

Traditional Worship

December 21, 2025

Fourth Sunday of Advent

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.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – arr. Wilbur Held

RINGING OF THE STEEPLE BELL *

*As the bell is rung the assembly stands for the Welcome & Opening Hymn.
A * in the order of service indicates that those who are able are invited to stand.*

WELCOME *

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Assembly: And also with you.

OPENING HYMN #257 – Verses 1-4 *

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS *

Leader: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
 who sends the Word to awaken the world,
 who makes all things new,
 who prepares our hearts for the coming Christ.

Assembly: Amen.

Leader: In this season of watching and waiting,
let us come before God with humility,
confessing our sin and longing for the dawn of God's mercy.

(Silence for reflection)

Leader: Living God,

Assembly: we confess that we are not awake to your presence.

We have wandered from your paths,
ignored the cries of our neighbors,
and failed to keep watch for your coming.

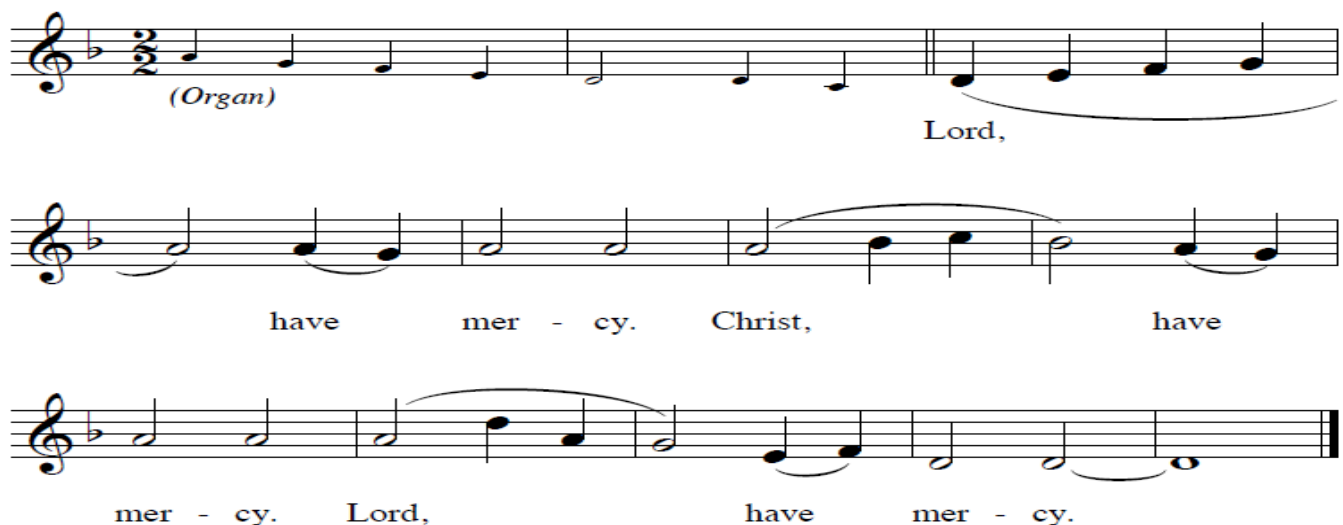
By your mercy, forgive us.

Turn us again to your ways of justice and peace.

Renew us with your Spirit,

that we may welcome you with joy
when you come among us in power.

Amen.



Leader: People of God, hear the glad news:
The dawn from on high breaks upon us.
Through the mercy of + Christ, your sins are forgiven,
and you are set free to prepare the way of the Lord
with hope, courage, and love.

Assembly: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Wait for the Lord

*As the Advent Wreath is lighted the cantor will sing the chant
and then the assembly will join the cantor in singing the chant.*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.

The musical notation is for a two-part setting in G major (one sharp). The treble staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, a quarter note B4, and a half note C5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The accompaniment starts with a whole note G3, followed by a half note A3, a quarter note B3, and a half note C4. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!

The musical notation continues the two-part setting. The treble staff continues the melody with a half note D5, a quarter note E5, and a half note F#5. The bass staff continues the accompaniment with a half note D3, a quarter note E3, and a half note F#3. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Text: Taizé Community

Music: WAIT FOR THE LORD, Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994

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PRAYER OF THE DAY *

Leader: 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.

Assembly: Amen.

WORD

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

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ “Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” ¹² But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.” ¹³ Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore 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. ¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For 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.”

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

Assembly: Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

*The cantor sings the Psalm Refrain and then the assembly joins in the refrain.
The cantor then sings the verses and the assembly joins in each refrain.*



¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

² In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.

³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴ O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?...*Refrain*

- ⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- ⁶ You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- ⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- ¹⁷ Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.
- ¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- ¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved...*Refrain*

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

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

⁷ To 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

Assembly: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *



GOSPEL LESSON *

Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, the first chapter.

Assembly: Glory to you, O Lord.

¹⁸ Now 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 pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But 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. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"
which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

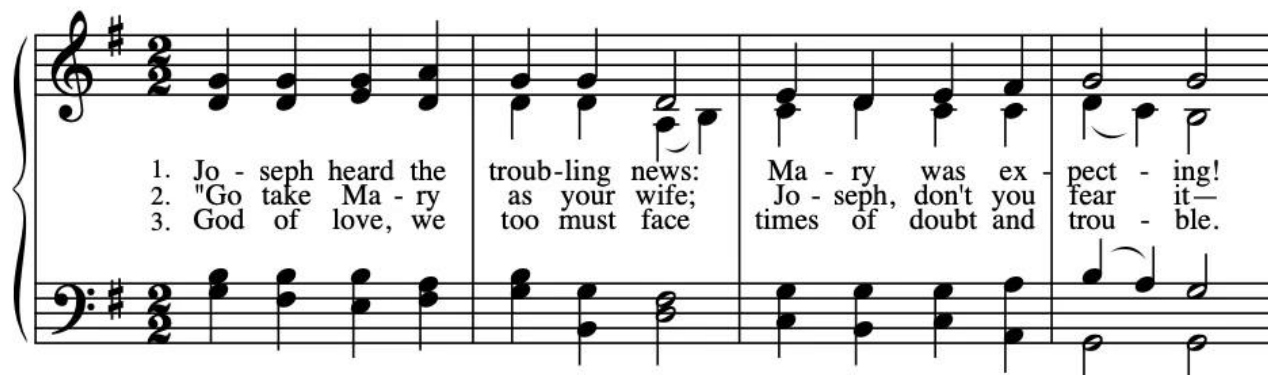
Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

Assembly: Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *

Joseph Heard the Troubling News



1. Jo - seph heard the troub-ling news: Ma - ry was ex - pect - ing!
 2. "Go take Ma - ry as your wife; Jo - seph, don't you fear it—
 3. God of love, we too must face times of doubt and trou - ble.



What should he, a just man, do? He sought God's di - rect - ing.
 God has formed a pre-cious life by the Ho - ly Spir - it!
 May we know your dai - ly grace, ev - en when we strug - gle.



Jo - seph thought to send her home— leave her, with - out blam - ing;
 Ma - ry soon will bear a son; you shall name him Je - sus.
 Just as Jo - seph an-swered, "Yes!" with new de - di - ca - tion,



then an an - gel in a dream spoke of joy pro - claim - ing:
 When the pro - phet spoke of him, he said, 'God is with us!"
 we re-joice, for we've been blessed by your in - car - na - tion.

Biblical Text: Matthew 1:18-25

Tune: *Piae Cantones*, 1852. Arr. by Ernest C. MacMillan, 1930

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APOSTLE'S CREED *

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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 *

The assembly responds to each petition ending in "God of grace,"

Assembly: Hear our prayer.

The assembly responds to the final petition ending with "through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel."

Assembly: Amen.

PEACE *

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you always!

Assembly: And also with you!

*The assembly greets each other with
"peace be with you...and also with you."*

You're invited to share God's peace with those around you.

If you're worshipping on Facebook, you may also greet one another in the comments.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

In Christ's body and blood given to us, God forgives us and nourishes us for mission.

OFFERING

As we respond to hearing God's Word and prepare to feast at God's table we contemplate the many ways we serve the Kingdom of God through our time, talents, and gifts.

Offering plates will be passed among the assembly by the ushers.

Gifts can also be given electronically using the QR Code.



8:00 – *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine* – arr. Brian Dean

*"Joseph dearest, Joseph mine, help me cradle the Child divine.
God reward thee and all that's thine in Paradise,"
So prays the Virgin Mary.*

*"Gladly, dear one, lady mine, help I cradle this Child divine.
God's own light on us shall shine in Paradise,
As prays the mother Mary."*

*He came among us at Christmastide in Bethlehem.
Men shall bring Him from far and wide love's diadem.*

*Jesu, Jesu,
Lo, he comes and loves, and saves, and frees us.*

11:00 – *Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine* – arr. James Kirby

*"Joseph dearest, Joseph mine, help me rock the Child divine;
God reward thee and all that's thine in paradise,"
so prays the mother Mary.*

*"Gladly, dear one, lady mine, I will rock this child of thine;
Heav'nly light on us shall shine in paradise,
As prays the mother Mary."*

*Sweet and lovely little one, princely, beauteous God's own Son,
Without thee were we all undone: our love is won by thine,
O Son of Mary.*

*Heav'nly Child, thou Lord of all, meanly housed in ox's stall,
Free our souls in Satan's thrall:
On thee we call, thou blessed Son of Mary.*

OFFERTORY *

In the Lord I'll be Ever Thankful



The musical notation is written on three staves in 3/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are: In the Lord I'll be ev - er thank - ful, in the Lord I will re -
joice! Look to God, do not be a - fraid; lift up your
voic - es, the Lord is near; lift up your voic - es, the Lord is near.

GREAT THANKSGIVING *

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

Assembly: And also with you.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

Assembly: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Assembly: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Pastor: 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:

(Organ)

Ho - ly, ho - ly,

ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,

heav'n 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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION *

Pastor: 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.

We pray as our Lord has taught us...

LORD'S PRAYER *

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.

LAMB OF GOD *

(Organ)

Lamb of

God, you take a - way the sins of the world:

have mer - cy on us. Lamb

of God, you take a - way the sins of the

world: have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the

sins of the world: grant us peace.

HOLY COMMUNION

All those who confess Jesus as Lord and Savior are welcome to the table.

We invite you to come forward to receive the communion elements from the servers.

You will be handed a wafer from the server and are invited to select a cup of wine from the tray.

Pre-packaged elements of grape juice and gluten free wafers are available

in the baskets at the communion rail and at each entrance to the sanctuary.

You may partake of the elements at the communion rail and dispose of the cups and packaging in the baskets at the end of each communion rail or take the elements back to your pew to partake of them and dispose of the cups and packaging after the service.

"Bread from the Lord's Table" and/or a pastoral blessing are available for children who do not yet commune.

Pastor: Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

As you are served communion:

Communion Server: The body of Christ, given for you.
The blood of Christ, shed for you

Communion Receiver: Amen.

Music at Distribution – *Savior of the Nations, Come*

8:00 & 11:10 – Organ - Chorale – J. S. Bach

Organ – Ornamented Prelude – Dietrich Buxtehude

11:10 – Hymn #263

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

Leader: God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Assembly: Amen.

SENDING

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

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONNECTION & SERVICE

BLESSING *

Leader: May God who comes among us,
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

Assembly: Amen.

SENDING HYMN #257 – Verses 5-8 *

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

DISMISSAL *

Leader: Go in peace.
God is with us!

Assembly: **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE *

O Come, O Come Emmanuel – arr. Robert Powell

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS:

Pastor Leslie Fox Lott, Transition Pastor
Pastor Denny Asp, Associate Pastor
Deacon Diane Schwiger-Alexander, Director of Youth & Family
Brian Timm, 8:00 Lector & Communion Assistant
Karl Petzinger, 11:10 Lector & Communion Assistant
Pris Petzinger, 11:10 Communion Assistant
Chad Baker, Director of Worship & Music
Alyse Hancock-Phillips, Cantor
Jane McFadden, Chancel Choir Accompanist

FLOWER DEDICATION:

*The altar flowers are given in gratitude for the blessing of our family
and God's gift of His Son at Christmas by Michael and Bev Sapienza.*

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Hymn of the Day – Joseph Heard the Troubling News – used with permission of text writer
