

*Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*January 4, 2026
Second Sunday after Christmas*



MISSION

To worship God, to learn and live the Word of God,
to engage in Christian fellowship and service, to invite others
to join us on our faith journey in the ministry of Jesus Christ.

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We are so glad that you are joining your voice with ours in worship today!
Everyone, please sign our green friendship pads, found at the end of each pew.

If you like, a comfortable space for families is available under the balcony.

God put the wiggle in children, and we welcome them in worship!

Children are also welcome to participate in Sunday school, if they prefer.

All are invited to stand, as you are able, for sections marked with a cross (†);

Congregational responses are in bold text.

Prayer Requests

Fill out a prayer request card found in the pews.

You may give it to one of the pastors before the service
or to an usher during the Hymn of Response.

DEATHS

Bethlehem member, Norma Crouch passed away on Saturday December 27, 2025.

Please keep her family in your prayers during this difficult time.



CHURCH LIFE

No Bethlehem members were known to be in the hospital as of Wednesday

ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Total:46 (In Person:32, YouTube:11, Phone:3)

Worship is available in the sanctuary, via Phone Streaming and Livestream to
access the Livestream go to our website: <https://www.bethlehem-ucc.org>. To join the
Phone Stream, call 855-669-8965 prior to the start of worship. You may sign up to be
called by the Phone Stream by contacting the church office during regular business hours.
(You will be called about 5 minutes before worship begins.)

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND SHARING CHURCH LIFE

CENTERING MUSIC

Das alte Jahr vergangen ist (The old year has passed), BWV 614 - J. S. Bach
Cary Dumas, organ

OPENING WORSHIP

† CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Arise, shine, for your light has come!

All: The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.

One: The sun shall no longer be our light by day, nor the moon by night,

All: for the Lord will be our light. Let us praise the Lord together!

† HYMN OF GATHERING

NCH # 157

Brightest and Best

† OPENING PRAYER (unison)

Eternal God, by a star you led the Magi to a tiny child – Jesus Christ, our Lord. Through him, you sent a new light into the world and showered us with your love and grace. By his light and transformative love, guide us to be the people you need us to be, to do all we can to make this world a better place for all. In his name we pray. Amen.

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Julvisa (Christmas Song) - Jean Sibelius
William Lee, baritone-bass; Cary Dumas, piano

1. We ask for nothing rich or rare, no gifts of precious worth,
But quiet home and children dear and peace throughout the earth.
Our Christmas tree is gaily dressed, the King would be an honour'd guest,
For all are welcome at our feast, the highest and the least.

2. Give us our home and children gay, with angels watching o'er,
The Word of God at close of day, we ask for nothing more.
In our accustomed dwelling-place, where love doth shine in every face,
The Christmas festival so bright once more we hail tonight.

3. To men of high and low degree comes Christmas once a year,
God's children celebrate with glee, their holy day so dear.
Lord Jesus Christ, come, be our Guide, keep us all safe this Christmastide,
And as our carols loudly ring, we bless Thee, Lord and King.

HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

One: . . .Now, let us prepare our hearts. The Lord be with you!

All: And also with you!

One: Lift up your hearts!

All: We lift them to the Lord!

One: Let us give thanks to God Most High!

All: It is right to give God thanks and praise!

PRAYER OF BLESSING

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

SHARING THE MEAL SPP # 112 *Come to the Table of Grace* (sung during the meal)

(note: all bread is gluten-free; red cups contain juice; white cups contain wine;
prepackaged elements also available; please place empty cups in the baskets)

Lyric order: grace, peace, love, joy

Come to the table of grace.

Come to the table of grace.

This is Christ's table not just yours or mine.

Come to the table of grace.

† **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (unison)

**Gracious God, we thank you and praise you for refreshing us
through this sacred meal. We thank you and praise you for Jesus Christ,
our Lord – the Light of the world. Lead us by his Light; strengthen our
faith; increase our love for one another; and send us forth into the
world letting his Light shine in all we say and do. In his name we pray.
Amen.**

MUSICAL RESPONSE NCH # 154 v.3 *Got Tell It on the Mountain*

Children may leave for Sunday School during the song.

**Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.
Go tell it on the mountain, over the hill and everywhere.
Go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

From the Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

One: The gospel of the Lord, for the people of God!

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

MESSAGE

Road less-travelled

Pastor Dawn

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

† HYMN OF REFLECTION NCH # 159 *As with Gladness Those of Old*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns

Silent Prayer & Sung Petition *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*

Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your spirit in this place;

**Lord, listen to your children praying; send us love, send us power,
send us grace.**

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Please use these words or those most familiar to you.

Our God in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING

Invitation to give

Offertory

Be Still

- Ashley Grote

Cary Dumas, organ

† Hymn of Thanksgiving NCH # 780 (lyrics #778) *Doxology*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.**

† Prayer of Dedication (unison)

O Lord, the Magi followed a star to you, and in their amazement and adoration they gave you gifts. We too are amazed by your presence among us and adore you. In joyful gratitude for the gift that you are to us, we offer our time, talent and treasure. Use all that we offer to bless the lives of others. In your name we pray. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

† CLOSING HYMN NCH # 164 *Arise, Your Light is Come*

WORDS OF SENDING

POSTLUDE *Declamation on hymn tune DIX* - Craig Phillips
Cary Dumas, organ

OUR TEAM:

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dawn Christenson

Associate Pastor: Rev. Diane White

Ministers: All the people

Director of Music & Organist: Dr. Naki Sung Kripfgans

Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan

Guest Organist: Cary Dumas

Soloist: William Lee

Liturgist: Please see [Signup Genius](#) for open dates

Sound Technician:

Videographer: Dan Blakeney

Streaming Technician:

Security Volunteer: Volunteers needed, please contact church office.

Community Time Host: Jim and Katie Rowan

Reach out to us:

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(734) 665-6149

info@bethlehem-ucc.org



a just world for all