

† Eighth Reformed Church †
Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22, 2024 - 9:30 am
Order of Worship

Piano Prelude

Greetings and Announcements

Call to Worship/Advent Reading Jeff & Patty VanMeekeren

Reader: When the people were looking for deliverance, the prophet Micah declared, “But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah...from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient day.” (Micah 5:2). But what if Micah is also talking to us, proclaiming, “But you, O Eighth Reformed Church, from you shall come forth for me...” What? What might God be calling forth from us?

Congregation: God invites us to receive the promise of God’s salvation and the sustenance of God’s mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God’s invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

Reader: We light this candle of love as a sign of our commitment to live as people of God’s promise, a promise of salvation and flourishing for all people that springs forth from God’s love for all creation.

*Opening Hymn # 258

Go Tell It on the Mountain

Opening Prayer

Choir

O Holy Night

Prayers of the People

*Hymn of Preparation # 278 *Angels We Have Heard on High*

Scripture: John 1:1-14 (page 1509)

Message: **“Just Like Us -- Almost”**

*Hymn of Response # 281 *What Child Is This?*

Offering and Offertory

**Doxology* # 815, Offertory Prayer

*Benediction

*Closing Hymn # 243 *Emmanuel*

Postlude

(*Please stand if you are able.)

Welcome!

Welcome to worship at Eighth Reformed Church on this Fourth Sunday of Advent. We pray that the little Child of Bethlehem will find a welcome in your heart and in your life, and that you may know the wonder of being loved unconditionally, cherished unceasingly, and saved everlastingly. Our prayer is that your time here will be uplifting and joyful. If you are visiting with us today, please sign our guest register in the Narthex, and if you are looking for a church home, we hope that you will return to worship with us again.

Church Office: 616-452-9417
Website: 8thchurch.org
Email: 8threformed@gmail.com

Our worship service is Sunday morning at 9:30 am.
It is broadcast on WYGR Radio “Jethro FM” at
94.9 FM or 1530 AM. You can also listen to our
service live on the web at Jethro.fm.

Opportunities for Worship and Service This Week

Pastor: Pastor Harry Koops

Organist: Paul Kerkstra

Pianist: Ruth Tacoma

Song Leader: Pete Rusticus

Trumpet: David Ellis

Greeters: North door: Fred Diekman

Organ door: Todd Riemersma

Elder (organ door, post service): Pete Rusticus

Valet/Lift: Rob Pols

Parking Lot Guard: TBA

Ushers: John Deppe Jr., Larry Rudnik

Sound: Scott Diekman

Radio: Scott Pastoor

Praying with Pastor: Doug VanderMeer, Rick Miller

Volunteer Deacons: John Stapel, John Deppe Jr.

Coffee/Cookie Donators/Servers: Marsa Barclay, Joy Hendricks

Opportunities for Worship and Service Next Week

Pastor: Pastor Garrett Sweeney

Organist: Paul Kerkstra

Pianist: Ruth Tacoma

Song Leader: Terry Grooters

Trumpet: David Ellis

Greeters: North door: Fred Diekman

Organ door: Todd Riemersma

Elder (organ door, post service): Tim Tacoma

Valet/Lift: Danielle Wagenmaker

Parking Lot Guard: TBA

Ushers: John Deppe Jr., Pastor Harry

Sound: Scott Diekman

Radio: Kevin VanHeukelom

Praying with Pastor: Doug VanderMeer, Rick Miller

Volunteer Deacons: John Stapel, John Deppe Jr.

Coffee/Cookie Donators/Servers: Marj Hedges, Deb Jacobson

This Week's Events

Today:

9:30 a.m. Worship, followed by coffee in the Narthex.

Monday:

1:00 p.m. Monday Bible Study.

Wednesday:

9:30 a.m. Christmas Morning Worship.

Church News and Future Events

Bulletin Announcements: Marilee Takken, the secretary, is in the office Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Please have all announcements to her by 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday. If you leave a note for her, please put it in the black mailbox on her desk in the church office. Thank you.



Christmas Morning Worship: Please join us this Wednesday, Christmas morning, at 9:30 a.m. as we come together to celebrate the true meaning of this special day – the incredible gift of Jesus. The Christmas offering will be designated for the “Jesus Film” Project.

The Mitten Tree will remain up through Christmas morning worship. Thank you to everyone whose donations have so beautifully decorated the tree this year!

No Coffee and Donut Fellowship Time for the next 2 Wednesdays. We'll see you on January 8, 2025!

No Sunday School Classes will meet today or next Sunday, the 29th. All classes will resume on January 5, 2025.

Church Offering Envelopes have been placed in mailboxes. If you didn't receive yours, or if you would like to begin using envelopes in the new year, please see Shannon Wagoner. (Starting in 2025, the Deacons will be providing 'giving receipts' upon request for only those using the envelope system.)

Winter Coat Drive: Winter coats are a necessity for Michigan winters. Not everyone has a coat. Over the next month we are collecting gently used and new coats for Alpha Center (the same folks we do the Diaper Drive for). There is a box in the Narthex near the ladies rest room to collect your donations. We will collect through January 5th, 2025. Thank you for your support.

Dear Congregation, It's that time of year when we ask you to pray about names to submit to fill elder (2) and deacon (2) positions for 3-year-terms. As you do, please consider the guidelines on the bulletin insert. Names may be submitted in the offering plate or given to current consistory members no later than January 12th. Be sure to ask the person before submitting their name to see if they are willing to serve. No one is EVER obligated to serve in this capacity. Our retiring deacon is Rick Miller and Terri Oosterhouse is our retiring elder. (Two elder and two deacon positions are being filled as the size of Consistory is increasing - see Consistory Notes on back of bulletin.) Consistory will review the names submitted. After that, they will be submitted for the casting of lots at our February 16th Congregational Meeting (held during Sunday School time downstairs in the Fellowship Hall).

From Alex & Cami Vlassin, our Romanian Missionaries: We pray that you enjoy a very Merry Christmas! It is a great blessing we can all celebrate Jesus' birth and enjoy His presence in our lives. Thank you for being part of our team in prayer and financial support. We are blessed beyond words to have you as our partners.

Church Activity Cancellations: In the event that Eighth decides to cancel services and/or activities, please tune your TV to Channels 8 (WOOD) or 13 (WZZM), our Prayer Chain, or Eighth Reformed Facebook page.

Prayer Concerns and Praises

- ❖ Praise! My sister-in-law, Judie Heuvelhorst, has moved back to her condo. Thank you for how faithful you all were with prayers and cards during her long recovery.
~Mary Roelofs and the Heuvelhorst Family
- ❖ Betty Holmes has some heart and lung concerns with additional testing scheduled in the New Year.
- ❖ Please be in prayer for Mary and Jerry Lothschutz, sister and brother-in-law to Rick and Debbie Miller, as it has been a tough week for Mary who is dealing with an infection and being treated through a pic line. Please pray there will not be a need to do surgery. Her husband, Jerry, had another heart attack and according to Cleveland Clinic he is not a candidate for any more treatments or surgery.
- ❖ Ernie Otto continues to be under Hospice Care.
- ❖ Homebound or in a Care Facility: This week we remember Gladys Kessel and Judy VanderMeer.
- ❖ Missionary of the Month: Please pray for Angel Lopez who lives near the El Paso, TX and Mexico border. He collaborates with Border of Grace Church where guests find refuge and a place of worship on their migration journey. He also educates other congregations about the border situation and provides advocacy resources for immigrants.
- ❖ Those dealing with health issues: Deb Pierce, Rick Boom, Phil Tymes, Larry Rudnik, Michelle Strating (Dick & Lorraine Strating's daughter-in-law), Gail Rinvelt (Shannon Wagoner's aunt), Renee (Cindi Ralph's friend), Joan Emaus, Arvilla DeVries, Ron & Jenny Benedict, Glenn Bartman, Kim Wiggers (Arvilla DeVries' daughter), Heath Misiak, Joe (David Shaver's uncle), and RJ Poel.

Notes of Appreciation

Thank you very much for the beautiful cards from my church family. They are greatly appreciated. Merry Christmas to all!

~Joyfully Yours, Joy Stulp

Dear Congregation: Thank You and the deacon board for a most generous Christmas gift. We feel so blessed and spoiled by you, the dear people of this congregation. You make it such a joy for Beth and I to serve as your Under-shepherd. We are so aware of your love, support, encouragement and prayers -- not just now but on a regular basis. In many ways it seems excessive and we are humbled by it. With you we are excited what God is doing here at 8th and look forward with eager anticipation to see what He has in-store for 2025. May there be much joy in serving Him together.

~Pastor Harry and Beth

Betty Holmes and her family are thankful for your prayers for Tobias and Anna (Betty's grandchildren). They are currently waiting to see what the New Year holds.

Thank you all for the birthday cards, visits, and prayers. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated.

~Marve Nyenhuis

Thank you to everyone for the birthday cards and wishes. They were truly appreciated.

~Barb Dreyer

Dear Church Family at 8th, Thank you so much for praying for my daughter, Ashley, and her family. It has been a very trying time but God has graciously heard your prayers and has blessed them beyond what we could have pictured. Thank you and Thank you, Jesus.

~Merry Christmas, Kristi Schell

(Ashley's address: 3232 Larue St. SW, Grandville, MI 49418)