

Thanks to all who served today:

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|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Preacher: Dr. Phillip Giessler | • Organist: Mr. James Alfieri |
| • Service Leader: Pastor Robert Green | • All Ushers |

Bethlehem Lutheran Church – Schedule & Sermon Titles

Sunday, December 22 at 8:00 & 10:45
“Savior of the Nations, Come” (LSB 332)

Christmas Eve – Tuesday, December 24 at 6 PM
“From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” (LSB 358)

Christmas Day – Wednesday, December 25 at 10 AM
“Go Tell It on the Mountain” (LSB 388)

Sunday, December 29 at 10 AM
“I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day” (FHOP 91)

New Year’s Eve – Tuesday, December 31 at 7 PM
“The First Noel” (TSC 94)

Sunday, January 5 at 8:00 & 10:45; Monday, January 6 at 7 PM

Contact Information → Synod, District, Pastor, Secretary, Childcare
Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod → www.lcms.org • Ohio District → www.oh.lcms.org
Bethlehem Website → www.blc7500.com • Bethlehem Address → 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134
Pastor – Robert Green → Church: 440-845-2230 • Cell: 440-292-5915 • Home: 440-842-0694 • Pastor@blc7500.com
Secretary – Kathy Green → Monday – Thursday, 9:00 to 3:00 • 440-845-2230 • Secretary@blc7500.com
Childcare Director – Tricia Wise → Monday – Friday, 6:45-6:00, 440-884-0430 • ChildcareDirector@blc7500.com

Advent—Christmas Symbols at Bethlehem (may our decorating point others to the Christ of Christmas):

- **Wreaths:** Shaped like the crown of thorns worn by Jesus; eternal life, since a circle has no ending!
- **Tree:** It points toward heaven; its evergreen color symbolizes eternal life!
- **Lights:** In the midst of the darkness of sin, Jesus is the True Light of the world!

Thanks to all who helped decorate our church building!

Welcome to Bethlehem Lutheran Church

By God’s grace we believe the Bible is God’s Word and trust in Jesus Christ as our Savior!
Before the Service—speak to God. During the Service—let God speak to you. After the Service—speak to others!

Series: “BALAAM: The Prophet Who Tried to Stop Christmas”

Numbers 22—24

Episode 3: The Real “Star” of Christmas

Numbers 24:1-18, 25

Third Wednesday in Advent, December 18, 2013 at 11:00 & 7:00

What is the Season of Advent? It includes the four Sundays before Christmas. The key word is “coming” and the color is blue for sky. As the Son of God came down from heaven to save us from our sins, so He will come again from the sky to forever bless those who receive Him as Savior!

TODAY: Our final Advent Wednesday Meals at 12 and 6 – Please Join Us!

WELCOME: During the bell the candles are lit; please be seated and turn to the opening hymn.

Advent – P: He is coming! **C:** God will keep us ready!

Today’s Service: Vespers – Adapted from the Lutheran Service Book, 229-234.

Please Participate: L = Leader • C = Congregation • A = All

Hymnals: TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal (RED) • LSB = Lutheran Service Book (MAROON)

(↑arise) VERSICLES (Psalm 51:15; Psalm 70:1):

L: O Lord, open my lips,

C: and my mouth will declare Your praise.

L: Hurry, O God, to deliver me;

C: hurry to help me, O Lord.

A: 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.

L: Praise to You, O Christ,

C: Our King who comes to save us.

HYMN: “Rise, Thou Light of Gentile Nations”

TLH 498, vv. 1-2, 5-6

COLLECT OF THE DAY:

L: Almighty God, heavenly Father, as many years ago you opened the eyes of Balaam to see the truth, so, in our day, open the eyes of many to ♦rightly see the truth, ♦be sorry for

their sins, and ♦ever-rejoice in the Real Star of Christmas—our Lord Jesus Christ!
C: Amen.



SERMON and SCRIPTURE READING: Episode 3: The Real “Star” of Christmas
 Numbers 24:1-18, 25 AAT

¹ When Balaam saw that the LORD wanted to bless Israel, he didn’t look for omens as he had done before but turned toward the desert.

² Balaam looked and saw Israel camping tribe by tribe, and God’s Spirit came on him, ³ and he spoke his message:

“Balaam, Beor’s son, is speaking, the man with opened eyes is speaking, ⁴ he who hears God’s words is speaking; he who has a vision from the Almighty falls down, and his eyes are opened: ⁵ How beautiful are your tents, Jacob, and your dwelling places, Israel, ⁶ like valleys spread out, like gardens by a river, like aloes the LORD planted, like cedars by the water. ⁷ He irrigates with his buckets, and his seed has plenty of water. His king will rise higher than Agag, and his kingdom will be raised high. ⁸ When God led him out of Egypt, he had the strength of a wild bull. He will devour nations who are his enemies, crushing their bones and piercing them with his arrows. ⁹ He crouches and lies down like a lion and like a mature lion—who will rouse him? Blessed is he who blesses you, and cursed is he who curses you!”

¹⁰ Balak got very angry with Balaam, and he clapped his hands. “I called you to curse my enemies,” Balak told Balaam, “and here you have

blessed them three times. ¹¹ So hurry on back home. I intended to reward you richly, but you see, the LORD has kept you from being rewarded.”

¹² Balaam answered Balak: “Didn’t I already tell the messengers you sent me: ¹³ ‘If Balak gives me his palace full of silver and gold, I can’t go against the LORD’s instructions and of myself do anything good or bad; I must say what the LORD tells me?’ ¹⁴ And now look, I’m going back to my people. Come, let me tell you what these people will do to your people in the future.” ¹⁵ Then he spoke his message:

“Balaam, Beor’s son, is speaking, the man with clear eyes is speaking, ¹⁶ he who hears God’s words is speaking; he knows what the Most High knows. He has a vision from the Almighty and falls down, and his eyes are opened: ¹⁷ I see Him who is not here now; I behold Him who will come later. A Star will come from Jacob, a Scepter will rise from Israel; He will smash Moab’s head and destroy all the sons of Sheth. ¹⁸ Edom will be occupied, Seir will be dispossessed by its enemies, and so Israel will show its power....

²⁵ Then Balaam left to go back home, and Balak also went his way.

Sermon Notes: _____

HONORING THE LORD WITH OUR FIRSTFRUITS:

- ▶ **Everyone – please sign a Record of Fellowship pad** (located near the center aisle of each pew).
- ▶ **Offertory**

(↑arise) KYRIE (Greek for “Lord”) (Mark 10:47): *We ask the Savior to mercifully provide our physical needs!*

L: Let us pray:	L: O Christ,	C: have mercy.
L: O Lord,	C: have mercy.	L: O Lord,
		C: have mercy.

LORD’S PRAYER (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4):

L: Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
 A: *(See the back inside cover of either hymnal for the words.)*

PRAYERS: Speaking to God in words and thoughts!

L: O Lord, hear my prayer.	2. For sorrow for sin.
C: And let my cry come to You.	3. For joy in Jesus!
After each petition:	4. For a renewed desire to fully live God’s Word.
L: Lord, in Your mercy.	5. For guidance to share the truth with others.
C: Hear our prayer.	L: We trust O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
1. For a true comparison between God’s Word and our lives.	C: Amen.

BENEDICAMUS and BENEDICTION (Psalm 103:1; 2 Corinthians 13:14):

L: Let us bless the Lord.	love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.
C: Thanks be to God.	C: Amen.
L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the	

HYMN and CANDLE EXTINGUISHING: “Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord” **TLH vv. 1-2, 4, 6, 8**



Midweek Advent Recital

James Alfieri, Organist
 Wednesday, December 18, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.

“Christmas Around the World”

by S. Tucker

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|---------|------------------------|
| France | “The Burgundian Carol” |
| Spain | “The Basque Carol” |
| Poland | “The Polish Carol” |
| Ireland | “The Wexford Carol” |

