



The  
desert  
shall  
rejoice  
and blossom

ISAIAH 35:1





# Third Sunday in Advent December 11, 2022



## AS WE GATHER

Advent is a most joyful time and a time for great praise of our God. Today is the “joyful Sunday” in Advent. With Mary’s beautiful song, the Magnificat, we exult that God has “done great things” and that “His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation” (LSB, pp. 248–49). With Mary, we rejoice that God “has shown strength with His arm” especially to those who are lowly and humbled. In his paraphrase of the Magnificat, hymnwriter Stephen Starke invites us to “Sing the greatness of the Lord” and “With praise and blessing Join in confessing God, who is solely Mighty and holy” (LSB 933:1). There is so much joy in Advent—it simply must be shared!

**The pottery vessels on the altar remind us that although Holy Communion is not celebrated today, our Lord’s sacred gifts are still central to our life of faith. Holy Communion is celebrated every 1st, 3rd, and 5th weekend (and major festivals).**

### *Liturgical Color:*

*Blue is the color of water and sky, thus hope, for the baptized who know Christ came down from heaven to earth and is coming again.*

*Visitors: We are glad you have chosen to be with us today! We would especially like to follow-up with you beyond today, so please take a moment to leave your best contact information in the guest books at each entrance/exit or in the Record of Fellowship books found on each pew. **Do you have basic questions about Bethlehem? Refer to the information sheet inside the Record of Fellowship books or ask. A cry-room for parents and children is just off from the front entryway and there is a nursery downstairs as well.***

**Preservice** ..... Cody Clemons, Delaney Clemons

**Gathering Hymn** ..... “Come, We That Love the Lord”, #669



1	Come, we	that	love	the Lord,	And let	our joys	be
2	Let those	re -	fuse	to sing	Who nev -	er knew	our
3	The hill	of	Zi -	on yields	A thou -	sand sa -	cred
4	Then let	our	songs	a - bound,	And ev -	'ry tear	be



known; Join in a song with sweet ac - cord,  
 God; But chil - dren of the heav'n - ly King,  
 sweets Be - fore we reach the heav'n - ly fields,  
 dry; We're march - ing through Em - man - uel's ground,



Join in a song with sweet ac - cord And thus sur -  
 But chil - dren of the heav'n - ly King May speak their  
 Be - fore we reach the heav'n - ly fields, Or walk the  
 We're march - ing through Em - man - uel's ground To fair - er



round the throne, And thus sur - round the throne.  
 joys a - broad, May speak their joys a - broad.  
 gold - en streets, Or walk the gold - en streets.  
 worlds on high, To fair - er worlds on high.

*Refrain*



We're march - ing to Zi - on, Beau - ti - ful, beau - ti - ful Zi - on;



We're march - ing up - ward to Zi - on, The beau - ti - ful cit - y of God.

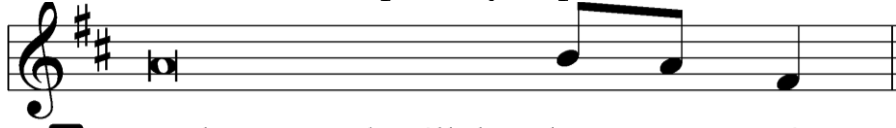
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## Matins

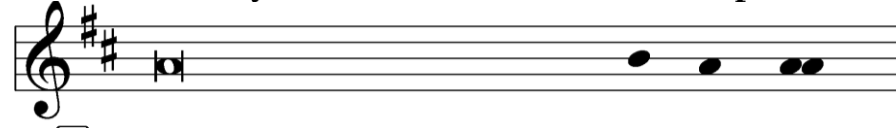
Opening Verses..... page 219



**L** O Lord, o - pen my lips,



**C** and my mouth will de - clare Your praise.



**L** Make haste, O God, to de - liv - er me;



**C** make haste to help me, O Lord.



**C** Glo-ry be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spir - it;



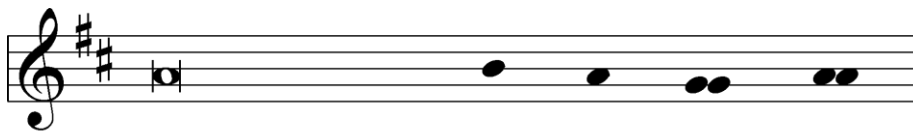
as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.



Praise to You, O Christ, King who comes to save us.

## Psalmody

### Antiphon (*Advent*)

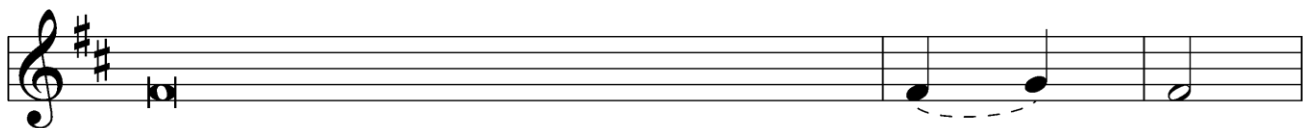


**L** Behold, the Lord comes to save us.



**C** O come, let us wor - ship Him.

### Venite.....pages 220-221

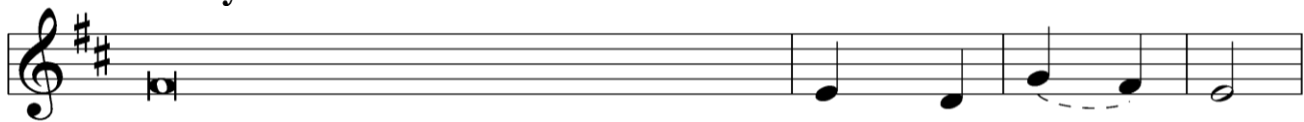


**C** 1 O come, let us sing . . . . . to the Lord,

2 For the Lord is a . . . . . great God

3 The sea is His, for He . . . . . made it,

5 Glory be to the Father and . . . . . to the Son

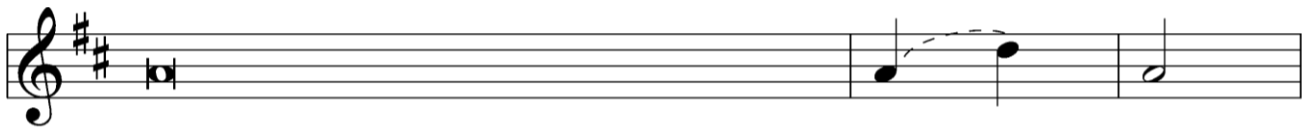


1 let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our sal - va - tion.

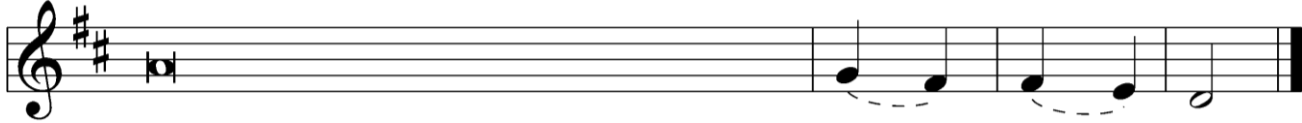
2 and a great . . . . . king a - bove all gods.

3 and His hand . . . . . formed the dry land.

5 and to the . . . . . Ho - ly Spir - it;

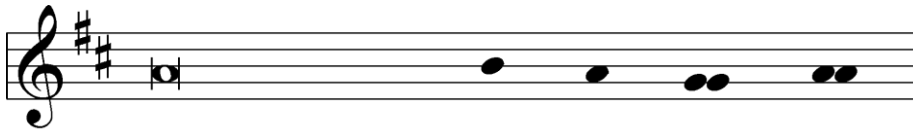


1 Let us come into His presence with thanks - giv - ing,  
 2 The deep places of the earth are . . . . . in His hand;  
 3 O come, let us worship and . . . . . bow — down,  
 4 For He . . . . . is our God,  
 5 as it was in the be - gin - ning,



1 let us make a joyful noise to . . . . . Him with songs of praise.  
 2 the strength of the hills is . . . . . His — al - so.  
 3 let us kneel before the . . . . . Lord, our mak - er.  
 4 and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep — of His hand.  
 5 is now, and will be for - ev - er. A - men.

**Antiphon** (*Advent*)



**L** Behold, the Lord comes to save us.



**C** O come, let us wor - ship Him.

**Office Hymn**.....“*Praise the Almighty*”, #797



1 Praise the Al - might - y, my soul, a - dore Him!  
 2 Trust not in rul - ers; they are but mor - tal;  
 3 Bless - ed, oh, bless - ed are they for - ev - er  
 4 Pen - i - tent sin - ners, for mer - cy cry - ing,  
 5 Praise, all you peo - ple, the name so ho - ly



Yes, I will laud Him un - til death; With songs and  
 Earth - born they are and soon de - cay. Vain are their  
 Whose help is from the Lord Most High, Whom from sal -  
 Par - don and peace from Him ob - tain; Ev - er the  
 Of Him who does such won - drous things! All that has



an - thems I come be - fore Him As long as  
 coun - sels at life's last por - tal, When the dark  
 va - tion can noth - ing sev - er, And who in  
 wants of the poor sup - ply - ing, Their faith - ful  
 be - ing, to praise Him sole - ly, With hap - py



He al - lows me breath. From Him my life and  
 grave en - gulfs its prey. Since mor - tals can no  
 hope to Christ draw nigh. To all who trust in  
 God He will re - main. He helps His chil - dren  
 heart its a - men sings. Chil - dren of God, with



all things came; Bless, O my soul, His ho - ly name.  
 help af - ford, Place all your trust in Christ, our Lord.  
 Him, our Lord Will aid and coun - sel now af - ford.  
 in dis - tress, The wid - ows and the fa - ther - less.  
 an - gel host Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost!



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!  
 Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

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*Please be seated*

## Readings

**Old Testament Reading..... Isaiah 35:1-10**

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
 the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus;  
 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.

Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.

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.”

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
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;

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.

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, they shall not go astray.

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.

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..

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## **Epistle Reading ..... James 5:7-11**

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. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 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.

**P** O Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**

*Please rise.*

## **Holy Gospel ..... Matthew 11:2-15**

When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 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. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

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? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

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. From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

**P** Oh Lord, have mercy on us.

**C** **Thanks be to God.**



Verse To Refrain

- 1 Forever, O Lord, Your Word is firmly set in the heavens.
- 2 Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.
- 3 Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Refrain

Lord, I love the habitation of Your house and the place where Your glory dwells.

*Please be seated.*

**Jesse Tree Symbol with the Children**

**Sermon**.....“Wilderness & Wonderlands”

*Please rise.*

**Canticle**

**Hymn of Praise**.....“My Soul Rejoices” #933

1 My soul re - joic - es, My spir - it voic - es— Sing the  
 2 His arm now bar - ing, His strength de - clar - ing— Sing the

great - ness of the Lord! For God my Sav - ior Has shown me  
 great - ness of the Lord! The proud He scat - ters, Their rule He

fa - vor— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! With praise and  
 shat - ters— Sing the great - ness of the Lord! Op - pres - sion

bles - sing, Join in con - fess - ing God, who is sole - ly Might - y and  
 halt - ed; The meek ex - alt - ed. Full are the hun - gry; Emp - ty, the

ho - ly— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! His mer - cy  
wealth - y— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord! Here is the  
sure - ly Shall rest se - cure - ly On all who fear Him,  
to - ken All that was spo - ken To A - br'ham's off - spring  
Love and re - vere Him— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!  
God is ful - fill - ing— O sing the great - ness of God the Lord!

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## Offering

*Offering plates are not being passed during the service; worshipers may place their offerings into the plate located at the west entrance.*

*“Through him (Jesus) then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.” (Hebrews 13:15-16)*

## Prayer

**Kyrie**.....page 227

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

## Lord's Prayer

**Collects**.....page 227-228

**L** O Lord, hear my prayer.

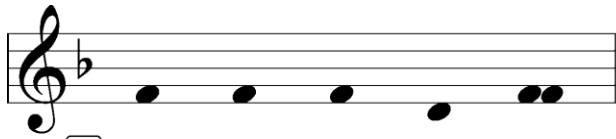
**C** And let my cry come to You.

**Collect of the Day** ..... *(in unison)*

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. Amen.

**Additional Collects** ..... *(ending Amen.)*

**Benedicamus** ..... *page 228*



**L** Let us bless the Lord.



**C** Thanks be to God.

**Benediction** ..... *page 228*



**P** The grace of our Lord ✠ Je - sus Christ and the love of God



and the communion of the Holy Spir - it be with you all.



**C** A - men.

**Sending Hymn** ..... *"Hark the Glad Sound", #349*



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior  
2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, In Sa - tan's  
3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, The bleed - ing  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Thy wel - come



prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a  
bond - age held. The gates of brass be - fore Him  
soul to cure, And with the trea - sures of His  
shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es



throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.  
 burst, The i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 grace To en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
 ring With Thy be - lov - ed name.

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**Dismissal** ..... (Bethlehem's Mission)

- P** Grow in Christ,
- C** Live in Love and Share the Faith!

**Postlude** ..... Cody Clemons

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**Next week's readings:**

**OT: Isaiah 7:10-17; Epistle: Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25**

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<b>Attendance Last Saturday: 37</b>	<b>Attendance Last Sunday: 75</b>
<b>Attendance Advent Midweek: 37</b>	
<b>Total Offering: \$6,386.00</b>	<b>Missions: \$250.00</b>
<b>Home Use: \$4,972.00</b>	<b>Benevolences: \$1,164.00</b>

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**Serving us today:**

- Elders..... Alan Miller
- Musician..... Cody Clemons, Delaney Clemons
- Altar Committee..... Teresa Hillsman (Chair), Mary Creswell, Lisa Gulick  
 Beryl Lindley, Susie Mills
- Flower Committee ..... Eunice Cobb (Chair), Penny Humphrey

**This Week's Schedule**

- Today
  - 12:00 p.m. Thrivent Preparing Christmas Bags
  - 2:30 p.m. Country Club Care Center Service
  - 3:15 p.m. Youth Catechesis
  - 5:00 p.m. Crazy Christmas Dinner
- Monday
  - 9:30 a.m. Exercise
  - 2:00 p.m. Moms and Tots
- Tuesday
  - Circuit Pastoral Conference in Concordia
  - 9:30 a.m. Quilting
  - 7:00 p.m. Church Council Meeting



Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise
	10:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	7:00 p.m.	Advent Service
Thursday		Pastor at Warrensburg Christian School
	1:00 p.m.	Games and Card Group
Friday		<i>Cindy's Vacation Day</i> <i>No Exercise Today</i>
Saturday	11:00 a.m.	Trustees' Meeting
	5:30 p.m.	Holy Communion
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 <a href="http://www.blchurch.com">www.blchurch.com</a> , under the Sermons tab)
	9:15 a.m.	Sunday School, Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Children's Christmas Service/Holy Communion
	12:00 p.m.	Children's Christmas Party

### Office Hours

**The Church Office will be closed on December 23 and December 26 for Christmas Holidays.**

**Pastor Joel will be on vacation on December 20. Cindy Smith will be on vacation December 16, 19, 27 and 30.**

### Prayers

**For Pregnant Mothers (& Waiting Fathers),** especially Paige & Colin Hart as their December due date gets closer! The Lord's good provision to all who await the birth of a child (as we remember pregnant Mary this Advent).

**For Sustenance, Healing, and Provision**—We remember those who are dealing with illness, are homebound or in nursing homes, are undergoing and recovering from surgery, as well as going through hospitalization and rehabilitation: Holli Burge, Mel Bockelman, Paula Brewer, Ray & Mary Carstensen, Bob & Barbara Compton, Marion Droege, Wilma Gertz, Karen Haase, Mary Johnson, Wanda Kreisel, Johnny Nichol, Judy Pierce, Maryanna Savery, Denny Spanton, Rose Steitz, & Joe Zeman.

**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 and Chance Hillsman.

**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, feel free

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

**Saturday Services start at 5:30 p.m. Sunday Services are at 10:30 a.m.** Sunday's Services are live on Facebook and YouTube and the webpage at [blchurch.com](http://blchurch.com).

**Midweek Advent Services** are being held for the remaining Advent Wednesdays—**December 14 and 21—at 7:00 p.m.** in our sanctuary. As in past years, we're using the beautiful and renewing Holden Evening Prayer. Our theme this year is **Keeping Time**. Plan on setting aside this time for a quiet and contemplative keeping of the short and often crowded-out season of Advent! This week's theme is "Keeping the Time."

**Advent Midweek Offerings**—By using the seasonal envelopes (and those not designated elsewhere), the special offerings will go to the Food Banks at our two denominational seminaries: Concordia—St. Louis and Concordia—Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Thanks for supporting our church-workers-in-training this way!

**The Children's Christmas Service** (*We Celebrate a Tree*) will be held during the regular Communion service at **10:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 18**. Invite others and plan to attend this celebration of Christ—the Tree of Life—born in Bethlehem!

**Children's Christmas Party** will be held after the Children's Service on **Sunday, December 18**. **All children are invited**. There will be food, crafts and Christmas activities for kids 0-18.

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Services** will be held on **December 24 at 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.** Let others know, invite, and attend as you can! We gather around the very reason this holy day is called Christmas—Jesus, the Word made flesh, coming into our midst!

**Christmas Day Service** will be held on the regular Sunday time at **10:30 a.m.** Invite others and join us for a traditional Lessons and Carols!

### Sunday School and Christian Education

**Sunday School is at 9:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings downstairs for ages Preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.** The children are regularly working on songs with the goal of singing in the Sunday service once per month. We invite all children of the congregation (and outside too!) to come and be a part of this time growing together in Christ. **There will not be Sunday School on December 25-Christmas Day or January 1-New Year's Day.**

**Sunday Bible Study (9:15-10:10 a.m. in the conference room)**—From Advent through Epiphany, we're working through some of Trevor Sutton's 2018 book *Clearly Christian: Following Jesus in This Age of Confusion*). Join us for this discussion and exploration of who Christ is and what believing and living in Him really means. **There will not be Bible Study on December 25-Christmas Day or January 1-New Year's Day.**

**Wednesday Bible Study**—We are just starting to read and discuss our way through the writings of the prophet Zechariah. **Join us in the conference room from 10:30 a.m. to noon** for this biblical journey together!

### Opportunities to Help & Serve

**Coat Need**—With the cold weather onset and your response, our supply of winter coats has been bolstered; thank you! If you still have any gently-used or new adult coats for our Kindness Closet (the wooden cabinet in the north entryway), simply give them to Pr. Joel or leave them there. Much gratitude!

**Poinsettias** are still available to purchase. If you would like to purchase a plant, please fill out the form at either entrance of the church building with a "donation" for the cost of a plant. **Please make checks to Mary Martha Guild.**

**2022 Christmas Store**—The Christmas Store is in the 49th year of helping those who struggle with food insecurity a meal for the Christmas season. They rely on financial contributions rather than food donations. Vouchers will be distributed for families to purchase food for a Christmas meal. **Donations can be made by the following:** (1) Make a check out to Bethlehem Lutheran Church and in the memo section write "Christmas Store" or (2) donate online at: [foodcenterjoco.com](http://foodcenterjoco.com) and click Donate then Christmas Store.

### Fellowship

**Exercise Class** happens at **9:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** in the Fellowship Hall. This class is low impact exercise open to anyone, men or women. For more information, contact Judy Smith. **Fellowship will not meet on Friday, December 16 and will take a break until January 4.**

**The Games and Card Group** meets on **Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.** in the Youth Room downstairs. Anyone, men and women, are welcome to come. If you have any questions, please contact Melvin Theroff.

**The Quilting Group** meets on the **second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.** (September through May). Anyone is welcome to help with this project. No special sewing skills are needed. Bring your own lunch. If you have any questions, please contact Georgia Luker. **Quilting will only meet on December**

**13 this month due to the holidays.**

### **This & That**

**The Warrensburg Community Chorus** presents “A Holiday Concert” on **Sunday, December 11 at 3:00 p.m.** The concert will be at the Community of Christ Church, 700 S. Mitchell Street here in Warrensburg.

**National Children’s Memorial Day**—You are invited to attend Johnson County’s annual celebration in remembrance of those children and adults who have died before their time. It will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 7:00 p.m. at Nancy Anderson Park/Children’s Memorial Gardens (Colbern and N. Main Streets). The ceremony is open to all families and friend of families who have lost a child at any age from any cause.

**Offering Envelopes**—New offering envelopes for 2023 will be distributed before Christmas. If you currently have offering envelopes and don’t want them, please let Teresa Hillsman know by December 13<sup>th</sup>. If you don’t have offering envelopes and want some, please let Teresa Hillsman know by December 13<sup>th</sup>. Please do not use 2022 envelopes after December 31, 2022. You may not have the same envelope number next year. Thank you.

**Country Kitchen Cards**—We have Country Kitchen Cards. Stop by the office if you would like to purchase one. They are \$10 and you get 10 buy-one- get-one free meal deals. All proceeds go to the youth group. Thanks for your support!

**Ongoing thanks** to those who generously give to the Bethlehem Emergency Fund, which enables Pr. Joel to assist members and certain people in the community who are in crisis situations. Much appreciation for your good support!

### **2022 Elders**

**Willie Crespo** (last name begins A-D) 660-679-8121, [crespo6fam@gmail.com](mailto:crespo6fam@gmail.com)

**Ricky Bertels** (last name begins E-H), 660-262-8080, [rick1janice2@gmail.com](mailto:rick1janice2@gmail.com)

**Jack Easterwood** (last name begins I-Ma) 660-678-2045, [easter.egg2380@gmail.com](mailto:easter.egg2380@gmail.com)

**Alan Miller** (last name begins Mc-R) 660-909-1764, [alormiller@aol.com](mailto:alormiller@aol.com)

**Caleb Thomas** (last name begins S-Z) 660-441-2010, [calebthomas50@gmail.com](mailto:calebthomas50@gmail.com)



## 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](mailto:pastor@blchurch.com)

Website: [www.blchurch.com](http://www.blchurch.com)      Facebook: [blcwarrensburg](https://www.facebook.com/blcwarrensburg)

#### **Office Manager:**

Cindy Smith

Monday–Friday: 8am-5pm

660-747-6742

[officemanager@blchurch.com](mailto:officemanager@blchurch.com)

#### **Bookkeeper:**

Teresa Hillsman

Tuesday: 9am-11am

Thursday: 9am-11am

[financial@blchurch.com](mailto:financial@blchurch.com)

Please note that Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a closed-circuit video system. This allows for live streaming on the web, 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.