

# SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS

Blue Christmas | December 7, 2021 | 6:15pm

*"...to Reach, Ignite, & Empower people for Jesus."*

Ecclesiastes 3:1

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven



## Call to Worship

*Pastor:* In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by God, and without God nothing came to be. What came to be through God was life, and this life was the light of the world.

**People: The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

## Welcome

### Hymn *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love  
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is given;  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.  
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray  
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us this day  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

## Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

### Psalm 22 *(All read the boldface verses together.)*

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?  
Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning?  
**O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer,  
and by night, but I find no rest.**

In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you delivered them.

**It was you who brought me from the womb,  
you who kept me safe on my mother's breast.  
Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.**

Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

**God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted. God does not hide from me.  
When I cry to God, God hears me. Thanks be to God.**

## Music Interlude

### Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.  
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters.  
He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.  
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;  
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.  
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies;  
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

## Litany of Remembrance

*(The first candle is lighted.)*

*Pastor:* We light this first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost.

We pause to remember clearly, their faces, their voices, their bodies.

We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

**All: We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.**

**Sing: O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### Reflection

Pastor Brice Bloxham

*(The second candle is lighted.)*

*Pastor:* We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss:

loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.

We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You,

asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

**All: We remember that through You all things are possible.  
Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.**

**Sing: O come thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily  
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### Reflection

Pastor Brice Bloxham

*(The third candle is lighted.)*

*Pastor:* We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens. We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered. We accept and lay before you the time we have walked alone, in darkness; and in knowledge of our own mortality.

**All: We remember that though we have journeyed far, and that, while lost, we may have turned away from the light, the light itself has not failed. We remember that though winter be upon us and though the light be dark, with the turning of the Wheel the dawn will come, and dawn defeats the darkness.**

**Sing: O come thou day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by thy advent here  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight  
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

### Reflection

Pastor Brice Bloxham

*(The fourth candle is lighted.)*

*Pastor:* We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us in the stories of Hanukkah and of Christmas, which both also began in abandonment, insecurity, and humbleness, in a time of war and in a poor stable. We remember that the loving God who kept the light shining in the temple and who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace.

**All: We remember the One who shares our burdens, who shows us the way to the Light,  
and who journeys with us into all our tomorrows.**

**Sing:** O come desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind  
Bid then our sad, divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

**Silence**

*Hymn          Away in a Manger*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little lord Jesus laid down his sweet head  
The stars in the sky looked down where he lay, the little lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love thee, lord Jesus, look down from the sky And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care and take me to heaven to live with thee there.

**Prayer**

*Pastor:* Let us pray.

**All:** Almighty God, we thank you for your constant love and for the blessings of this day.

We know that even when we cannot see or feel you, still you are there.

Help us to remember you and to listen for your voice in the words of family, friends, and strangers.

Kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you reveal yourself in the world and  
in our lives. Let the light of your holy Spirit shine like these candles in the darkness,

lighting the way for all who feel despairing, lost, or forgotten,

and grant that it may come to dwell so deeply in our hearts

that when we leave this place may shine on, for us and for those we meet along the way. Amen.

*Hymn          Silent Night*

Silent night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright

Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,

Holy Infant, so tender and mild. Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;

Glories stream from heaven afar,

Heav'nly hosts sing alleluia; Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from thy holy face, With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

**Blessing and Dismissal**

*Adapted from Blue Christmas..Discipleship Ministries, United Methodist Church*

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

# THE SIMPLICITY OF ADVENT WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

Nov 24 - Thanksgiving Eve/Pies for Praise

Dec 1 - HOPE

Dec 8 - PEACE

Dec 15 - JOY

Dec 22 - LOVE

PREMIERING IN THE SANCTUARY AND  
ONLINE VIA FACEBOOK LIVE  
WEDNESDAYS IN DECEMBER @6:15PM



# Christmas

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Dec 7 6:15PM Blue Christmas Service

Dec 12 8 & 10AM Homestyle Christmas Sunday

Dec 19 8 & 10AM Children's Christmas Program Sunday

Dec 24 3:30 & 5pm & 10pm In-Sanctuary Worship

Dec 25 10AM Christmas Story Lesson & Caroles service online at [sohsv.org](http://sohsv.org)

3920 NORTH VICTORIA STREET | SHOREVIEW, MN | 55126|SOHSV.ORG

## IN-SANCTUARY WORSHIP GUIDELINES

### Keeping Safe During the Service

- Masks required while in the building.
- There will be no nursery but there is an in-sanctuary "Kid's PRAYground."  
Families are encouraged to bring quiet toys (no busy-bags will be available) and remain together as a family during the service
- Water fountains have been disabled

### When You Depart

- Offertory may be left in the basket at the doors or done online on our website
- Take all of your items with you including communion supplies
- Go spread the news of Jesus Christ

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Wednesday Bible Study:** The afternoon Bible Study at 1 pm will be in-person in the Narthex. The evening Bible Study will meet at 6:45pm on Zoom, click [HERE](#) to join on Zoom. Note change of time of evening Bible Study during Advent to make room for our [Wednesday Advent Services](#) at 6:15pm in the Sanctuary or livestreamed.

**Donut Table Hosts needed:** Donut table hosts/servers are needed to set up and serve donuts during our gathering time on Sunday mornings. Time commitment is 8:40 to 10:00 am Sundays on a schedule that fits your availability. Please sign up at the donut table or contact Maria in the office to volunteer.

**Advent-To-Go:** Pick up your bag in the Narthex. We invite you to join us this Advent as we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child on Christmas. This year we will be spending our Wednesday evening worship services focusing on The Simplicity of Advent. In place of our Children's Message we will have an activity you can do together as a family. Bring your supplies with you to worship or do at home as you watch online LIVE or anytime after Wednesday evening.

### December Drive:

For the month of December we are collecting items from the "always Needed" list for Ralph Reeder: Canned meats, Tuna & Hamburger Helpers, Peanut Butter, Baking Supplies, Crackers, Granola Bars, Cereal, Toilet Paper, Laundry Detergent, mayonnaise, Ketchup, mac and cheese cups, Juice Boxes, Pudding Cups

### **Family Event:**

In December we'll be gathering to decorate cookies, have a gingerbread house building competition, other Christmas themed activities, and a dice game. We're asking each participant bring a wrapped gift costing less than \$10 (the Five Below store is a great place to look for an item) that kids will have a chance to roll for. We'll be gathering on **Friday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 – 7:30 pm.** Please plan to eat dinner beforehand. You'll be able to take your cookie and gingerbread house home with you. Like always, our event will be masked, we're also asking that you sign up beforehand so we know how many to anticipate. To sign up or ask questions reach out to **Pastor Brice**.

### 2022 Winter Book Study:

Our Winter Book Study will be focused on *I Can Do No Other* by Anna Madsen. We will be meeting via every other week on Wednesdays at 2:30pm and Thursdays at 6:30pm via zoom, join us for the time that works best for you. Starts January 5th/6th, see the newsletter for further information.

Do you ever feel antsy while you sit at church or maybe have a difficult time focusing? Try out this Finger Prayer Labyrinth. It is meant for you to trace your finger around the path as you breath or pray.

Prayer Labyrinths are an ancient spiritual practice and their intent is to be a source of centering and reconnecting with the moment or through prayer reconnecting with God.

If you find yourself in need of centering during the worship service, feel free to use this Finger Prayer Labyrinth! Even if you don't need centering but just want to give it a try you can do so now or take it home and use it throughout the week!



## CONTACT INFORMATION

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<b>Building Ambassadors</b> , Baeza Tensaie & Dalanie Oliver		
<b>Social Media Specialist</b> , Ronni Winn		

**Serving in Worship Tonight:** Elsa Keeler, Singer

### How Can You Support Shepherd Financially?

Online Giving [sohsv.org](http://sohsv.org)

Stocks

Offertory Envelopes

Endowment Fund

Text to Give: 651.412.7495

## CONNECT WITH US

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Our App

