

# BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2018 BEACON

## Mary's Song

Each Advent season, I marvel at the faith of Mary, mother of Jesus. Her stunning song is recorded in Luke 1:46-55. She thanks God for remembering her, for His kindness, for His mercy and for keeping His promises to Abraham and all of his descendants. She is hopeful and blessed because God is faithful and can be trusted. Mary certainly is a wonder. A teenage un-wed mother who embraces the suffering she will endure, being judged and misunderstood to bring the Savior of the world into the world. It is understandable that the Christian church has celebrated her so. The song *Breath of Heaven* by Chris Eaton gives me a glimpse into Mary's experience. "I have traveled many moonless nights, cold and weary with a babe inside, and I wonder what I've done. Holy Father, You have come and chosen me now to carry Your Son. I am waiting in a silent prayer. I am frightened by the load I bear. In a world as cold as stone. Must I walk this path alone? Be with me now, be with me now." Her prayer is the prayer of Advent. And her prayer can be our prayer as well. For we carry Christ in us to our world which can feel frightening and burdensome and hopeful all at the same time.

Advent is the season of preparation before Christmas, and the color for Advent is blue. Blue symbolizes anticipation and hope for our coming king. The Savior's birth is second in importance only to His resurrection on Easter Sunday. In Advent we remember the story of hope coming into the world. When the time was right, God sent his Son, Jesus to dwell with us. And because Jesus dwells with us, He centers us. He calms us in true and right ways, then and now.

This Advent join us in worship as we consider the gifts of Christ's indwelling presence. Jesus is the source of all hope and each of us can say, "Because Christ dwells in my heart, I have nothing to fear, nothing to lose, nothing to prove, and nothing to hide." Come worship this season to grow in the confidence of hope in Christ. God chose Mary and God has a plan for each of our lives to be full of hope and purpose. Embrace Jesus the hope of the world. Prepare and make room in your heart again for the Savior. For He is the Breath of Heaven. Mary's prayer continues, "Breath of Heaven, hold me together, be forever near me, breath of Heaven. Lighten my darkness. Pour over me Your holiness for You are holy."

My prayer for each and every one who reads this is that Jesus will fill up your lives and homes this Advent and Christmas. Each Sunday we will light an Advent candle. The prayers for each week are included here in the Beacon. Create your own Advent experience in your home using these prayers while lighting your own Advent candles of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. May Christ fill your hearts this Advent and Christmas.

Your Friend in Christ,  
Pastor Jeff

## Advent Candle Lighting Prayers

December 2nd - This morning we light the first candle, the candle of **hope**. This candle reminds us that God's promises give us reason to be filled with hope – hope for unity in a world of division, hope for healing in a world of pain, and hope for peace in a world filled with anger and strife. We remember that Christ is our light and the source of our hope.

December 9th – This morning we light two candles, the candle of **hope** and the candle of **peace**. This candle reminds us that Christ came into our world to restore peace, and that only through trust in God's word and his promises can we find our own inner peace. We remember that Christ is the Prince of Peace who taught us that through simple acts of love and forgiveness peace is spread throughout the world.

(cont.)

## **Advent Candle Lighting Prayers** (cont.)

December 16th – This morning we light three candles – the candles of **hope, peace,** and today, **joy**. This candle reminds us that we have reason to be joyful, even in the midst of strife. We remember that the angel proclaimed Christ's birth as "Good news of great joy, to all people." We celebrate today with joyful hearts and commit ourselves to spreading that joy to the world around us.

December 23rd – This morning we light four candles, the candles of **hope, peace, joy,** and today's candle – **love**. This candle reminds us that God so loved the world that he sent his only son, so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have life everlasting. Today we celebrate God's gift of love and remember that we have been commanded to love others as God loves us.

December 24th, Christmas Eve – Tonight, we light all the candles as we celebrate the birth of Christ. The candles of **hope, peace, love,** and **joy** all remind us that Christ is our light and the source of eternal hope, everlasting peace, boundless love, and endless joy. The **Christ candle** reminds us that God's perfect gift was sent to us that we might have life abundant and everlasting. Joy to the world and peace on earth. Let us worship Christ, the newborn King.

"Love's Pure Light" by Joel Raney (BLC CCLI #1602889)

## **November 14, 2018 Church Council Minutes**

(to be reviewed at the December Council meeting)

**Present:** Pastor Jeff Teeples, Dan Frey, Allen Redman, Darla Drewelow, Bruce Simon, Michelle Rients, Carol Chapman

**Call to order** by President Dan Frey "In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." Council responds "Amen."

**Devotions:** Pastor led us in devotions relative to the meaning of our Mission Statement. He shared his interpretation & challenged each of us to state our personal interpretation at upcoming meetings. Michelle will share in December.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Motion by Darla, second by Allen. Passed.

**Approval of the October Minutes:** Motion by Carol, second by Michelle. Passed.

**Approval of the Treasurer's Report:** Motion to accept report by Allen, second by Bruce. Passed.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor reported highlights of the month which included two weddings, several home visits, a funeral and successful feedback he received on the candle lighting event on "All Saints Sunday." Pastor would like members of the Council to accompany him, on occasion, when making home/hospital/nursing home visits, etc. Council agreed. Pastor had a recent phone interview for a church in Arizona. He and Kris will be spending Thanksgiving with family out of state but will be back the following Sunday.

### **Ministry Team Reports:**

- **Children & Youth Ministry Team:** no report
- **Outreach & Fellowship Ministry Team:** no report
- **Property Ministry Team:** Bruce reported he secured, for now, a downstairs window. Dan will be fixing the outside handicap entrance button. They have not received the quote from Matt for the downstairs back door. Snow removal will be done by Jonathon Koop @ the same cost as last year.
- **Worship & Music Ministry Team:** no report
- **Social Concerns Ministry Team:** Carol reports Socktober Fest was a huge success. Several families have been identified for Thanksgiving and all the food donations needed for the families had been secured. After Thanksgiving, efforts for Christmas Adopt-A-Family will kick off. Carol is attempting to secure funds from Thrivent Financial, via Action Teams, for the families. Watch the bulletin board for needed items for these families.
- **Missions/Benevolence Ministry Team:** Allen reports in December they will meet & allocate remaining benevolence funds for year-end giving.

(cont.)

## **November 14, 2018 Church Council Minutes (cont.)**

**Correspondence:** Dan reported on and distributed.

### **Old Business:**

1. **Computer Update:** The computer in the office is five years old and the one in the Pastor's office is six years old. Due to the age we need to plan on updating next year, especially if we get a new Pastor. Dan reports that Jenny Hansmann does not have the password for virus scan updates to the computer in the Pastor's office.
2. **Lighting Update:** Dan has had some complications in completing the new lighting involving the lift rental. It is too big to get between the church pews so they are working off ladders. They expect to finish next week.

### **New Business:**

1. **Volunteers:** We agreed we have a giving volunteer network that continues to step forward to assist. However, we have more need due to the fact we don't always have a backup in case the volunteer can't complete the task on a certain day. One need is to backup Jenny Hansmann in preparing the bulletin and the Beacon. These are tasks that can be completed from their home computer throughout the week/month. Jenny is willing to train and remains available for questions. The other position is help in the office, answering the phone, welcoming visitors, mailings, Pastor's requests, etc. It was agreed we would thank our current volunteers at next Sunday's services and also ask for consideration for these additional two backup positions.
2. **Annual Meeting/Nominating Committee:** The **Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 27, 2019** immediately following services. Every year we have three Council Members leave office and three new ones fill those vacancies. The Nominating Committee consists of those Council Members who have left office the past two years. They are: Angie Ellermann, Jeremy Paulson, Jim Schwarz, Diane Buss, Jenny Hansmann, and Jay Herter, who has now moved. Allen will contact the Committee to remind them of this approaching task. Next Sunday Dan will be asking the Congregation to pray about saying "yes" to this Committee in their attempts to filling the open Council positions in January.
3. **Pastor's Vacation:** Council approved Pastor Jeff's request to have off the week of Christmas through the last Sunday of December to be with family out of state. This will be the first time since he became a Pastor that everyone will be together for Christmas.
4. **Old tables & chairs:** There are 14 old tables & 12 old chairs available to anyone who would like them. A motion to offer to the congregation for a free will donation, made by Bruce, second by Carol. Anyone interested should contact the office.
5. **Approval of bills:** Council approved bills presented. Dan suggested, in an attempt to minimize the wait time for folks to receive their reimbursement on items they've purchased for church, the Council President be given the authority to approve the bill immediately when presented for payment for amounts less than \$200 vs. having to wait until the next Council Meeting. Motion made to accept this recommendation by Bruce and second by Michelle. Passed.
6. **Approval of 2019 proposed budget:** Motion by Carol, second by Darla to approve the proposed 2019 budget. Passed.
7. **Microphones:** Discussed microphone issues. Dan will ask his contact at Primary Systems in Waterloo to do a service call checking our system and microphones.
8. **Call Committee:** The Call Committee has received a new resume for review. We discussed the manner in which the Call Committee receives feedback from the Congregation when a candidate performs the Church Service. Dan will speak further with Jeremy.
9. **Annual Reports:** Please note each Annual Report needs to be turned into the Church Office by December 20th.

Motion to adjourn by Michelle, second by Darla. Passed.

Closing Prayer/The Lord's Prayer

**Communion Assistants:** December: Marilyn Ingalls & Bruce Simon  
January: Dan Frey & JoAnne Schwarz

Submitted by Carol Chapman

## Family Devotions for December

### Don't Waste the Wait!

Bible Verse: "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." Isaiah 40:31

During Advent, we are reminded how God's people waited in hope many years ago for the Savior to come. Today, we wait in hope for Christ's return to take His people home, where He has prepared a place for us! But waiting can be hard. Just ask a parent waiting for their son or daughter to return from a tour of duty, or someone waiting while a loved one is in surgery, or even a child waiting for Christmas morning. Not for the faint of heart! But while waiting for the Lord, Isaiah 40:29 says we can count on Him to "give power to the faint and strength to the weak." Let's not waste the wait! Let's use every opportunity to share the Good News while we can! This month, let's spend some time . . .

- 1) Enjoying Advent devotions with our families, lighting the Advent candles, reading the Bible and a special Christmas book, making sure the story of Jesus comes through loud and clear.
- 2) Singing Christmas carols and going Christmas caroling with our family and friends.
- 3) Surprising someone with a special gift, Christmas cookies, or a simple meal.
- 4) Doing anything that lets others know Jesus is their Savior, too!

Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, Thank you for sending us Jesus as our Savior and for giving us Your strength as we wait for His return. In Jesus' name, amen.

## Social Concerns Update – Adopt-a-Family

Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Adopt-a-Family for Thanksgiving; it was a great success! All three families that we adopted told me how grateful they were!

This year for Christmas we will be adopting two families. One of those families is in greater need than the other. Most of the members of that family have not had beds to sleep on for years. We brought the mother a bed last week and, thanks to the BLC Benevolence fund, we were able to order bunk beds for two of the kids. Very soon everyone in that family will have beds to sleep on! However, there are still many items that are needed for both families. So, please keep an eye out for our Christmas tree with the Adopt-a-Family ornaments, it should be up soon. If anyone has any questions or has any items to donate that they think these families would benefit from (used sewing machine, microwave, small dresser, ...) please let me know.

--Brooke Paulson

## Organized Prayer for Bethel Families

**Week of December 2** – Molly O'Brien Brouwer, MacKensie, Jessie & Jaycee, Brad & Lindsey Buss Hedrick & family, Joel & Diane Buss; Mark & Marilyn Buss

**Week of December 9** – Jon & Tricia Jacobson, Anna, Wesley & Lauren; Jeff & Pam Jacobson; Darlene Johnson; Jeff & Diane Johnson

**Week of December 16** – Leah Ingalls, & Morgan, Colton & Abigail Hamilton; Matt & April Kressley, Jaxon, Derek, Bryer & Cayden; Dale & Candy Krohn; Lee & Michelle Rients

**Week of December 23** – Virgil Lindaman; Shannon & Natalie Spree, Ethan Allen; Jim & JoAnne Schwarz; Jean Scully

**Week of December 30** – Matt & Nora Stahlhut, Zachary & Mystica Harreld; Sandi Shepard; Clint & Marcie Sharp, Sam & Sydney; Bruce & Cindy Simon; Kyle Simon

## Call Committee Update

After receiving input from the congregation on the last Pastor Candidate that preached for us, the decision was made to continue our search. With the Lord's guidance, we will find the right Pastor for us. The process is taking longer than any of us would like, however we know that our efforts to find the right Pastor will reward the congregation in the end.

--Jeremy Paulson

### Worship Assistant Schedule for December--Worship Service 9:00 a.m.

	December 2	December 9	December 16	December 23	Christmas Eve, December 24, 7:00 pm	December 30
USHERS	Larry & Carol Chapman	Larry & Carol Chapman	Larry & Carol Chapman	Larry & Carol Chapman	Allen & Rachael Redman	Dennis & Bonnie Gerloff
ORGANISTS/PIANISTS	Janet Mennen/Sharleen Hubbard					
ALTAR GUILD	Bonnie Gerloff					
GREETERS	Randy & Connie Luhring	Terry & Darla Drewelow	Roger & Doralene Renken	Dave & Sharleen Hubbard	Steve & Sherry Brouwer	
LECTORS	Darla Drewelow	Julie Dudley	Jeff Jacobson	Diane Buss	Steve Brouwer	Beth Van Lengen
LITURGISTS	Bonnie Gerloff	WOV	Choir Concert	Sharleen Hubbard		Hymn Sing
ACOLYTES	Ava Mann	Corryn Mann	Evan Palmer	Gavin Bernard	Ava & Corryn Mann	Evan Palmer
COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	Marilyn Ingalls Bruce Simon		Marilyn Ingalls Bruce Simon		Marilyn Ingalls Bruce Simon	
COFFEE FELLOWSHIP						

### November Summary of Attendance and Financial Contributions

	Attendance	Bene./Mission	Current	Building Maintenance
<b>Sunday, November 4</b>	91	\$271.62	\$3,319.64	\$0.00
<b>Sunday, November 11</b>	66	\$99.40	\$1,554.35	\$0.00
<b>Sunday, November 18</b>	69	\$140.75	\$1,981.78	\$0.00
<b>Sunday, November 25</b>	70	\$123.74	\$1,700.92	\$0.00
<b>January 1-November 30, 2018</b>		\$7,509.28	\$96,898.89	\$250.00

### December Anniversaries

12 – Sam & Ami Cordes (3)  
 22 – Bob & Connie Rule (60)  
 27 – Joel & Diane Buss (50)

### AP Quilters

Since quilting started in September, 65 quilts have been completed. The following organizations received 64 of them: Ronald McDonald House, Cedar Valley Hospice in Waverly, Friends of the Library, and Bethel church family. Each resident at Parker Place also received a quilt (the quilts displayed on the pews on November 11th, plus 10 more). They were very happy to receive them.

### "The Story" Schedule

(Anyone can join at any time, books are available for purchase for \$9)

Dec. 2 From Shepherd to King  
 Dec. 9 The Trials of a King  
 Dec. 16 The King Who Had It All

### December Birthdays

2 – Riley Ellermann	22 – Colton Henrichs
6 – Ranae Knock	22 – Diane Johnson
7 – Dan Frey	24 – Nina Sweeney
15 – Jenn Buss	26 – Savannah Buss
15 – Kay Frey	28 – Sara Mann
20 – Sarah Redman	31 – Vada Luhring
20 – Kris Teeples	

## December 2018 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 9:00 am Worship/Holy Communion/ World Hunger Sunday 10:00 am Coffee 10:00 am Cookie or Candy by the Pound 10:15 am Sunday School/"The Story" Adult Class	3	4	5 6:15 pm Senior Choir 7:30 pm All Ministry Teams	6 9:00 am Quilting	7	8
9 9:00 am Sunday Worship 10:00 am Coffee 10:15 am Sunday School/"The Story" Adult Class	10	11	12 6:15 pm Senior Choir 7:30 pm Church Council	13 9:00 am Quilting 1:00 pm Ladies Bible Study @ Darla Drewelow's Home	14	15
16 9:00 am Worship/Holy Communion/ Noisy Nickels 10:00 am Coffee 10:15 am Sunday School/"The Story" Adult Class	17	18	19	20 9:00 am Quilting	21	22
23 9:00 am Sunday Worship 10:00 am Coffee 10:15 am Sunday School	24 7:00 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve Communion Service	25 <b>Christmas Day</b>	26	27 9:00 am Quilting	28	29
30 9:00 am Sunday Worship/Hymn Sing 10:00 am Coffee 10:15 am Sunday School	31		Email: <a href="mailto:bethelparkersburg@gmail.com">bethelparkersburg@gmail.com</a> Website: <a href="http://www.bethelparkersburg.org">www.bethelparkersburg.org</a> 'Like' & 'Follow' us on Facebook too!			

**POINSETTIA GARDEN:** If you would like to donate a poinsettia to decorate the sanctuary in memory or in honor of a loved one, the order forms are available at the back of the sanctuary. You may take your poinsettia home following the Christmas services.

### BLCW News

Cookie/Candy by the Pound sale will be December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Ladies are asked to bring cookies or candy to sell following worship service.

### Ministry Teams

Plan to gather in the sanctuary on **Wednesday, December 5th at 7:30 pm** for a short opening before splitting into individual teams with a Council Liaison.