



WEEKLY CONNECTION

DECEMBER 8, 2024

SUNDAY'S WORSHIP: SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT – ZECHARIAH'S SONG

Malachi 3:1-7, Psalm 24, Luke 1:67-80

The Songs of Advent

One of the things we're doing this month in our Advent and Christmas services is looking at a number of texts from Luke's "**Infancy Narrative**," that is, the first two chapters of Luke's gospel, which concern events related to the birth of Jesus Christ. And one of the distinctive features of Luke chapters 1 and 2 is the inclusion of four poetic, song-like pieces—in other words, the four canticles of Luke. And those four canticles are as follows: Mary's Song, the **Magnificat**; Zechariah's Song, the **Benedictus**; the Angels' Song, the **Gloria in Excelsis**; and Simeon's Song, the **Nunc Dimittis**. This week we consider the **Benedictus** found in Luke 1:67-80.

SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK:

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.

Luke 1:67

SERVING THIS SUNDAY – December 8

Preacher –	Pastor Korte
Officiant –	Deacon Ken Kerouac
Lay Reader -	10:30 am William Wittig
Acolytes-	9 am Coulton & Wil Duclos 10:30 am Micah Crumbley & Caleb Demers
Elder in Charge –	9 am Gary Grauf 10:30 am Steve Harvey
Greeters –	9 am Andrea & Paul Wagner 10:30 am Ruth & Mike Hargash
Tech Team –	9 am Val Engelhardt, Mark Stabek 10:30 am Jackson, Owen & Christian White
Music Team	9 am Jenna & Kiel Fauske, Audrey Engelhardt
Special Music	10:30 am Senior Choir
Music Leaders –	9 am Alex Holcomb 10:30 George Frank

SERVING THIS WEDNESDAY – December 11

Preacher & Officiant –	Pastor Korte
Lay Reader -	6:30 pm Michael Weiss
Greeter -	6:30 pm Amanda Lutz

Acolytes- 1 pm Luis Black & Landen Brown
Tech Booth 6:30 pm Wil Conrad, Steve Martin
Music Leaders – 1 pm Annelise Holcomb
6:30 pm George Frank

THIS WEEK AT A GLANCE (For more Information see blurbs below.)

December 7 – Funeral Jim Gould 10 – 12 Visitation, 12 noon Funeral
December 8 - Worship @ 9:00 am & 10:30 am
December 8 – Sunday School Preschool – 4th 9:15 am
December 8 – Bible Study Lower Level 9:15 am
December 9 – Braille Workers 5:45 pm
December 10 – Braille Workers 8:30 am
December 10 – Bible Study David Room 9:30 am
December 10– Bethlehem Knitters 11 am David Room
December 10 – Parish Leadership Council 6:30 pm
December 11 – Preschool/Kindergarten Chapel 8:15 am
December 11 – Advent Service with School 1 pm
December 11 – Advent Service 6:30 pm
December 11 - Worship Arts Team Rehearsal 7:30 pm
December 12 – Braille Workers 8:30 am
December 12 – Senior Choir Rehearsal 7 pm
December 13 - Men’s Bible Study via Zoom @ 6:15 am
December 15 - Worship @ 9:00 am with Lord’s Supper
December 15 – Sunday School Preschool – 4th 9:15 am
December 15 - Bible Study Lower Level 9:15 am
December 15 – Preschool & Kindergarten Program 10:30 am with Lord’s Supper

MIDWEEK WEDNESDAY ADVENT SERVICES

December 11 – 1 pm & 6:30 pm
December 18 – 6:00 pm Grade 1-8 Christmas Program

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

December 24 – 4:30 Family Service
December 24 – 7:00 pm Lessons & Carols
December 25 – 10:00 am Holy Communion

ONE CHURCH SUNDAY – December 29th @ 10:00 am

NEW YEAR’S EVE SERVICE – December 31 @ 4:30 pm

DIVINE CALL ISSUED: With great joy and excitement, a Divine Call was unanimously issued for Rev. Jacob Heine to be the next Pastor at Bethlehem. Please keep Pastor Heine, his wife Theresa, and their daughters in your prayers. We ask the that Holy Spirit be with them in their decision and with the congregation he currently serves, Faith Topeka, KS.

DECEMBER NOISY OFFERING FUNDS: “It’s All about the Cross Ministry” shares the hope found in Jesus with those in the Saginaw County Jail. Bethlehem member Andy Cox leads this effort to reach those with a great need for hope and peace.

PRAYER FOCUS:

SPECIAL PRAYERS: Paul Tomaszewski, Gordon Henry, Milda Persons, Yvonne Dennison, Barbara Ruhlig, Bob Egerer, Dave Vanderlip, Zachery, Quincy, Sally Efu

HOSPITALIZED: Sally Efu, James Lutz

PRAYER FOR PASTOR CALL: Lord God, heavenly Father, you have given us pastors to proclaim Your word. We pray for Bethlehem’s Pastoral search committee and **Pastor Jacob Heine** as he considers Your calling on his ministry. Grant wisdom and guidance to all and if it be Your will reveal to us who will be our next pastor to join us in the ministry at Bethlehem. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer. AMEN

COMMUNITY PRAYER CIRCLES: We’ll be gathering at the Food Court in Fashion Square Mall (4787 Fashion Square Blvd) at 2:30-4:00 pm on Sunday, December 8. The gathering will begin with Christmas carols in the food court led by David Paul Britton and Sue Brandt. We’ll then break into prayer groups for a time of prayer. Feel free to invite a friend.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE:

11-28-24	Thanksgiving	136		
12-01-24	1 st Sunday in Advent	207		Online viewership: 46
12-04-24	Midweek Advent Service	45	Adults	Online viewership: 46
12-04-24	Drive-up Communion	25		

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT Luke 3:4 – “As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” God makes long-range plans: Isaiah lived more than seven hundred years before St. John the Baptist preached by the Jordan River. Obviously, God sees farther into the future than we do! That’s yet another reason to trust Him when it comes to how He tells us to live our lives: He knows what’s coming and we don’t.

CARING FOR OTHERS

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING IMPACT AT THE RESCUE MISSION Thanks to all who supported Impact's important work of providing a new home for those in need at the Rescue Mission. Over 30 families participated in gathering gifts of kitchen utensils and cookware valued at over \$500. They will help families prepare good healthy meals. And, thanks to Deb Erickson for making the very realistic range where we could deposit our gifts.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS Habitat for Humanity is looking for volunteers to help finish their new builds. If you are interested in helping build new homes in

the Covenant Neighborhood, please contact Lindsay Olgine at 989-753-5200 x225 or lindsayolgin@sshfh.org. Individuals or groups, half day or full day, experiences of all kinds are available. You are also encouraged to sign up at sshfh.galaxydigital.com.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS The food pantry is well-stocked with everything at present. Thank you for your donations.

BETHLEHEM BRAILLE MINISTRY IS SEEKING NEW MEMBERS! If you are able to attend Braille ministry sessions at Bethlehem on Mondays from 5:45-7:45 PM or Thursdays from 8:30-11 AM, please contact Becky Bullard at 989-280-5130. No experience is necessary! Braille ministry does not meet in the summer.

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN is in need of men's clothing! If you are able to donate, please drop off items at the church office, or in the Orphan Grain Train bin in the narthex.

SCHOOL NEWS

160 YEARS OF INSTRUCTION, A YEAR OF THANKSGIVING. Because of the spirit of generosity here at Bethlehem, pledges toward the School Tuition Fund of the Bethlehem Lutheran Perpetual Trust Fund totaled \$44,946.49. If you are still giving towards your pledge, or if you desire to give to the School Tuition Fund, please make out your check to "Bethlehem Lutheran Perpetual Trust Fund," write "School Tuition Fund" on the Memo line, and place it in the Joash Box in the Narthex or mail it to the Church before the end of the year. And thank you for your support of Bethlehem Lutheran School!

AROUND BETHLEHEM

ANGEL GIVING TREE We are sponsoring HealthSource of Saginaw this year. We will be providing gifts for the residents and patients. We hope to brighten their Christmas season with our generosity. Some of these residents and patients have no family to visit them or give them gifts. Please provide a gift bag with tissue paper and attach the angel to the handle of the gift bag. HealthSource is asking that we DO NOT wrap the gifts. Please place your gifts under the Angel Tree by Sunday, December 8.

Thank you for your generosity!
The Board of Christian Life

LENDING LIBRARY NEWS For those readers who enjoy Amish fiction, you'll want to check out a new three book series entitled "The Bishop's Family" by Suzanne Woods Fisher. The book titles include "The Imposter", "The Quieting", and "The Devoted". These are wonderfully written tales of life, love, and faith.

The Lending Library is found at the top of the stairs and is always open. Just check out any book or DVD using the sign out pad on the counter.

SIGN UP FOR THE LUTHERAN WITNESS The Lutheran Witness is the official periodical of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Published 11 times a year, it provides stories and information

that compliment congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective.

It is time to subscribe to The Lutheran Witness to insure a discounted subscription price. Orders are due to Sue Brandt or the church office by December 12 to take advantage of the discounted rate of \$21.20. Late orders will be charged an additional \$2. Payments should be made out to the church. Please note: Michigan in Touch will not be included in the new subscription cycle starting March 2025. Plans for a standalone publication are forthcoming from The Michigan District. If you have questions please contact Sue Brandt at Brandt.john@sbcglobal.net or 989-860-6183.

GIFTS OF STOCK As you do your year-end tax planning, it may be helpful for you to know that Bethlehem has accounts that can be used if you want to make gifts of stock transferable directly from your account to one of Bethlehem's accounts. These accounts are available for the General Fund, our Trust, or for any of our Memorial account categories. If you are interested in this, please contact the office for account information or for the names of fellow members that can discuss with you the mechanics and/or benefits of contributing to our church in this manner.

SEEKING WORSHIP ARTS TEAM MEMBERS Do you sing or play an instrument? Or can you see yourself working lights, sound, or visuals in our tech booth? Then you should consider joining our Worship Arts team! We are in need of new Worship Arts team members to lend us their talents at both the 9 AM and 10:30 AM service times. If you are interested, please see Alex Holcomb, email aholcomb@bethlehemsaginaw.org, or call 989-755-1144 to let us know.

WEEKLY ADULT BIBLE STUDIES

- **Tuesdays, 9:30 am (Ladies)** in the David Room. Contact Mary Kay Hall for more information - (989) 497-8474.
- **Wednesdays, 8:00 am (Men)** Meeting at Immanuel Bible Church on Center Rd. in Saginaw. Men from Bethlehem, Holly Cross, Immanuel, and Peace will be in attendance. Currently in Romans. Bring your own coffee – donuts provided. Contact Bill Denno at 989-781-4851 or 989-295-8618 for more info. Bring your favorite Bible!
- **Fridays, 6:15 am (Men)** on Zoom. **“The Book of Romans.”** For info: mp_denno@yahoo.com
- **Sundays, 9:15 am Beginning November 3rd: The Messiah in the Old Testament.** We will use the study The Messiah: Revealing Jesus in the Old Testament. Jesus made Himself very clear that the Old Testament testifies of him. This study will walk us through that claim. And do you have Sunday School age children and would like to join the study? Children are welcome in our class until Sunday School begins at 9:30.

OTHER NEWS

FROM VALLEY LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL You are invited to join the Music Department of Valley Lutheran High School this afternoon, Sunday, December 8 at 3 pm for their annual Christmas

Choral Concert. The concert will be held at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 6100 Westside Saginaw Rd., Bay City.

Have you seen the December Valley Vision newsletter yet? Read about the growth of our fitness program, a recap of our fall drama production, and more at www.vlhs.com/vvdec2024. These are also available in the Narthex right by the Joash box.

Considering Valley Lutheran for the 2025-2026 school year? Begin your application today at www.vlhs.com/apply! Or, have additional questions before you apply? Contact Amy or Beth at 989-790-1676 or admissions@vlhs.com.

IMMANUEL LIVING NATIVITY Immanuel Lutheran Church of Frankentrost, 8220 E. Holland Rd. (M-46) in Saginaw, MI will host its 28th annual “Living Nativity – A Journey to Bethlehem” on Friday, December 6th – 7-9 PM; Saturday, December 7th – 6-8 PM; and Sunday, December 8th – 6-8 PM. Experience the sights and sounds of Bethlehem on that blessed night when Jesus Christ was born. This is a free 30-minute outdoor walk, so dress for the weather. Fellowship and refreshments will follow in the school. See church narthex announcements board for more information.

ESTATE PLANNING Gift planning can ensure that your charitable intent is honored in your overall estate plan. An estate plan addresses many concerns with intent of bringing the process of administering your estate into conformity with state law. There are many rabbit trails to follow during the estate planning process. If we aren't careful, we may lose the opportunity to dig into how gifts to ministry can be important for the sharing of the Gospel into the future. Your LCMS Foundation Gift Planning Counselor can help you keep your family and ministry in focus throughout the process. Contact...

Julie Burgess

Gift Planning Counselor

Church Extension Fund/MI District

Email: Julie.burgess@lfnd.org

Mobile: 713-822-5284