellewes.org
Sandy Stough, Office Manager	office@bethellewes.org
Cindi Clavette, Treasurer	cindi@bethellewes.org
Laura Petranto, Financial Secretary	laura3152@live.com
Katie Davis, S.S. Superintendent	Kdavis4786@gmail.com
Todd Mentzer, AV Coordinator	tamjam3@gmail.com
Susan Kremer, PR Coordinator	suzykq@mchsi.com
George Pepper, Maintenance	gpepper@bethellewes.org
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Kathy Pepper, Bethel Christian School	bethelpepper@yahoo.com

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Bethel Christian School Phone: (302) 645-5132
Church Office Hours M-F 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.



Leaders for Today’s Service

Greeters:	8:00	Mary Lou Warren
	9:15	Curtis Moomaw
	11:00	Curt & Harriett Smith
Ushers:	8:00	Ernie Stanley, Head Usher
		Sandy Hunsicker, & Ron Smith Assistants
	9:15	Libby Gibson, Head Usher
	11:00	Joann Brittingham, Head Usher
		Miguel Gomez & Ralph Scott; Assistants
Liturgists:	8:00	Herky Billings
	9:15	Ray Davis
	11:00	Jim Vandegrift
Audio Visual Techs:		Ray Davis, Ed Emmett, Norm Macturk, Mauro Medeiros, Todd Mentzer
Miracle Singers:	9:15	Kim Edmonds, Cathy Ferree, John Harris, Faye Kintz, Patty Marvel, Bill Powell

Weekly Statistics

Attendance: December 14, 2025: 211 (8:00-49; 9:15-90; 11:00-72)

Contributions for December 14, 2025

weekly deposit	\$ 13,594.58
weekly budget	\$ 16,461.43
YTD collection	\$ 783,911.81
YTD budget	\$ 823,071.50



To enroll, click on the “Giving” tab on the Church’s website.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



FOOD
MINISTRY

Bethel’s Food Ministries

Cold Weather Sheltering programs will begin 12/1/25
Contact for both programs is Cathie Wagner at
ccwgr@aol.com

Anyone interested in providing food can access the sign-up sheets for the two programs by following these steps:

- Go to: www.bethellewes.org
 - Click on Information at the top of Bethel’s home page.
 - Select “Bethel Food Ministries” from the drop down menu. This will bring you to a page that contains the direct links to the two programs and important information for each program, (so read through carefully).
 - Click on the link for the program you want and you will be linked to the sign-up sheet for that program.
- The CRC sign up has a separate link for each month.



Men’s Ministry-New Monthly Gathering!!

A NEW monthly gathering started this fall. This group usually meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, from 7:00 -8:30 PM at Barry Eaton’s home for a time of fun, fellowship, and spiritual growth. However, due to the Christmas holiday they will be meeting on the 3rd Wed in December.

Upcoming meeting dates are Dec 17 and Jan 28. We’ll be using video-based studies throughout the year, kicking things off with an Andy Stanley series on the importance of community. All men of Bethel UMC are invited and encouraged to join us. Please contact either Barry Eaton at 1785ea-ton@gmail.com or Ray Davis at ray@bethellewes.org for directions or any questions and to let them know you’re planning to attend. Let’s grow together in faith and friendship!



Our Bethel Cookbook is returning after 15 years!

The Elizabeth Circle will be collecting your favorite recipes from January 11 to February 1st to publish in a new cookbook. As you prepare your holiday best, set aside the recipes to share. Forms and a collection box are available in the Lobby.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Missions First Annual Opportunity to Serve Fair & Chili Tasting



Sunday, February 1, 2026
4:00 pm in Fellowship Hall

SAVE THE DATE!



Non-profit, local organizations will be invited to promote their organizations and share volunteer opportunities. The goal of the event is to connect our congregation with community needs. Service to others is a cornerstone to the United Methodist faith. A chili tasting will provide a tasty addition to the event. More details to follow. We hope you will plan to attend this event on the Sunday between the end of the NFL Playoffs and the Super Bowl.



Coming on Thursday Mornings Beginning January 15, 2026

What a great way to begin the New Year: A new Bible Study on the Gospel of Matthew emphasizing the 5 Great Discourses or Conversations contained in the book. Jesus had a lot to say and a very short time to say it. Come and join in as we explore His words together in the Sermon on the Mount, in the instructions he gave to the 12 before sending them out to proclaim the Gospel, the Parables on the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church, and the End Times.

This class is for everyone: those who want to learn more about how to study the Bible, those who love studying the Bible, and everyone in between. All you need is your Bible and a heart that's inclined to studying God's Word and listening to His teaching. The class is led by John Hammett and will meet for 11 consecutive Thursday mornings from 10:00 - 11:30 in the PMH.

Please contact John by text at 410-733-5736 or by email at hammettjohnj@comcast.net if you'd like to attend or if you have questions.



Pastor Jim Vacation: Pastor Jim will be away on vacation after Christmas Eve. from 12/25/2025 to 1/3/2026. Pastor Earle will lead worship on 12/28 and will cover any pastoral care needs while I'm away. He can be reached at 302-841-1305.

NOTE SHEET

Note Sheet

The Christmas Gift of Salvation

Romans 8:31-39

12/21/25

1. Jesus came into the world because God saw the _____ of humanity.
2. The world needs the redemption, love, forgiveness, and grace that _____ brings us.
3. 1st Peter 4:8 reminds us, "Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for _____ covers a multitude of sins."
4. With the gift of salvation from Christ our Lord, _____ can separate us from the love of God.
5. _____ is why Jesus came into the world.
6. I want to remind you that _____ and _____ go hand in hand.
7. "Love came down at Christmas" for _____ and for _____. Let's share the good news with the world, in all we _____ and _____.

Scripture reading for further reflection: 1st Peter 4:7-11, John 3:1-17.

Note: You may access the Digital Sermon Note Page

by scanning the QR Code 





Bethel Staff Christmas Appreciation Gift

In a world where integrity and values matter more than ever, our Bethel staff: Pastor Jim/Earle, Sandy, Joyce, Todd, Ray, Katie, Cindi, Laura, George, & Bill collectively stand as shining examples. Our church is truly blessed with their devotion and dedication and incredible commitment to serve. Employee appreciation plays a significant role in shaping a positive workplace culture. When employees feel valued and recognized for their contribution there is a positive catalyst... Gratitude and praise can arrive in many forms so the choices are numerous.

The time period is here when the congregation has an opportunity to demonstrate an appreciation for the Bethel staff for all that they do. You may include them in your prayers, thank them in person, send a note, or make a donation. You may make a donate online or drop it in offering plate. If making a check please note in memo for staff appreciation or by cash please indicate on envelope. Donations will be collected through December 24th.

Since my position as Chair of Staff Pastor Relations Committee (SPRC), which is the personnel department of our church, the staff has assisted the committee far beyond normal expectations. The Bethel staff is a stimulus and testimony for the Bethel reputation. Regardless of the challenges faced and there are many their optimism is sincerely contagious within the staff. The only way to do great work is to love what you do. Thank you for loving what you do, and doing it so well.

Thank you for going above and beyond every day. Your work doesn't go unnoticed.

Bud Frampton/Chair

