



THAT FIRST  
*C*HRISTMAS

GOD GAVE US HIS BEST.

# Bethel United Methodist Church

December 24, 2025

3:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



PRELUDE: *"Ding Dong! Merrily On High"* arr. McDonald

GREETING

\*CALL TO WORSHIP: Joyce Snyder

Leader: Christ is born; give him glory!

**People:** *Christ has come down from heaven; receive him!*

Leader: O you earth, sing to the Lord!

**People:** *O you nations, praise him with joy, for he has been glorified!*

\*OPENING CAROL: *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"* Stzs. 1, 3, & 5 #234

*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.*

*O come let us adore Him. O come, let us adore Him*

*O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation.*

*O sing all ye citizens of heaven above!*

*Glory to God, all glory in the highest.*

*O come let us adore Him. O come, let us adore Him*

*O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Child for us sinners poor and in the manger,*

*We would embrace Thee with love and awe.*

*Who would not love Thee, loving us so dearly?*

*O come let us adore Him. O come, let us adore Him*

*O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

**Communion Love offering:** It is our custom to receive a love offering when Communion is celebrated. The recipient of tonight's love offering is Community Resource Center of Rehoboth. Community Resource Center helps those in need with dignity and respect by helping individuals and families get to the next step of their journey towards self-sufficiency and stability.

## Participants in this evening's service:

Greeters: Ron & Marilyn Mead

Ushers: Joann Brittingham, Jim Brown, Phil Fitch, Ralph Scott,  
Todd Shultz, Ernie Stanley

Liturgist: Joyce Snyder

Communion Servers: Olga Fitch, Pastor Jim, Joyce Snyder, Wanda Zullo

Communion Stewards: Edie Sipos, Mary Lou Warren

Tech Team: Todd Mentzer, Lauren Mentzer

## Worship Opportunities:

Thank you for sharing this worship service with us. You are cordially invited to worship at Bethel every Sunday. For information about ministries and activities, please visit our website: [www.bethellewes.org](http://www.bethellewes.org)

## SUNDAY WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

Traditional Worship is at 8:00 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Contemporary Worship is at 9:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Children are dismissed to go to Sunday School around 9:30 a.m.

All Sunday services are also available to watch from home by searching "Bethel Lewes" on YouTube or by clicking the Virtual Bethel tab on our website ([bethellewes.org](http://bethellewes.org))

## BETHEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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*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.*

*(Lift candles)*

*Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;  
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born.*

\*BENEDICTION

\*EXTINGUISHING THE CANDLES



OPENING PRAYER: ***O almighty God, by the birth of your holy child, Jesus, you gave us a great light to dawn on our darkness. Grant that in his light we may see light. Bestow upon us that most excellent Christmas gift of love to all people, so that the likeness of your Son may be formed in us, and that we may have the ever brightening hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.***

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: “Christ Candle”

Jim Brown

RESPONSE: “O Little Town of Bethlehem” (Stzs. 3 & 4)

#230

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;  
While God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.*

*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 Emmanuel!*

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

“Bethlehem Wind”

by Martin

Chancel Choir with Lauren Mentzer, clarinet

\* OFFERING RESPONSE:

*What shall I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.  
If I were a Wise Man I would do my part. Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.*

CELEBRATION CAROL:

“Joy to the World”

#246

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;  
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

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*No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,  
And wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders of His love.*

\* GOSPEL LESSON:                      *Luke 2:1-20*                      Pastor Penuel

MESSAGE:                      *“Putting First Things First”*                      Pastor Penuel



CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader:            The Lord is with you.

**PEOPLE:**        ***And also with you.***

Leader:            Lift up your hearts:

**PEOPLE:**        ***We give thanks to the Lord our Savior.***

Leader: It is just, right and our privilege that we shall at all times, in all places, and on this holy night, give thanks to You Almighty Father. For you have sent Your light into the world in the form of a tiny Child, fragile and vulnerable, Who grew to be the very Light of light, full of grace and truth, revealing Your awesome glory.

O Lord, on this night of miracle and mystery, we do not kneel at Your table because of our own merits; because without You we are broken and incomplete. But in Jesus Christ, You have revealed Yourself to us with mercy and forgiveness. For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. And now You have invited us to feast as guests at Your table. Gladly we come. Turn our darkness into light, our sorrow into joy unspeakable; fill our emptiness with Your presence; that we may grow into the likeness of Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE LORD’S PRAYER *(sung)*

*Our Father, which 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 debts as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.*

BREAKING THE BREAD AND SHARING THE CUP

- *You are invited to receive Communion tonight, even if you are a guest.*
- *It is the practice of The United Methodist Church to have an ‘open’ communion table so that everyone who comes in faith may share in this Holy Sacrament.*
- *The Pastor will give instructions for how and when to partake of the communion elements.*
- *It is our custom to receive a love offering when Communion is celebrated. The recipient of tonight’s love offering is Community Resource Center of Rehoboth. Community Resource Center helps those in need with dignity and respect by helping individuals and families get to the next step of their journey towards self-sufficiency and stability.*

SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Please remain standing while your candle is lit.  
Hold your lit candle upright, and tip unlit candles into it.  
Please keep your candle away from the hair and clothes of others.  
Please be attentive to children around you.  
Extinguish your candle before leaving your seat.  
Please take your candle home as a reminder that Jesus is the ‘Light of the World.’  
Please leave the candleholder to be reused.

\* CLOSING CAROL:                      *“Silent Night”*

*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.*

*Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;  
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!*

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