



**NORTHWESTERN  
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

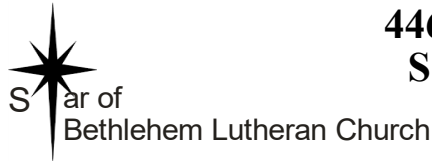
*You are to give him the name Jesus,*  
**because he will save his people  
from their sins.**



*Matthew 1:21*



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Pastor Michael Foley

## Worship Service

*Sunday, December 18, 2022 10:00 a.m.*

### Fourth SUNDAY in ADVENT

**Theme of the day:** This last Sunday of Advent, we celebrate together the promise and fulfillment of the One born *Immanuel*, "God with us." As we get closer and closer to Christmas, we ask God to prepare our hearts to receive the baby born in Bethlehem as his wonderful gift of salvation.

## WELCOME

A warm welcome to our friends and visitors! Star of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is eager to share with you the blessings of its Christ-centered ministry. If you are a new or long-time resident of the Central Coast looking for a church home, we invite you to meet with us at the close of this worship service or at your convenience. All are welcome to stay for refreshments in the fellowship hall.

**Families** are encouraged to worship together. If you need to step out with your children, the service can be seen and heard in the fellowship hall or narthex area. Feel free to enter and return at any time.

## OUR MISSION

Our congregation exists for the purpose of "HOLDING OUT THE WORD OF LIFE." This is accomplished by faithfully preserving and proclaiming all of God's inerrant word, and administering the Sacraments as they were instituted by Christ.

**OPENING HYMN: # 301 “Savior of the Nations, Come”**

♪ **Savior of the nations, come;  
virgin’s Son, make here your home.  
Marvel now, O heav’n and earth,  
that the Lord chose such a birth.**

**Not by human flesh and blood, by the Spirit of our God  
was the Word of God made flesh,  
woman’s offspring, pure and fresh.**

**Wondrous birth! O wondrous Child of the virgin undefiled,  
though by all the world disowned,  
yet to be in heav’n enthroned!**

**From the Father’s throne he came and ascended to the same,  
captive leading death and hell.  
High the song of triumph swell!**

*Please stand for last verse:*

**Praise to God the Father sing,  
praise to God the Son, our King,  
praise to God the Spirit be ever and eternally.**

Minister: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and  
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

Congregation: **And also with you.** (*spoken*)

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

M: God, through Moses, commanded his people, “The man or woman  
who sins against his neighbor, betrays the Lord and will have to  
answer for it. He should confess his sin.”

*Silence to reflect on the Word of God*

♪ **Song: Jesus Sinners Does Receive**

**Jesus sinners does receive; oh, may all this saying ponder  
who in sin’s delusions live and from God and heaven wander.  
Here is hope for all who grieve: Jesus sinners does receive.**

♪ **We deserve but grief and shame,  
yet his words, rich grace revealing,  
pardon, peace, and life proclaim;  
here their ills have perfect healing  
who with humble hearts believe: Jesus sinners does receive.**

M: We confess our sins both seen and unseen in thought, word,  
and action, according to the words of Psalm 51:

**C: Be gracious to me, God, according to your mercy. Erase my  
acts of rebellion according to the greatness of your compassion.  
Scrub me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I  
admit my rebellious acts. My sin is always in front of me.  
Against you, you only, have I sinned, and I have done this evil  
in your eyes. Remove my sin with hyssop, and I will be clean.  
Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and  
gladness. Let the bones you have crushed celebrate. Hide your  
face from my sins. Erase all my guilty deeds. Create in me a  
pure heart, O God. Renew an unwavering spirit within me.**

M: The Lord is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and  
abounding in love. He gives us this great comfort: “As distant as  
the east is from the west, so far has he removed our rebellious acts  
from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD  
has compassion on those who fear him.” And the blood of Jesus  
Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. Therefore, as a called  
servant of Christ, and by his authority, I forgive you all of your sins  
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.** *(spoken)*

*Please be seated.*

## **ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING INTROIT**

♪ **Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,  
and see what in the manger lies.  
Who is this child, so young and fair?  
It is the Christ Child lying there.**

M: The darkness of sin and unbelief are shattered by the light of the  
Gospel. The **Prophecy Candle** gives us the first flicker of hope  
as we watch for the coming of the Lord.

**C: Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come.** (Mark 13:33)

*The Prophecy Candle is lit.*

M: The **Bethlehem Candle** calls us to repent. See in Jesus the Light of the world. Change your hearts so that you may live as children of the light.

**C: "Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight paths for him."**  
(Matthew 3:3)

*The Bethlehem Candle is lit.*

M: The **Shepherd Candle** points to our joy as God's people. In Jesus we have all that matters. In joy and peace we ask God to keep us in the faith and faithful in our lives.

**C: The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.**  
(1 Thessalonians 5:24)

*The Shepherd Candle is lit.*

M: The **Angel Candle** shows us the glory of the Son of God who humbled himself to save us. With the angels, we praise our Savior who gave his all for us.

**C: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind."**  
(Luke 2:14)

*The Angel Candle is lit.*



♪ **Welcome to earth, O noble Guest,  
through whom the sinful world is blest!  
You came to share my misery  
that you might share your joy with me.**

M: May the light of these candles call to mind the glorious light of the Gospel, shining in the birth of our Savior. May his grace enlighten our lives, both now and forever.

♪ **Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
prepare a bed, soft, undefiled  
within my heart, made clean and new,  
a quiet chamber kept for you.**

## FIRST LESSON: Isaiah 7:10-14

<sup>10</sup>The LORD spoke to Ahaz again. He said, <sup>11</sup>“Ask for a sign from the LORD your God. Ask for it either in the depths below or in the heights above.”

<sup>12</sup>But Ahaz responded, “I will not ask. I will not test the LORD.”

<sup>13</sup>So Isaiah said:

Listen now, you house of David. Is it not enough for you to test the patience of men? Will you test the patience of my God as well? <sup>14</sup>Therefore the Lord himself will give a sign for all of you. Look! The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel.

## Psalm of the Day: Psalm 89

### *Refrain*



At the works of your hands, O Lord, I  
lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

### *Psalm tone*



\*

I will sing of the LORD'S great love forever;  
I will make your faithfulness known through all generations.

I will declare that your love stands firm forever,  
that you established your faithfulness in heaven itself.

The heavens praise your wonders, O LORD,  
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the holy ones.

### *Refrain*

**O LORD God Almighty, who is like you?\***  
**You are mighty, O LORD,**  
**and your faithfulness surrounds you.**

**Blessed are those who have learned to acclaim you,\***  
**who walk in the light of your presence, O LORD.**

**They rejoice in your name all day long;\***  
**they exult in your righteousness.**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son\***  
**and to the Holy Spirit,**  
**as it was in the beginning,\***  
**is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*Refrain*

M: Alleluia. Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel. Alleluia. (*Matthew 1:23*)

C: ♪ Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!  
These words are written that we may believe  
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

**SECOND LESSON: Romans 1:1-7**

**Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised in advance through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures. <sup>3</sup>This gospel is about his Son—who in the flesh was born a descendant of David, <sup>4</sup>who in the spirit of holiness was declared to be God’s powerful Son by his resurrection from the dead—Jesus Christ, our Lord. <sup>5</sup>Through him we received grace and the call to be an apostle on behalf of his name, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, <sup>6</sup>including you, who were called by Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>To all those loved by God who are in Rome, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**HYMN: # 496 “Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love”**

**♪ Jesus! Name of wondrous love,  
name all other names above,  
unto which must ev’ry knee  
bow in deep humility.**

**Jesus! Name decreed of old,  
to the maiden mother told,  
kneeling in her lowly cell by the angel Gabriel.**

**Jesus! Name of priceless worth  
to the fallen here on earth  
for the promise that it gave,  
“Jesus shall his people save.”**

**Jesus! Name of mercy mild,  
given to the holy Child  
when the cup of human woe  
first he tasted here below.**

**Jesus! Only name that’s giv’n  
under all the mighty heav’n  
whereby those to sin enslaved,  
burst their fetters and are saved.**

**Jesus! Name of wondrous love,  
human name of God above;  
pleading only this, we flee helpless, O our God to thee.**

**SERMON: Matthew 1:18-25**

**<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. <sup>20</sup>But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from**



the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

<sup>22</sup>All this happened to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>“Look, the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son. And they will name him Immanuel,” which means, “God with us.”

<sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up from his sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him. He took Mary home as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but he was not intimate with her until she gave birth to her firstborn son. And he named him Jesus.

## **NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God, the father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, The Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.**

**We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

M: Eternal Father, throughout the centuries you repeated and affirmed your promise to send the offspring of the woman to crush the serpent's head. Through your prophets of old, you continually directed the eyes of your people to the advent of their Savior.

**C: We praise you, O Lord, for keeping your promise and sending your Son to destroy the works of the devil.**

M: As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our King, use your mighty Word to shatter our pride and to rouse us from spiritual slumber and apathy.

**C: Move us to take to heart the words of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."**

M: You sent your Son to redeem us from sin. Let this good news be our joy and strength. Use it to cheer the lonely, encourage the fearful, and give hope to the despairing. In these days before Christmas, spare us from the stress of deadlines and the frenzy of commercialism.

**C: Fill our lives with the message of your peace and the music of your grace.**

M: Direct our eyes not only to the manger but also to the skies, where we will see your Son coming again, not as a lowly child but as the Lord of lords.

**C: Lift up our hearts in joyful anticipation of that day.**

M: Come quickly, Lord Jesus, in your grace, in your power, and in your glory.

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

## LORD'S PRAYER

**C: 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 HOLY SACRAMENT

M: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you. (*spoken*)**

M: Lift up your hearts.

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

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

M: Praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In love he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. Through his holy prophets, he promised a King to bring light to those living in darkness and in the shadow of death.

Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ. To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and thanks and honor and glory forever and ever.

**♪ Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of your glory. You are my God, and I will exalt you. I will give you thanks for you have become my salvation. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of your glory.**

Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today's service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord's Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord's Supper together is a public expression of our complete "oneness," or unity of faith.

Because the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord's Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister church body, the ELS.

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord's Supper today. We don't want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

## **The Words of Institution**

M: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: ♪ Amen.**

**♪ O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world grant us your peace. Amen.**

**COMMUNION HYMN: # 320 “As Angels Joyed with One Accord”**

**♪ As angels joyed with one accord  
upon the advent of our Lord,  
so let us gladly praise the name  
of him who from the Father came.**

**He came, not clothed in majesty nor pow’r that suits his deity.  
In lowly state he walked till he in dying set us captives free.**

**This done, he soared to God’s right hand,  
yet orphaned not his chosen band,  
for he, not bound in grace and pow’r,  
attends his own each day and hour.**

**In ev’ry age—let praise abound—  
he comes; we hear his voice resound.  
His glorious gospel does not cease  
to bring us comfort, joy, and peace.**

**He comes in water to the child  
and cleanses it, from birth defiled.  
This washing seals his pard’ning grace  
and shows the Father’s kindly face.**

**He comes to us in bread and wine  
to give himself and gifts divine.  
O, praise him for this sacrament,  
redeeming love’s great testament!**

**Lift up your heads! All grief and pain  
shall vanish when he comes again.  
Where we shall see him face to face,  
there joy alone shall have a place.**

## Thanksgiving

*Please stand.*

♪ **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 renews his promises and leads  
his people forth in joy  
With shouts of thanksgiving.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!**

M: Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: ♪ **Amen**

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: ♪ **Amen. Amen. Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN: # 345 "Where Shepherds Lately Knelt"

♪ **Where shepherds lately knelt and kept the angel's word,  
I come in half-belief, a pilgrim strangely stirred;  
but there is room and welcome there for me,  
but there is room and welcome there for me.**

**In that unlikely place I find him as they said:  
sweet newborn Babe, how frail! And in a manger bed,  
a still, small voice to cry one day for me,  
a still, small voice to cry one day for me.**

**How should I not have known Isaiah would be there,  
his prophecies fulfilled? With pounding heart I stare:  
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,  
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.**

**Can I, will I forget how Love was born, and burned  
its way into my heart unasked, unforced, unearned,  
to die, to live, and not alone for me,  
to die, to live, and not alone for me?**



**For the Mighty One  
has done great things for me.**

**Holy is his  
Name.**

Luke 1:49

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FLOWERS** for today's service were given to the glory of God by the Taubmans.

**PRAYERS:** Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Doris Scheuffele, Molly Webb (and brother, Jim), Helen Marten, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Linda Hill & Christina, Roberta Gowin, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, and Sam Daugherty.

**MISSION OFFERING:** Our Collection for the WELS' Care and Relief Committee comes to an end with the ending of 2022. The next sixth months our designated Mission Offering will be for *Conquerors through Christ*, a WELS organization which exists to "help people Resist - Reject - Recover" from pornography use or addiction. It provides resources for individuals, significant others, parents, families, and ministry leaders.

### THIS WEEK

<b>Today</b>	<b>Living Nativity, 4:00-6:00, Las Posadas after.</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Bible Class, 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Bible Class and Sunday School, 9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service, 10:00 a.m.</b>

# PERSONAL PREPARATION FOR HOLY COMMUNION

(cf. page 156 in the front of Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal)

**Q: What does God tell me about myself in his holy Word?**

*A: He says that I am a sinner and deserve only his punishment.*

**Q: What should I do if I am not aware of my sins or am not troubled by them?**

*A: I should examine myself according to the Ten Commandments and ask how well I have carried out my responsibilities as a husband or wife or single person, as a parent or child, an employer or employee, a teacher or student. Have I loved God with all my heart, gladly heard his Word, and patiently endured affliction? Have I been disobedient, proud, or unforgiving? Have I been selfish, lazy, envious, or quarrelsome? Have I lied or deceived, taken something not mine, or given anyone a bad name? Have I abused my body or permitted indecent thoughts to linger in my mind? Have I failed to do what is right and good?*

**Q: When I realize that I have sinned against God and deserve his punishment, what should I do?**

*A: I will confess before God all my sins, those which I remember as well as those of which I am unaware. I will pray to God for his mercy and forgiveness.*

**Q: How do I receive his gracious forgiveness?**

*A: His Word assures me that Jesus led a pure and holy life for me and died on the cross for me to pay the full price for all my sins. Through faith in Jesus, I have been clothed in my Savior's perfect righteousness and holiness.*

**Q: What further assurance do I have that Jesus is mine and I am his?**

*A: In Holy Communion he gives me his body and blood together with the bread and wine as a truly life-giving food and drink to unite me with him and my fellow believers. By means of this sacrament, Jesus not only forgives my sins but sweeps away all my doubts about his love for me, gives me his own strength to live a God-pleasing life, and grants me a joyful foretaste of heaven.*

**Q: How can I be sure that I receive all these blessings in the Lord's Supper?**

*A: I have his own word spoken as his last will and testament on the night before he died. There he tells me: "Take and eat; this is my body. Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."*

**Q: How will I respond to this priceless gift from Jesus?**

*A: I will daily thank and praise him for his love to me. With his help I will fight temptation, do my best to correct whatever wrongs I have done, and serve him and those around me with love and good works.*

*Lord Jesus, with joy and gratitude I now come to your table to receive the precious food of your life-giving body and blood. May it strengthen me to remain in you as you remain in me, so that I bear much fruit in devoted service to you and in acts of kindness to others. Amen.*