

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**  
**Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod**  
14531 Old Olga Road  
Fort Myers, FL

# *Bethlehem Lutheran Church*

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

14531 Old Olga Road S.E.

Ft Myers, FL 33905

Sunday Worship: 10:30 AM

Sunday School & Bible Class: 11:30 AM

Church Office: **(239) 694-3878**

[bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org](http://bethlehemlutheranfortmyers.org)

E-Mail: [bethlehemlc@gmail.com](mailto:bethlehemlc@gmail.com)

**Rev. Karl P. Glander, Pastor**

Pastor's Cell Phone: **(239) 293-1489**

Pastor's E-Mail Address:

[pastorkarlglander@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkarlglander@gmail.com)

Linda Kirsch, Church Secretary

**Pursuing a life of mercy in the new year.**

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love.

Based on the New Year's Bible Readings and theme for this day, how can you show compassion and mercy to someone in need?

Gather on New Year's Eve or Day to give thanks for the past year and to ask for God's blessing

on the year to come. Provide glasses for all gathered to share in a toast. Light a candle to represent the presence of Christ.

**Pray: God of yesterday, today, and tomorrow, thank you for a new year of blessings, opportunities, and challenges. Help us to live this year with faith in our hearts and praises on our lips. Amen.**



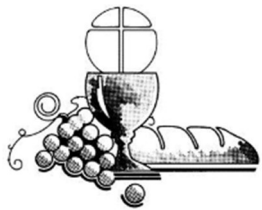
**IT IS GREAT TO HAVE YOU IN WORSHIP WITH US THIS EVENING!**

Here at Bethlehem Lutheran, we believe in the teachings of the Bible as taught by Jesus and the apostles and strive to live our lives in accord with the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are all fellow sinners who live together in the mercy and grace of Jesus. Jesus is the heart and center of all that we say and do as we serve Him and live in Christian love with one another.

If you would like to learn more about this church, or are looking for a church family, please talk to our pastor or one of the ushers or elders. They would be happy to talk with you! Regardless of whether you join or not, we welcome you and your family to worship with us any time!

Should you have something we could privately pray about for you this week, we invite you to let our pastor or one of our members know so we can seek the Lord's face together.

Come visit us again sometime soon and may the Lord richly bless you!



## **ATTENDING COMMUNION AT BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN**

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

LCMS and yet desire to receive the sacrament,  
are invited to speak with Pastor Karl Glander.

## **NEW YEAR'S EVE**

*December 31, 2023*

### **PRELUDE**

✠ **ORDER OF WORSHIP** ✠

### **HYMN OF INVOCATION**

#### **917 SAVIOR, AGAIN TO THY DEAR NAME WE RAISE**

- 1 Savior, again to Thy dear name we raise  
With one accord our parting hymn of praise;  
Once more we bless Thee ere our worship  
cease,  
Then, lowly bending, wait Thy word of peace.
- 2 Grant us Thy peace upon our homeward way;  
With Thee began, with Thee shall end, the day.  
Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from  
shame,  
That in this house have called upon Thy name.

- 3 Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the coming night;  
Turn Thou for us its darkness into light.  
From harm and danger keep Thy children free;  
For dark and light are both alike to Thee.
- 4 Grant us Thy peace throughout our earthly life,  
Our balm in sorrow and our stay in strife;  
Then, when Thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,  
Call us, O Lord, to Thine eternal peace.

**+ CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION +**

*(Please rise)*

**P**In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C**Amen.

**P**If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**C**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

*(Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.)*

**P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

**P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

*(Please be seated)*

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**INTROIT**

*Psalm 90:1–12*

**Book Four**

**From Everlasting to Everlasting**

**P** Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
in all generations.

**C** Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the  
world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

**P** You return man to dust  
and say, “Return, O children of man!”

**C** For a thousand years in your sight  
are but as yesterday when it is past,  
or as a watch in the night.

**P** You sweep them away as with a flood;  
they are like a dream,  
like grass that is renewed in the morning:

**C** in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;  
in the evening it fades and withers.

**P** For we are brought to an end by your anger;  
by your wrath we are dismayed.

**C** You have set our iniquities before you,  
our secret sins in the light of your presence.

**P** For all our days pass away under your wrath;  
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.

**C** The years of our life are seventy,  
or even by reason of strength eighty;  
yet their span is but toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and we fly away.

**P** Who considers the power of your anger,  
and your wrath according to the fear of you?

**C** So teach us to number our days  
that we may get a heart of wisdom.

*(Please rise)*

**♪ GLORIA IN EXCELSIS ♪**

**C** 1 To God on high be glory  
And peace to all the earth;  
Goodwill from God in heaven  
Proclaimed at Jesus' birth!  
We praise and bless You, Father;  
Your holy name, we sing—  
Our thanks for Your great glory,  
Lord God, our heav'nly King.

2 To You, O sole-begotten,  
The Father's Son, we pray;  
O Lamb of God, our Savior,  
You take our sins away.  
Have mercy on us, Jesus;  
Receive our heartfelt cry,  
Where You in pow'r are seated  
At God's right hand on high—

3 For You alone are holy;  
You only are the Lord.

**Forever and forever,  
Be worshiped and adored;  
You with the Holy Spirit  
Alone are Lord Most High,  
In God the Father's glory.  
"Amen!" our glad reply.**

## **SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Let us pray.

Eternal God, we commit to Your mercy and forgiveness the year now ending and commend to Your blessing and love the times yet to come. In the new year, abide among us with Your Holy Spirit that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*(Please be seated)*

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

*Isaiah 30:15–17*

<sup>15</sup>For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel,

“In returning and rest you shall be saved;  
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.”

But you were unwilling, <sup>16</sup>and you said,

“No! We will flee upon horses”;

therefore you shall flee away;

and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”;

therefore your pursuers shall be swift.

<sup>17</sup>A thousand shall flee at the threat of one;

at the threat of five you shall flee,

till you are left

like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain,

like a signal on a hill.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## EPISTLE

*Romans 8:31b–39*

If God is for us, who can be against us? <sup>32</sup>He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us

all things? <sup>33</sup>Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup>Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. <sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;

we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

<sup>37</sup>No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup>For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup>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.

**L** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

*(Please rise)*

## **♪ALLELUIA AND VERSE♪**

### **☪ Alleluia.**

**Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia, alleluia.**

## **HOLY GOSPEL**

*Luke 12:35–40*

**☪** The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the twelfth chapter.

### **☪ Glory to You, O Lord.**

## **You Must Be Ready**

<sup>35</sup>[Jesus said:] “Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, <sup>36</sup>and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.

<sup>37</sup>Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.

<sup>38</sup>If he comes in the second watch, or in the third, and finds them awake, blessed are those servants! <sup>39</sup>But know this, that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was

coming, he would not have left his house to be broken into. <sup>40</sup>You also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.”

**P**This is the Gospel of the Lord.

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

*(Please be seated)*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

### **370 WHAT CHILD IS THIS**

- 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
On Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet  
While shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the king,  
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,  
The babe, the son of Mary!
- 2 Why lies He in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here

The silent Word is pleading.  
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,  
The cross be borne for me, for you;  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,  
The babe, the son of Mary!

3 So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;  
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.  
The King of kings salvation brings;  
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.  
Raise, raise the song on high,  
The virgin sings her lullaby;  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,  
The babe, the son of Mary!

## **SERMON**

### **"Marked with Signs and Scars"**

*. . . Pastor Karl*

*(Please rise)*

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**☐ I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried.  
He descended into hell.**

**The third day He rose again from the  
dead.**

**He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the  
Father Almighty.**

**From thence He will come to judge the  
living and the dead.**

**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.**

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

**P** Lord, in Your mercy

**C** Hear our prayer.

*(Please be seated)*

**OFFERING**

**♪OFFERTORY RESPONSE♪**

**805 PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL  
BLESSINGS FLOW**

*(Please rise)*

- △ **1 Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.**

*(Please rise)*

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** And also with you.

**P** Lift up your hearts.

**C** We lift them to the Lord.

**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

**P** It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God. In the communion of all Your saints gathered into the one body of Your Son, You have surrounded us with so great a cloud of witnesses that we, encouraged by their faith and strengthened by their fellowship, may run with perseverance the race that is set before us and, together with them, receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

**♪SANCTUS♪**

**C** Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:

**Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

**Hosanna. Hosanna.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**P** Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## THE WORDS OF OUR LORD

**P** 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** As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

**C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

**P** O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and

Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

## **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  
and the power and the glory  
forever and ever. Amen.

## **PAX DOMINI**

**☐** The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**☐** Amen.

## **♪ AGNUS DEI ♪**

**☐ Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

*(Please be seated)*

## **DISTRIBUTION**

## **DISTRIBUTION HYMNS**

### **617 O LORD, WE PRAISE THEE**

**1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and adore  
Thee,  
In thanksgiving bow before Thee.  
Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish  
Our weak souls that they may flourish:  
O Lord, have mercy!  
May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary,  
That our sins and sorrows did carry,  
And Thy blood for us plead**

In all trial, fear, and need:  
O Lord, have mercy!

**2** Thy holy body into death was given,  
Life to win for us in heaven.  
No greater love than this to Thee could bind us;  
May this feast thereof remind us!

O Lord, have mercy!  
Lord, Thy kindness did so constrain Thee  
That Thy blood should bless and sustain me.  
All our debt Thou hast paid;  
Peace with God once more is made:  
O Lord, have mercy!

**3** May God bestow on us His grace and favor  
That we follow Christ our Savior  
And live together here in love and union  
Nor despise this blest Communion!

O Lord, have mercy!  
Let not Thy good Spirit forsake us;  
Grant that heav'nly-minded He make us;  
Give Thy Church, Lord, to see  
Days of peace and unity:  
O Lord, have mercy!

## **619 THY BODY, GIVEN FOR ME, O SAVIOR**

**1** Thy body, giv'n for me, O Savior,  
Thy blood which Thou for me didst shed,  
These are my life and strength forever,  
By them my hungry soul is fed. **Refrain**

**ref Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood  
Be for my soul the highest good!**

**2** With Thee, Lord, I am now united;  
I live in Thee and Thou in me.  
No sorrow fills my soul, delighted  
It finds its only joy in Thee. **Refrain**

**3** Who can condemn me now? For surely  
The Lord is nigh, who justifies.  
No hell I fear, and thus securely  
With Jesus I to heaven rise. **Refrain**

**4** Though death may threaten with disaster,  
It cannot rob me of my cheer;  
For He who is of death the master  
With aid and comfort e'er is near. **Refrain**

**5** My heart has now become Thy dwelling,  
O blessèd, holy Trinity.  
With angels I, Thy praises telling,  
Shall live in joy eternally. **Refrain**

**ref Lord, may Thy body and Thy blood  
Be for my soul the highest good!**

*(Please Rise)*

**♪THANK THE LORD♪**

**☪ Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell  
ev'ryone what He has done.  
Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly  
bear His name.  
He recalls His promises and leads His  
people forth in joy  
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia,  
alleluia.**

**☪** Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You  
have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and  
we implore You that of Your mercy You would  
strengthen us through the same in faith toward

You and in 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.**

*(Please be seated)*

## **CLOSING HYMN**

### **361 O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM**

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.
  
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary,  
And, gathered all above  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wond'ring love.  
O morning stars, together

Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the king  
And peace to all the earth!

3 How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heav'n.  
No ear may hear His coming;  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still  
The dear Christ enters in.

4 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 Immanuel!

## **BENEDICTION**

**P** 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.

**☩ Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **POSTLUDE**

*Go in peace.*

*Share the joy of Christ.*



Rev. Karl P. Glander  
Organist: Holly Bell  
Pianist: Cheryl Nelson  
Elder: Paul Rugenstein  
Altar Guild: Emmy Larson, Betty Willis  
Ushers: Doug Grage  
Reader: Pam Rugenstein  
Acolyte: Nala Hidalgo



**New Year's Eve** celebration following the service tonight. D'oeuvres and goodies in the fellowship hall. Bring a friend or neighbors who will be alone along.