



“...Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.”

~Matthew 1:20

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
4th Sunday of Advent – December 18, 2022
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Rev. Katie McNeal, Presiding Minister
Maizy Fisher, Director of Music Ministries

*We are delighted to have you worship with us this morning!
Know that you are welcome here just as you are*

If you are looking for a church to call home, why not consider making this one your own? If this is your first time visiting us, please fill out the visitor information card stapled to your bulletin.

*Everything you need to follow worship can be found in this bulletin. As you are comfortable, please rise when there is an * and join in the congregational responses, noted in **bold**.*

All songs are marked with numbers. The red book in the pew has all the songs. Look for the large number in the upper corner of the page to find the correct song.

During the time of Peace, you are invited to turn to those around you and offer a word of peace. We suggest a handshake and saying, "Peace be with you." You are also welcomed to offer another gesture of peace (wave, fist-bump, smile, etc.). Hand sanitizer is available in each pew.

At the time of Offering, you are invited to share a gift as you are comfortable. You may also place any prayer requests for the pastor in the offering plates.

If you need a restroom, restrooms are located on the bottom floor at the far side of the building from the elevator. Restrooms may be accessed either via the stairs in the rear of the sanctuary, the stairs by the Greeting Area, or the elevator.

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to fill out the blue prayer request forms located in each pew. The cards will be collected during our hymn of the day, and prayers will be offered during the prayers of the people.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

We join our voices together in song, waiting hopefully, expectantly for the fullness of Christ's presence in our lives and in our world. We light this candle as we look to how God's goodness has grown quietly in our midst, like the infant who has grown just out of sight. This final candle reminds us of the times we see and hold God's promise for ourselves.

The fourth candle is lit during the singing of the hymn.

ADVENT SONG *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah* (ELW 240)

Verses 1, 2, 3 and 4



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we wait and dream for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior.

Amen.

*KYRIE



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal-va-tion, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



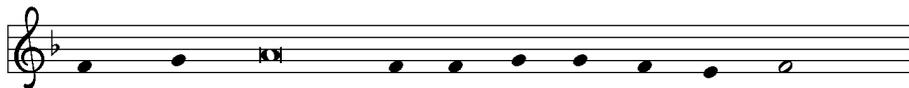
For this ho-ly house, and for all who of-fer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de-fend us, gra-cious Lord.



A - men.

***CONFESSION**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever.

Amen.

Now is the time to wake from sleep.
God is here, and God sees through every defense
that fools the world.

Since we cannot hide from God,
there is nothing left to do
but to be honest with each other
and humble before God.

So, in humility,
we confess our sins.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings,
we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.

We have strayed from your paths.

We prepare for war instead of peace.

We dishonor one another and your creation.

**Purify us with your refining fire
and set us again on your way of love,
that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,
and welcome your coming among us.**

Amen.

***ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS**

People of God,
Before our first mistakes,
God perfected the plan for our salvation in Jesus Christ.
Receive now the gift we have in God the Holy Trinity,
the gift of grace and the total forgiveness of all sins. †
Be free to love and rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen.

***GATHERING SONG *O Come O Come Emmanuel* (ELW 257)**

Verses 1-4



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

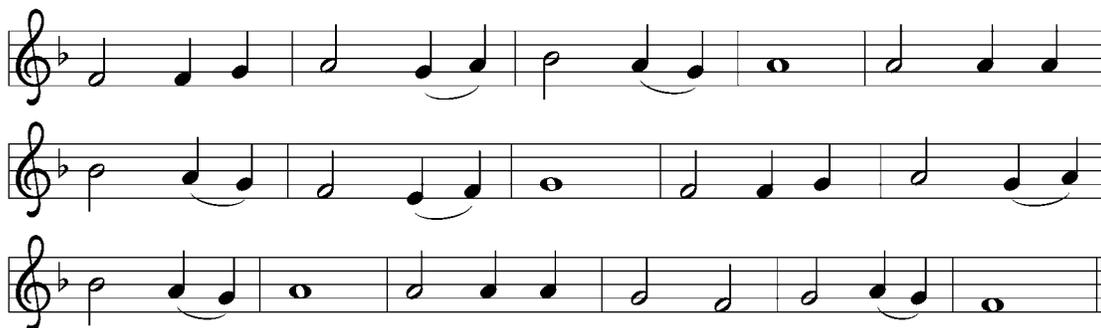
A reading from the book of Isaiah.

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. ¹³Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 80:1-7



**1. O Shepherd, like a flock you lead
Your people Israel; hear our prayer;
Enthroned upon the cherubim
In glory, shine on our despair.**

**2. Before Manasseh, Benjamin,
And Ephraim, Lord, grant us your
grace;
Restore us, O Lord God of hosts,
And show the glory of your face.**

**3. How long will you be angered, Lord,
Although we kneel before your feet?
You give us bowls of tears to drink,
Provide us bread of tears to eat.**

**4. Our enemies laugh us to scorn,
Our neighbors witness our disgrace;
Restore us, O Lord God of hosts,
Show us the glory of your face.**

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

A reading from the book of Romans.

¹Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, ⁷to all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al-le-lu - ia, al - le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

Repeat alleluia

*GOSPEL READING: Matthew 1:18-25

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, ²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

CHILDREN'S SERMON

SERMON

***HYMN OF THE DAY** *O Come O Come Emmanuel* (ELW 257)

Verses 5-8

(Blue prayer cards are collected during the song.)

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*

- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer,
O Son of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*

- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
Refresh the hearts that long for you:
Restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*

- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

***APOSTLES' CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**



*PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. Raise up leaders in every nation who dream of and work toward freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights. Lord, hear our prayer.

Sung Response:

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart!

God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to those experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely. Lord, hear our prayer.

Sung Response:

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart!

God our Emmanuel, you are with us in our life together. We give you thanks for gathering us in worship and fellowship, and we remember those who cannot be present. Watch over those who travel. Heal the sick and speed their recovery especially Jeff, Bob, Katie, Marcia, Geneva, Cherry, Winnie, Chuck, Henry, Harry, Roy, Ellen, Ruth, Sally, Beverly, those on our prayer list, and all whom we remember aloud or in our hearts (*a brief silence for prayers*). God our hope, you bring life out of death, and you promise to be our God forever. Shine upon the faithful who now rest in the fulfillment of your promise and bring us also into your blessed reign of peace. Bring comfort to those who are grieving, especially the family of Ralph Storm. Lord, hear our prayer.

Sung Response:

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord; be strong, take heart!

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. You hear the prayers on our hearts that do not yet have words. We trust you to hear the prayers on the hearts of this congregation this day, especially (*received prayer cards are read*). In Jesus' name we pray.



*SHARING THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY HYMN *He Came Down* (ELW 253)

**Rise on 4th verse*



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Eternal God,
you make the desert bloom
and send springs of water to thirsty ground.
Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,
and make us messengers of your mercy and love
for all in need of your healing and justice.
We ask this through Christ our Savior.
Amen.

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The musical score consists of five staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across multiple notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics for the first staff are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might, heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. The second staff continues the lyrics: Ho - san - na in the high - est. The third staff continues: Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The fourth and fifth staves repeat the lyrics: Ho - san - na in the high - est. The score ends with a double bar line.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Ho - san - na in the high - est.

You are indeed holy, almighty, and merciful God.
In great love you send to us Jesus, your Son,
who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
who preached good news to the poor,
and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving death, resurrection, and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God,
not as we ought but as we are able.
For you allowed yourself to die
the same way you were born:
as a fragile person.

We ask you to bless this meal that we are about to receive,
that through your gifts of bread and wine,
we may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
in love and service to you and your people.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen**

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Come and encounter the God who waits to love you.

Through this meal, we know forgiveness, life, and salvation as the blessings of God's sacramental grace. In response to Jesus' invitation, all are welcome to come forward and experience the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine. Those who do not receive the bread and wine are invited to come forward for a blessing.

Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available upon request. Communion may also be brought back to the pews for those who are unable to come forward.

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you
take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy
on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

COMMUNION HYMN *People, Look East* (ELW 248)



1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look



east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

***BLESSING OF COMMUNION OUTREACH**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist us in this ministry on which we are sent forth. Bless those who carry your heavenly food to those unable to be with us this day. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those to whom we bring this sacrament, that through the body and blood of your Son we all may know the comfort of your abiding presence. **Amen.**

***POST-COMMUNION PRAYER**

Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.
As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled,
sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.
Guide us toward your promised future,
coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*BLESSING

God the eternal Word,
who dwells with us in Jesus,
and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit,
✠ bless you now and forever.
Amen.

*SENDING SONG *Joy to the World* (ELW 267)



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

*DISMISSAL

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Go in peace. Christ is near.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Assisting in worship today:

Assisting Minister: Denise Hager

Acolyte:

Ushers:

Offering:

Attendance last week: 45 + 5 zoom

Notes for the day's texts:

Today Isaiah prophesies that a young woman will bear a son and name him Emmanuel. The gospel is Matthew's account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, God-with-us. During these final days of Advent we pray, "O come, O come, Emmanuel," a beloved hymn based on the O Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.

Today's Music

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah. Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954, Music: Yiddish folk tune. Augsburg Fortress.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel. Text: *Psalteriolum Canticum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. Composite, Music: French processional, 15th cent. Augsburg Fortress / Public Domain.

He Came Down. Text: Cameroon traditional, Music: Cameroon traditional; arr. John L. Bell, b. 1949. Public Domain / GIA Publications, Inc..

People, Look East. Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965, Music: French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934. David Higham Associates / Public Domain.

Joy to the World. Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, Music: English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792-1872. Public Domain.

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