

AS WE GATHER

"Let our gladness have no end, alleluia!" (LSB 381:1). "Let our gladness banish sadness All throughout creation!" (LSB 371:1). These two songs of the Christmas season remind us that we are in glad times as we celebrate the birth of our Lord. This year, because of the way the days of the week fall immediately after Christmas Day, we are blessed by having not one but two Sundays after Christmas! Through the Holy Gospel today, we hear about our Lord Jesus when He was a young man—one who increased in wisdom and stature. Jesus was glad to be in God's house when He was in Jerusalem. Our gladness in these special days is heightened by our being here for worship as we grow in wisdom and in stature by God's endless grace!

REGARDING COMMUNION

Jesus was born in a town called "house of bread" (Bethlehem) and laid in a feeding trough (a manger) where the livestock normally found their grain. Little surprise then that Jesus spoke of himself as "the bread who came down from heaven" (John 6:41) and as "a grain of wheat falling into the earth" (John 12:24)! Christmas is the celebration of the Eternal Son Jesus, God of God and Light of Light, taking on flesh and dwelling among us so that we behold in him the glory of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). Our word "Christmas" simply means Christ's Mass and reminds us that Jesus is still present among us in body and blood through the sacred gifts of bread and wine. In this vein, Luther once said: "Word and Sacrament are the manger and swaddling clothes into which it has pleased Christ to lay himself." May we come to Christ's manger (the Altar) humbled in repentance for all that is wrong in our lives so that we may receive his gracious meal for forgiveness and renewal. Since Christian denominations have differing understandings of Holy Communion, if you are not a member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation and have not communed here before, we ask that you speak with the pastor or elder prior to communing with us the first time. Those not communing are invited to cross their arms over their chests and approach the pastor for a blessing during the distribution. Also, if certain factors prohibit you from partaking of regular wine, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center circle of the tray. If you would like to begin sharing this sacred meal with us on a regular basis, please ask the pastor for a time of faith instruction and formation.

Liturgical Color:

White is the color of purity and is associated with festivals of Christ and his Church such as Christmas Eve

Welcome Stand **Invocation Hymn**"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" #380 (2&3) 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord, 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness! be-hold Him come, Off-spring of Late in time a vir-gin's womb. brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings. Light and life to all He Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in-car - nate De - i - ty! He lays His glo - ry Born that man no more may die, by, Man with man to dwell, Je Pleased as sus, our Im - man - u - el! Born raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec-ond birth. Refrain Hark! The her-ald the new-born King!" an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to Tune and text: Public domain

Divine Service, Setting Four

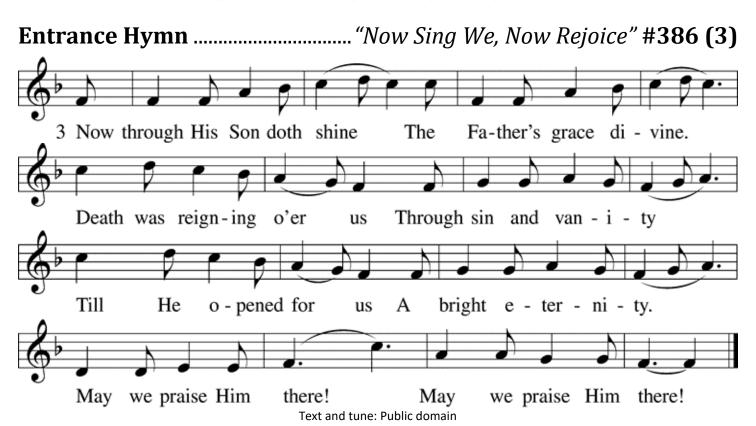
Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross † may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Confession and Absolution.....page 203

- P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C Amen.
- P Our help is in the name of the Lord,
- who made heaven and earth.
- **P** If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?
- But with You there is forgiveness; therefore, You are revered.
- P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.
- Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.
- Almighty God, merciful Father, in Holy Baptism You declared us to be Your children and gathered us into Your one, holy Church, in which You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.
- C Amen.

Service of the Word



Kyrie......page 204



C Lord, have mer-cy; Christ, have mer-cy; Lord, have mer-cy.

Salutation (spoken in unison)

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- And also with you.
- P Let us pray.

Collect of the Day(spoken in unison)

Almighty God, You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word. Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Sit

Old Testament Reading...... 1 Kings 3:4-15

The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the great high place. Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I shall give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you. And you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne this day. And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too many to be numbered or counted for multitude. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?"

It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. And if you will

walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

And Solomon awoke, and behold, it was a dream. Then he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings and peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

- **P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.

Gradual(spoken in unison)

To us a child is born, to us a son is given;

and the government shall be upon his shoulder.

And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Sing to the Lord a new song,

for he has done marvelous things!

Epistle Reading Ephesians 1:3-14

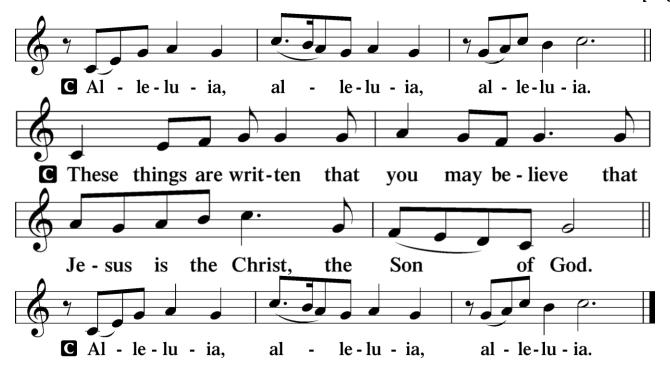
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

- **P** This is the Word of the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Versepage 205



Holy GospelLuke 2:40-52

- P The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.
- Glory to You, O Lord.

The child [Jesus] grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching 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. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

Nicene Creed...... page 206

I believe in one God,

the Father Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth

and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,

the only-begotten Son of God,

begotten of His Father before all worlds,

God of God, Light of Light,

very God of very God,

begotten, not made,

being of one substance with the Father,

by whom all things were made;

who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary

and was made man;

and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered and was buried.

And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures

and ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of the Father.

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,

whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the Lord and giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,

who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,

I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,

and I look for the resurrection of the dead

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Hymn of the Day "Within the Father's House" #410



3 Yet not to them is giv'n The might - y truth to know, 4 The se - cret of the Lord Es - capes each hu - man eye,



And to His tem - ple sud - den - ly The Lord of life has come. And mar-vel at His gra-cious words Of wis-dom un - de - filed. To lift the earth - ly veil that hides In - car-nate God be - low. And faith-ful pon - d'ring hearts a - wait The full e - piph - a - ny.

5 Lord, visit Thou our souls And teach us by Thy grace Each dim revealing of Thyself With loving awe to trace

6 Till we behold Thy face
And know as we are known
Thee, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Coequal Three in One.

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon....."The Child Who Knows"

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

Sit

Offertory Hymn......"Just As I Am" (reflection hymn played while communion vessels are being prepared)

Offering

Offering plates will not be passed during the service; worshipers may place their offerings into the plate located at the entrance.

Service of the Sacrament

Communion Liturgypages 208-209

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- **C** And also with you.
- **P** Lift up your hearts.
- **G** We lift them to the Lord.
- **P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- It is right to give Him thanks and praise.
- It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:



P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for the redemption You have prepared for us through Jesus Christ. Grant us Your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully eat and drink of the fruits of His Cross and receive the blessing of forgiveness, life and salvation that come to us in His body and blood.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

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.

The Words of Our Lord.....page 209

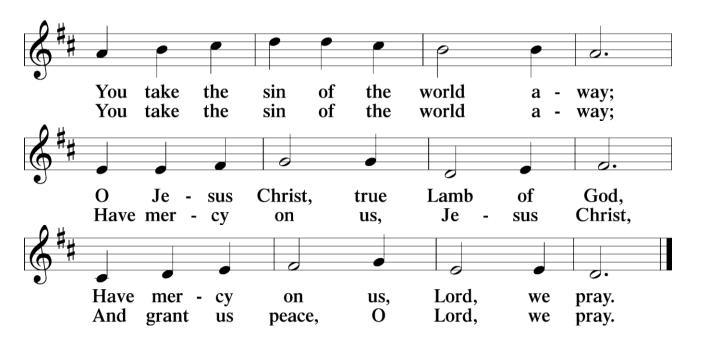
Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C Amen.

Agnus Dei......*page 210*





Sit (until motioned to rise and proceed forward if going for Communion or a blessing).

Communion Distribution

Distribution of the Lord's gifts in Holy Communion is in standing format with Pastor and the Elder near the chancel steps. You will be released by the usher to head forward, maintaining physical distance between each person or family unit. Pastor will drop the wafer into your hands, so please cup them together and hold them chest-level. Individual plastic cups only are being used, so if you're not taking the non-alcoholic wine from the center, please make sure to take from the outer circle first until all of those are gone before reaching for the next level in. A basket to the left of the table is available for you to place your used cup inside.

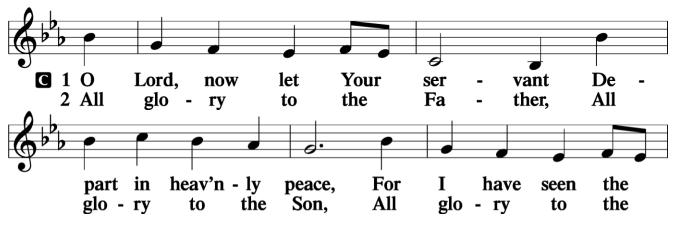
"In the Bleak Mid-Winter" (Gustav Holst,1874-1934)

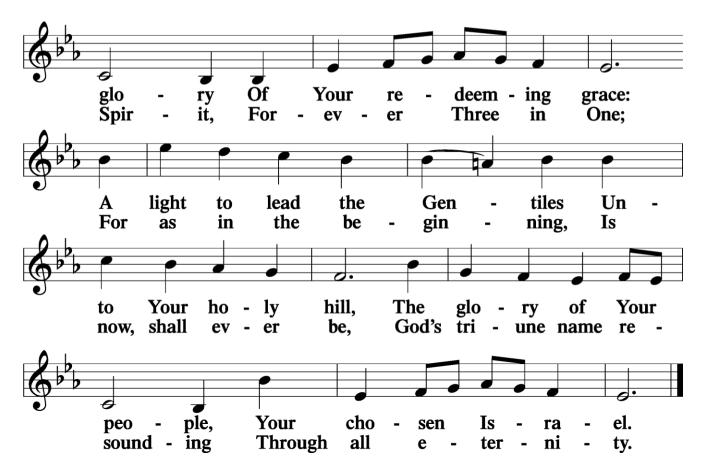
"Gesu Bambino" (Pietro A. Yon, 1886-1943)

"Silent Night, Holy Night" #363

Stand

Post Communion Canticle "Nunc Dimittis" page 211





Post-Communion Collect......page 212

- P Let us pray...
 - ... through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C Amen.

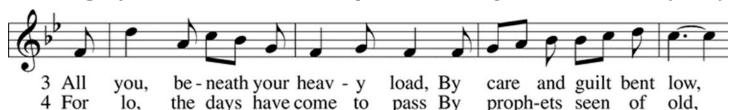
Benedicamus and Benediction......page 212

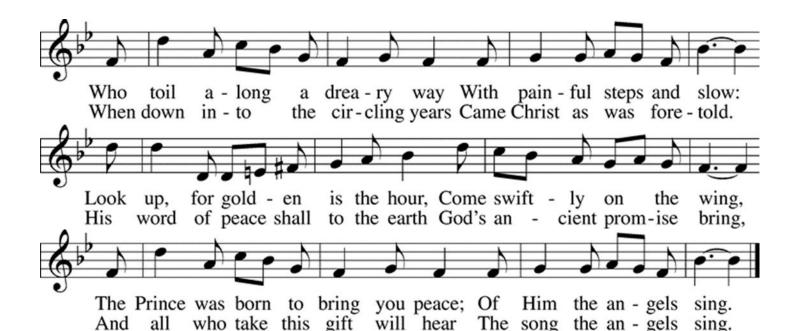
- **P** Let us bless the Lord.
- Thanks be to God.
- The Lord bless you and keep you.

 The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

 The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
- C Amen.

Sending Hymn....."It Came Upon the Midnight Clear" #366 (3&4)





Text and tune: Public domain

Dismissal (Bethlehem's Mission)

P Grow in Christ,

C Live in Love and Share the Faith!

Postlude Schmillerwoods

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Attendance Last Saturday: 7

Attendance Last Sunday: 31

Attendance Christmas Eve: Early 61; Late 64

Total Offering: \$7,980.86 Missions: \$0.00 Home Use: \$7,149.00 Benevolences: \$831.86

Serving us today:

This Week's Schedule

Today 11:30 a.m. Undecorating the Church

Monday 9:30 a.m. Exercise Class

10:00 a.m. Moms and Tots

Wednesday 9:30 a.m. Exercise Class

Thursday 9:30 a.m. Pastor at Warrensburg Christian School

| | 7:00 p.m. | Great Women of the Bible II |
|----------|------------|--|
| Friday | 9:30 a.m. | Exercise Class |
| Saturday | 8:00 a.m. | County 4-H Planning Meeting |
| | 5:30 p.m. | Worship |
| Sunday | 8:00 a.m. | The Lutheran Hour broadcast on 96.9 |
| | 9:00 a.m. | Radio Broadcast 98.5 (can also be heard at |
| | | www.blchurch.com, under the Sermons tab) |
| | 9:30 a.m. | Sunday School—Jr. and Sr. Youth |
| | 10:30 a.m. | Worship |

Prayers

For Sustenance, Healing, and Provision—We remember those who are dealing with illness, are homebound or in nursing homes, recovering from hospitalization, and going through rehabilitation: Leora Baack (Charlene McCarter's mother), Paula Brewer, Ray & Mary Carstensen, Mike Chasar, Denise (Penny Humphrey's sister), Marion & Leona Droege, David Gates, Wilma Gertz, Ralph Hein, Roy Hillmann (Bonnie Rich's father), Sharon Hochsprung, Heather Jackson (Kaye Fair's niece), Mary Johnson, Marty Lehn, Marvin Logan (Nicole Clemons' father), Kathy Marshall, Rick Mills, Johnny Nichol, Jim Rudy, Rose Ann Steitz, Lynn Trimble (Kaye Fair's sister), and Paula Willis (Bonnie Rich's friend), and Joe Zeman. We remember as well all who are dealing with COVID—19, especially the healthcare providers who are straining to prevent, stem the spread, and treat those who are ill!

For Pregnant Mothers, especially Brittany Brown as she and her husband Joe await childbirth next year. May the Lord grant good health and joyful expectation!

For Military Members—We remember all service and support personnel who are deployed and stationed away from us and their families: Andy Burden, Ty Carter, Ethan Hillsman, Chance Hillsman and Logan LeBaige.

Thank You

Shawn and Beryl would like to say "Thank You" very much to the "Elders" and "Congregation" for the kind gifts and cards that we received. We wish you all a happy and healthy New Year in 2021.

Maryanna Savery has been overjoyed and uplifted during this Advent and Christmas season. She is very thankful for all of the phone calls, letters, cards, visits, gifts and food that she has received from members and groups of the congregation.

Congregational Events & Opportunities

Prayer Requests & Spiritual Care—If you would like to make a prayer request, contact Pr. Joel or email the church office. Also, if you're feeling the strain and needing to talk and be encouraged in the living of life from day to day, don't hesitate to call or text Pr. Joel or contact your elder or the church office. We rely upon the Holy Spirit and his gifts in Christ during every time of uncertainty, and can never be thankful enough for the gift of each other!

Worship Services (Masks required at all services)

Sunday Services are at 10:30 a.m. You can also watch it live on Facebook or YouTube, or go to it directly from the webpage at blchurch.com.

Saturday Services are at 5:30 p.m. The order of worship is the shorter service of Early Evening Prayer. Holy Communion is observed on 1st, 3rd and 5th weekends of the month, as has been our regular practice.

Youth

Sunday School classes for the middle and high school grades are being held on **Sundays at 9:30 a.m.** in the youth room.

Faith Discussion and Bible Study

Portals of Prayer are now available at each entrance of the church.

The Lutheran Witness for January is available for pickup at each entrance of the church. This issue focuses on how we should fear and love God so that we lead a Chaste and Decent Life.

"Great Women of the Bible II" will begin on January 7 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom. We will begin discussing and learning about Jochebed and Miriam, Deborah, Ruth and Hannah. We will discuss their weaknesses, strengths, trials, and triumphs. This class will be held for four consecutive Thursdays. Please contact Cindy or Rebecca if you are interested in joining this class. You will receive materials and a link for the zoom class.

Fellowship

Mary Martha Guild. Happy New Year one and all! We hope this new year has started off on a good foot for you and your families! Just want to give a reminder of our first Mary Martha Guild meeting on the 11th of January, at 7:00 pm in the fellowship hall. Judy Schache has graciously agreed to give a presentation on Covid-19. The presentation should be interesting and also informative. We will be adhering

to appropriate safety guidelines and practicing social distancing. We hope to see everyone in the Congregation that is interested in the topic. God bless!

Merry Widows will have a monthly meeting at County Kitchen on Thursday, January 28 at 10:00 a.m. (weather permitting). This will be the new scheduled time.

Strength Training is being held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m. This low impact, exercise class is open to anyone, all ages and abilities. We exercise in the fellowship hall and have set up a safe and comfortable environment for everyone. Contact Judy Smith with any questions.

Mondays at 10:00 a.m. join our **Moms and Tots** who need some exercise outdoors. We go to the park during all seasons if it is not raining or bitter cold. Check out the Moms and Tots Facebook Page or get in touch with Rebecca Holland.

Offerings

You can mail your offerings to Bethlehem and have pastor put it in the offering plate on the altar with a prayer of trust for you, or you can give through the online offering called "Simply Giving".

2021 Envelopes—Envelopes are ready to be picked up at the front west entrance. If you did not get envelopes and would like them, please contact Teresa Hillsman.

Elders

Jeff Harris (last name begins A-E) 660-624-1571, elvis100669@yahoo.com
Willie Crespo (last name begins F-H) 660-679-8121, willie.crespo@fairwaymc.com
Jack Easterwood (last name begins I-Ma) 660-678-2045, easter.egg2380@gmail.com
Caleb Thomas (last name begins Mc-R), 660-441-2010, calebthomas50@gmail.com
Jeremy VanWey (last name begins S-Z) 606-909-4765, jeremy.vanwey@gmail.com

January 3rd Undecorating

The Mary-Martha Guild will be taking down the Christmas decorations following the service **TODAY**. The congregation is welcome to help. The more willing workers to do the job the faster it will be completed. Tall people are always very much appreciated.

2021 Council Members

President Alan Miller

Elders

Jeremy VanWey, Willie Crespo Jack Easterwood, Jeff Harris, Caleb Thomas

Stewardship Tim Schnell

EvangelismRebecca Holland

MissionsDarlene Laubenstein

EducationEllen Pederson

Fellowship Penny Humphrey

Treasurer Eunice Cobb

Recording Secretary
Sue Cottrill

Trustee's
Bryon Freeman, Mark Brown, Ron Rode, Ben Smith

Long Range PlanningRichard Vanderburgh, Bonnie Rich, Mark Schlueter

Contact Information

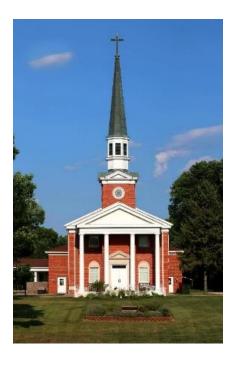
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 607 N. Maguire, Warrensburg, MO 64093

Our Mission

· Grow in Christ · Live in Love · Share the Faith

Our Vision

To be a community of believers, disciples, and servants while we deepen our personal faith and reach others for Christ.



Rev. Joel R. Kurz

Tuesday & Thursday: 8am–5pm, Wednesday & Friday: 10am-5pm

Otherwise by appointment Office: 660-747-6742

Cell Phone: 660-441-5710 Email: pastor@blchurch.com

Website: www.blchurch.com Facebook: blcwarrensburg

Office Manager:

Cindy Smith
Monday–Friday: 8am-5pm
660-747-6742
officemanager@blchurch.com

Congregational Life Facilitator:

Rebecca Stewart MTW: 8am-2pm Thursday by appointment clf@blchurch.com

Bookkeeper:

Teresa Hillsman
Tuesday: 3pm-6pm
Thursday by appointment
financial@blchurch.com

Please note that Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a closed-circuit video system. This allows for the viewing of the service on screens in the building and helps to enhance our security. Please see a trustee or an elder if you have any questions.