

BETHEL UMC MORNING WORSHIP SERVICE

1st Sunday of Advent/Hanging Of The Greens

December 3, 2023

We Gather Together In The Lord's Name

Tolling of the Bell and Prelude
Coming of the Light
Welcome and Announcements

Let Us Prepare Our Hearts and Minds for Worship

Morning Call to Worship:
In this season of anticipation, our hearts are filled with hope.
We await God's Promised One, who will make all things new.

We await the One who was, who is, and who shall come again.
The babe in Bethlehem's manger is the One with us now.

Jesus Christ: the Word made flesh, the Word that abides in Spirit.
Our hope is built on nothing less than God's only Son.

Come, let us welcome the Living Christ into our midst
Come, O long expected Jesus!

Blessing of the Advent Wreath

Loving God, your Church joyfully awaits the coming of its Savior, who
enlightens our hearts and dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin.
Pour forth your blessings upon us as we light the candles of this wreath.
May their light reflect the splendor of Christ, who is Lord, for ever and
ever. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Candle of Hope
Hugh & Doris Leitner

*Hymn of Preparation & Decoration of the Chrismon Tree.....
..“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”.....#211

*Blessing of the Chrismon Tree

Holy Lord, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of your Son, who
rescued us from the darkness of sin by making the cross a tree of life
and light. May this tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-
giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that
shines in our hearts. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Canticle of Hope.....#734
“God's glory will be our light, and night shall be no more.”

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord's Prayer

Children's Moments..... “Jesus Loves Me”..... #191

The Promises of God Comes to Us Through The Word

Old Testament Lesson.....Isaiah 64:1-9
The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**
*Gospel Lesson.....Mark 13:24-37
The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**
Sermon.....“Hopeful Preparation”..... Rev. Ben Rogers

Advent Prayer of Hope (*please join in unison*)

**Even though this is a season of hope, O God, we enter it clutching tight to the
ways of yesterday and the moments of despair that we allow to hold us in
bondage.**

**Free us from such unhappiness, Holy One, and forgive us for the times when
we have chosen to live lives mired in anguish rather than the optimistic
expectation that the coming of Christ instills.**

**May we find ways to embody the elation of this season and may you empower
us to share it with all people. We offer this prayer, and we seek your pardon,
in the name of the One who was, who is, and whose return we await: Christ
Jesus. Amen.**

*Hymn of Hope“Have Thine Own Way, Lord”.....#382

The Word of God Comes to Us Through the Holy Spirit

Affirmation of Faith.....“The Apostles' Creed”.....#881

Worship with Tithes and Offerings

Offertory
*Doxology.....#95
*Offertory Prayer

Go and Share the Love of God

*Hymn of Commitment.....“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”.....#140

*Benediction:

Beloved of God, keep awake! Stay alert! Pay attention to God at work all around
you. And now, go from this place with hope and shocked out of our complacency to
watch and wait and join in the work of bringing God's dream for all creation to life.
Amen.

*Postlude

**Please Stand If Able*

Announcements & Upcoming Events:

- ❖ Thank you to everyone who donated items to Fairfield Council on Aging. The referees went to the instant replay and determined that South Carolina is the winners of Gridiron Gratitude. Thanks again for your generosity!
- ❖ Gifts for Christmas with Epworth Children's Home are due today. If you have any monetary gifts, please make sure checks are made payable to Epworth Children's Home. The Reindeer Mobile will be taking the gifts on December 4th.
- ❖ **This Afternoon-** Bethel Trustees Meeting (4pm at Bethel)
- ❖ **Monday, December 4-** Christmas Supper (7pm at Bethel) (There will be a catered meal from Scottie's Café & Grill; \$13 per plate; Please see sign-up sheet to add your name! Our Women's Group has been asked to please bring desserts!)
- ❖ Fairfield Christian Men is helping Boys Farm in Newberry this Christmas. If you would like to help with our project, please see Mr. Lewis Hobgood or Pastor Ben. The Men's Group is taking up a cash love offering by December 4th.
- ❖ **Wednesday, December 6-** Fairfield Circuit Charge PPRC Meeting (6pm at Bethel)
- ❖ **Thursday, December 7-** Thursday Night Worship Service (6:30pm at Bethel)
- ❖ **Sunday, December 10-** Bethel Administrative Council Meeting (5pm at Bethel)
- ❖ **Monday, December 11-** Covenant Prayer Group (10am at Bethel)
- ❖ **Sunday, December 24-**
 - *Monticello-9am Worship Service
 - *Bethel-11:15am Worship Service
 - *Bethel Christmas Eve Candlelight & Holy Communion Worship Service-5pm

Prayer Thought of the Day

May today be a canvas of gratitude, kindness, and resilience, as we navigate life's journey with grace and embrace the beauty in each moment.

The Churches Are in Prayer For:

Bethel UMC- Bob Bazinet, William Bundrick, Sherry Crosby, Billy and Diane Dove, Epworth Children's Home, Jackie McDaniel, Greg Robertson, Sheryl Ashford, Jerry Arnold, Mary Cathryn Wilson, Marian Faile, Joseph Schachner, Mary Ella Ruff, Christian Moore, Teresa Taaffe, Lindsey Gunter, Frankie Lewis, Mary Isbell, Willie Long, Rev. Kathy Griffin, Jed Withers, Family of Buddy Beckham, Randy Davis, The unity in our county, state, nation, and world

CONTACT INFORMATION: (Office Hours: TUES/TH 9am-1pm)

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