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Bethel United Church of Christ Bulletin
November 29, 2020 – First Sunday of Advent

“It seems to me we can never give up longing and wishing while we are thoroughly alive. There are certain

things we feel to be beautiful and good, and we must hunger after them.” George Eliot, 19th C

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *“Good Christian Men Rejoice”* J.S. Bach Bethel Recorders

CALL TO WORSHIP

There is so much to learn from the world all around us.

The seasons come and go. Earth is renewed.

Hope is fulfilled. Faith is restored.

God’s Word, God’s World, God’s Wisdom, are all connected.

Let us learn from God and from each other.

Jesus walked among us long ago. Jesus is in our midst today.

Jesus will be born again in our hearts!

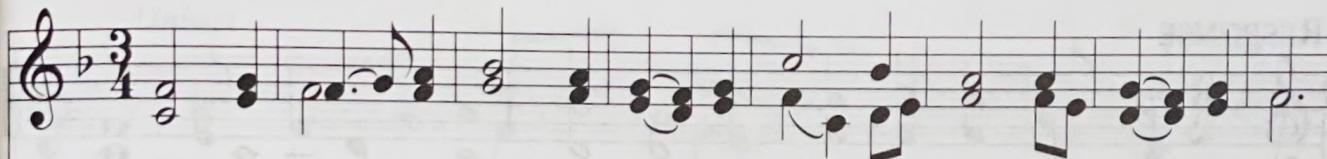
PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

God of Hope, open our hearts to your word that we might learn with joy your desire for us. We wait with anticipation the coming of Christ into our lives. The Advent season is a time of preparation. Keep us ever watchful as we journey to the manger. Amen

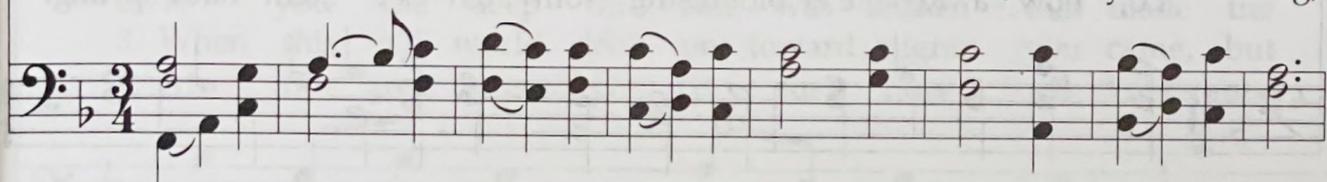
OPENING HYMN#125 *“Come, O Long-expected Jesus”*

Come, O Long-expected Jesus

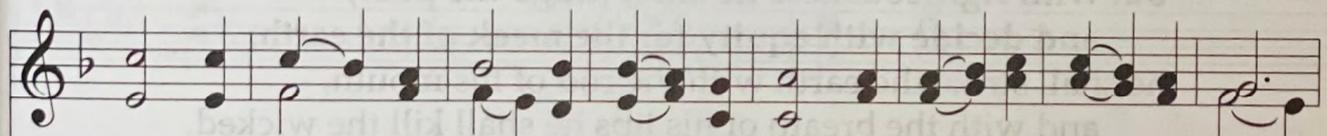
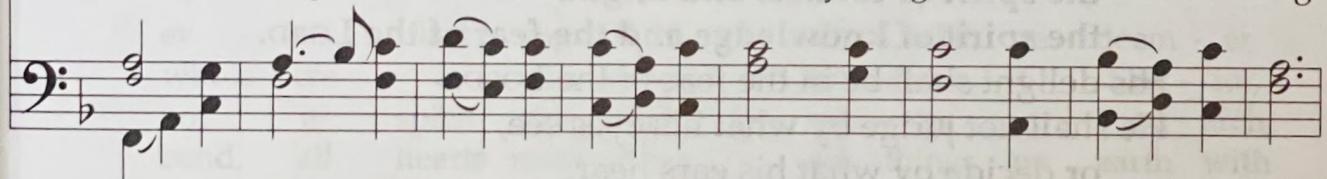
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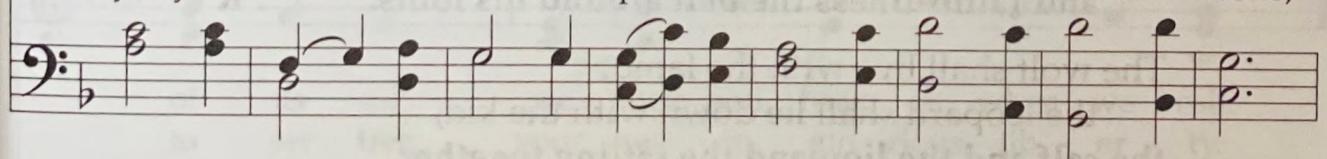
1. Come, O long-ex-pect-ed Je-sus, born to set your peo-ple free.
2. Born your peo-ple to de-liv-er, born a child, and yet a king,



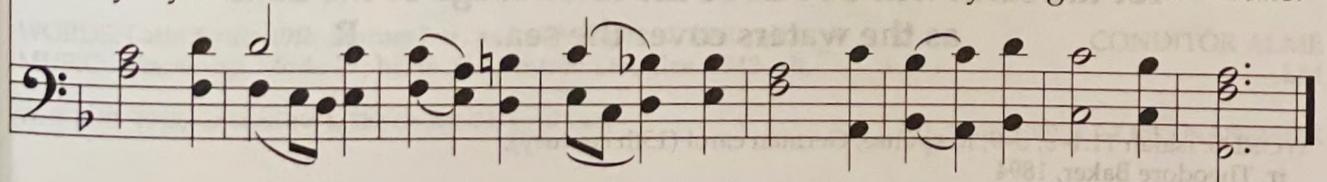
From our fears and sins re-lease us; Christ, in whom our rest shall be.
born to reign in us for-ev-er, born your grac-ious realm to bring.



You, our strength and con-so-la-tion, come sal-va-tion to im-part;
By your own e-ter-nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a-lone;



dear de-sire of man-y a na-tion, joy of man-y a long-ing heart.
by your all-suf-fi-cient mer-it raise us to your glo-rious throne.



LIGHTING THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE- "HOPE"

Kim Heft

Today we light the first Advent candle: HOPE (light the candle) (congregation sings)

One Candle is Lit (#128)

*Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,
our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.
Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage.
One candle is lit for the HOPE of the age.*

Let us pray: (unison)

Oh God, give us the strength and courage to hope as we wait again for Christ to come into our hearts. Let HOPE fill our lives as we continue to walk to the manger together. Amen.

**edited from Seasons of Hope: Reading for the Liturgical Year by David E. Butler, c1998*

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

Ever present God, we ask that you not judge us by our actions, our callousness, our lack of concern for hurting people, our cynicism about your world and our prejudices. No matter where we stray, you stand before us, our rock, our salvation. Forgive us. Inspire us to repentance. Receive us once more. We want to see the face of Christ. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE#305

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"

305 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray - ing, Lord, send your spir - it
in this place; Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray - ing,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace. grace!

1 (optional) Final

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "305 Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying". It is written in 2/2 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is arranged in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are: "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. grace!". The final system includes a first ending marked "1 (optional)" and a final cadence marked "Final".

OUR SACRED STORIES

Isaiah 64:1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence— as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil— to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.

We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

Mark 13:24-37

“But in those days, after that suffering,

the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light,
and the stars will be falling from heaven,
and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.

Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in clouds’ with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.”

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

"The Shape of Love"

SPECIAL MUSIC MESSAGE

"Sans Day Caro"
"Work to be Done"

arr. Eric Haas

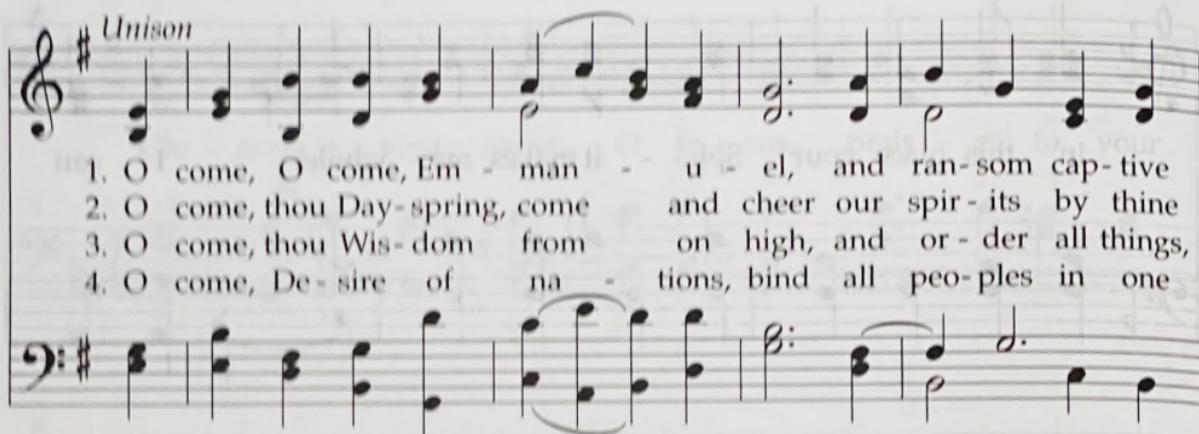
Bethel Recorders
Rev. Karen J. Aitkens

HYMN#119

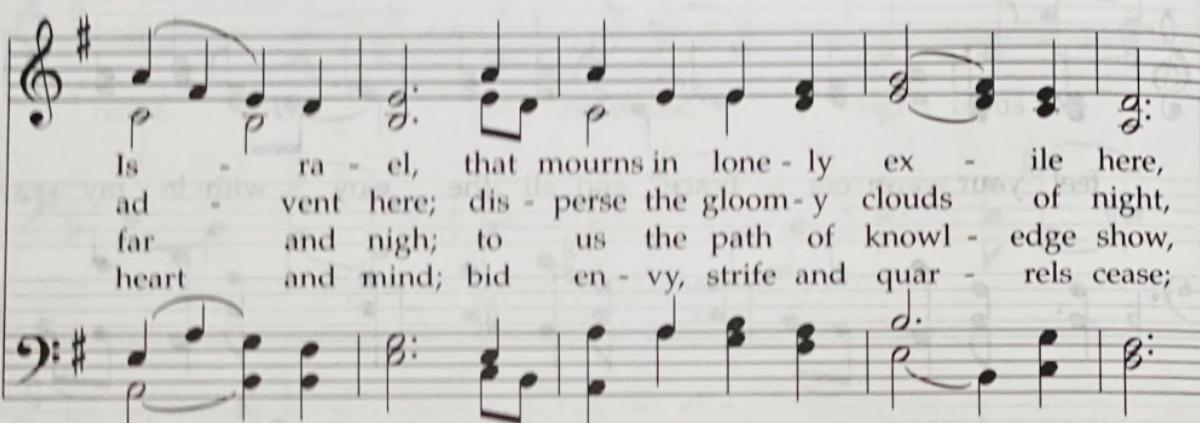
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 1,2)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Unison

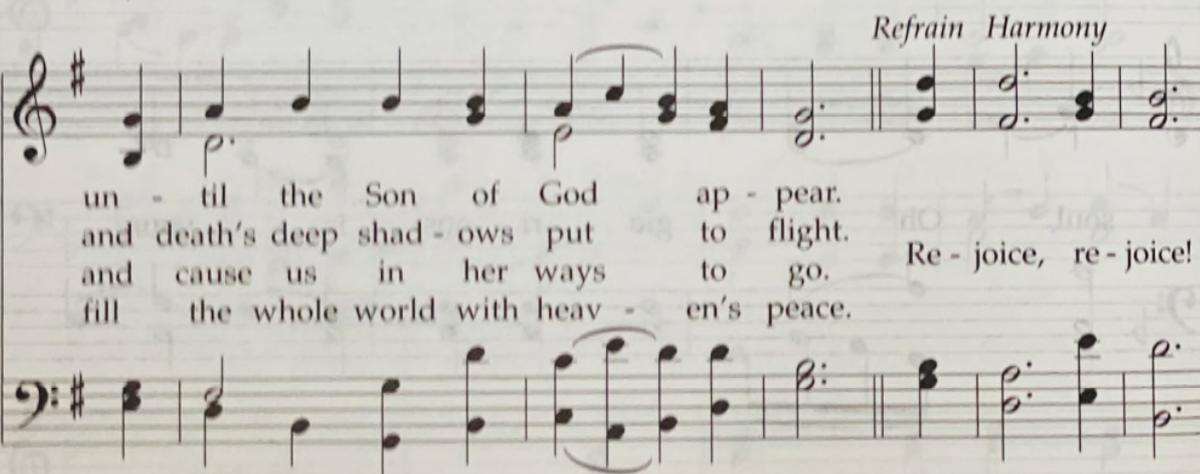


1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2. O come, thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spir - its by thine
 3. O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, and or - der all things,
 4. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind all peo - ples in one

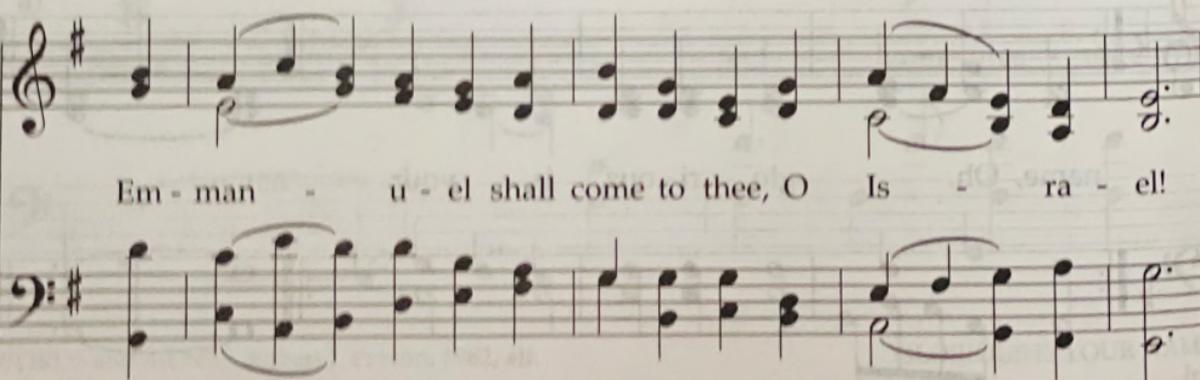


Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here,
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show,
 heart and mind; bid en - vy, strife and quar - rels cease;

Refrain Harmony



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 and death's deep shad - ows put to flight.
 and cause us in her ways to go. Re - joice, re - joice!
 fill the whole world with heav - en's peace.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/LORD'S PRAYER (*forgive us our sins...*)
RESPONSE#306 "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord"

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Hear Our Prayer, O Lord" (number 306). The score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and includes piano accompaniment. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, in-cline thine ear to us, and grant us thy peace. A-men." The score is presented on two systems of staves, with the vocal parts and piano accompaniment clearly visible.

OFFERING OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO GOD

Invitation

Offertory

Response to Praise

"I Wonder as I Wander" arr. Eric Haas
Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above the heavenly host.
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Bethel Recorders

Prayer of Dedication

CLOSING HYMN#119

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 3&4)

COMMISSION/BENEDICTION

As we prepare for the Light of the World, let us feel new life emerging.

We will embrace the signs of Christ in the life we share!

Let the love of the Holy Spirit surround us.

With open hearts filled with HOPE, we prepare for Christ to enter in again.

Keep alert as we enter this Advent season. And let us proclaim together:

Renew us, O God and let Christ's light shine through us. Amen.

POSTLUDE

"Sussex Carol"

arr. Eric Haas

Bethel Recorders