



**NORTHWESTERN  
PUBLISHING HOUSE**

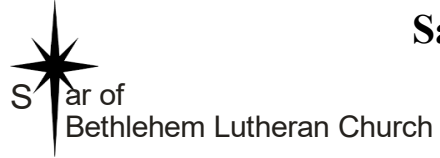
You will conceive  
and give birth  
*to a son,*  
and you are to  
call him

*Jesus.*

Luke 1:31



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Pastor Michael Foley

## Worship Service

*Sunday, December 24, 2024 10:00 a.m.*

### Fourth Sunday of ADVENT

**Theme of the day:** What's the best way to prepare for Jesus' coming? It's not with frantic doing. It's not with a focus on what we have done or promise to do. It's not with how we will pay back what he comes to bring. The best preparation for Christmas is a *readiness to receive*.

## 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.

**HYMN: # 320:1,2,4,7 “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.**

**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.**

*Please stand for last verse:*

**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.**

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*)

M: God invites us to come into his presence to worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

**Song:** (*CW #341 “Away in a Manger”*)

♪ **Lord Jesus, I long to be cleansed and made whole;  
have pardon and mercy upon my ill soul.  
By faith, for my cleansing, I see Thy blood flow,  
now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

**Lord Jesus, have mercy, my burden is great,  
come now, and within me a new heart create;  
renew me and guide me; your mercy will show.  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.**

**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.” “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: Watch! Be alert and pray, because you do not know when the 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 his paths straight.”**  
(*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.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

M: Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## SUNDAY SCHOOL SONG: “In a Little Stable”

♪ In a little stable Far across the sea  
Was a little Baby Just like you and me.

Not a bed or cradle, Not a pillow deep,  
But a lowly manger Was His place to sleep.

Shepherds stood around Him, Angels watched with care,  
For this Babe was JESUS, Lying, smiling there.

Oh, I love this Jesus, Who was little then,  
For I know He loves me, Little though I am.

## FIRST LESSON: Romans 16:25-27

<sup>25</sup>Now to him who is able to strengthen you—  
according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus  
Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that  
was veiled in silence for long ages past, <sup>26</sup>but now has  
been revealed through the prophetic Scriptures and  
made known to all the Gentiles, in keeping with the com-  
mand of the eternal God, resulting in the obedience of  
faith—

<sup>27</sup>to God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through Jesus  
Christ. Amen.

## PSALM OF THE DAY: Psalm 139a

### *Refrain*



To you, O Lord, I lift my soul; in you I trust, my God.

### *Psalm tone*



O LORD, you have searched me and you know me;\*  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down;\*  
you are familiar with all my ways.      *Refrain*

Where can I go from your Spirit?\*  
Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;\*  
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,\*  
if I settle on the far side of the sea,

even there your hand will guide me,\*  
your right hand will hold me fast.

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*

## VERSE OF THE DAY

M: Alleluia. “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son.  
And they will name him Immanuel,” which means, “God with us.”  
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!

## GOSPEL LESSON: Luke 1:26-38

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women.”

<sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end.”

<sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?”

<sup>35</sup>The angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup>Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible for God.”

<sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, “See, I am the Lord’s servant. May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

**HYMN: # 327 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”**

♪ Oh, come, oh, come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Root of Jesse, free your own from Satan’s tyranny;  
from depths of hell your people save,  
and give them vict’ry o’er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death’s dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

Oh, come, O Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heav’nly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!



## **SERMON: 2 Samuel 7:1-16**

**It happened that when the king was living in his palace, and when the LORD had given him rest from his enemies all around, <sup>2</sup>the king said to Nathan the prophet, “Look, I live in a house of cedar, but the Ark of God sits under tent curtains.”**

**<sup>3</sup>Nathan said to the king, “Go and do everything that is in your heart, because the LORD is with you.”**

**<sup>4</sup>But that night the word of the LORD came to Nathan. He said, <sup>5</sup>“Go and tell my servant David all these things.”**

**This is what the LORD says. Are you the one to build a house for me to live in? <sup>6</sup>I have not lived in a house from the day I brought the people of Israel up from Egypt until today. I have been moving around in the Tent and the Dwelling. <sup>7</sup>I have traveled everywhere with all the people of Israel. Did I ever speak a word to any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people, or ask them, “Why have you not built a house of cedar for me?”**

**<sup>8</sup>You are also to say the following to my servant David.**

**This is what the LORD of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. <sup>9</sup>I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. <sup>10</sup>I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning <sup>11</sup>and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.**

**The LORD also declares to you that the LORD himself will make a house for you. <sup>12</sup>When your days are complete and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your seed, who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. <sup>13</sup>He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. <sup>14</sup>I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will discipline him with a rod used by men and with blows of the sons of men. <sup>15</sup>My faithful mercy will not depart from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. <sup>16</sup>Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.**

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

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

**I believe 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 is seated at the right  
hand of God the Father almighty.**

**From there 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.**

**HYMN: # 355 “Let All Together Praise Our God”**

**♪ Let all together praise our God before his highest throne;  
today he opens heav’n again and gives us his own Son,  
and gives us his own Son.**

**He leaves his heav’nly Father’s throne,  
is born an infant small,  
and in a manger, poor and lone, lies in a humble stall,  
lies in a humble stall.**

**He veils in flesh his pow’r divine a servant’s form to take,  
in want and lowliness must pine  
who heav’n and earth did make,  
who heav’n and earth did make.**

**He undertakes a great exchange, puts on our human frame,  
and in return gives us his realm, his glory, and his name,  
his glory, and his name.**

**He serves that I a lord may be— a great exchange indeed!  
Could Jesus’ love do more for me to help me in my need,  
to help me in my need?**

**For us he opens wide the door of paradise today.  
The angel guards the gate no more;  
to God our thanks we pay,  
to God our thanks we pay.**

## **OFFERING**

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

#### **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.**

**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: # 349 "A Great and Mighty Wonder"**

**♪ A great and mighty wonder, a glorious mystery:  
a virgin bears an infant who veils his deity.**

***Refrain:* Proclaim the Savior's birth:**

**"To God on high be glory and peace to all the earth."**

**The Word becomes incarnate and yet remains on high,  
and cherubim sing anthems to shepherds from the sky.**

***Refrain***

**While thus they sing your monarch, those bright angelic bands,  
rejoice, O vales and mountains, and oceans, clap your hands.**

***Refrain***

**Since all he comes to ransom, by all be he adored,  
the infant born in Bethl'em, the Savior and the Lord.  
*Refrain***

**All idols then shall perish and Satan's lying cease,  
and Christ shall raise his scepter, decreeing endless peace.  
*Refrain***

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the glory of God by the Evers on the occasion of Holly's birthday.

**PRAYERS:** Remember to pray for: Shawn Lozano, John Velasques, little Elias, Dennis Douglas, Bob Ward, George Caravana, Molly Webb (and brother, Jim), Helen Marten, Doug Ward, Kathy Jones, Art Amarillas, Roberta Gowin, Melinda Brown, Alice Taubman, Monica, Louise Perry, Rylan Downs, Sam Daugherty, Jeff Brown, Aaron Taubman, Judy Washburn, Marlene Washburn, and Rich Olerich.

## **THIS WEEK**

<b>Today</b>	<b>Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 p.m.</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Christmas Day Service, 10:00 a.m.</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>No Bible Class</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Sunday School &amp; Bible Class, 9:00 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m.</b>

