



# Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2020

## *Jesus' Birth Announced*

*Waiting can be a hard, but necessary element in the arrival of something important.*

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

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### Prelude

*Still, Still, Still*

### Announcements

### Gathering Music

*Advent Wreath Candle Lighting*

Red ELW 240 vs. 4

Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
let the light banish darkness.  
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining

### Confession & Forgiveness

We confess our sins before God and one another.

*Pause for silence and reflection.*

Renewing God,

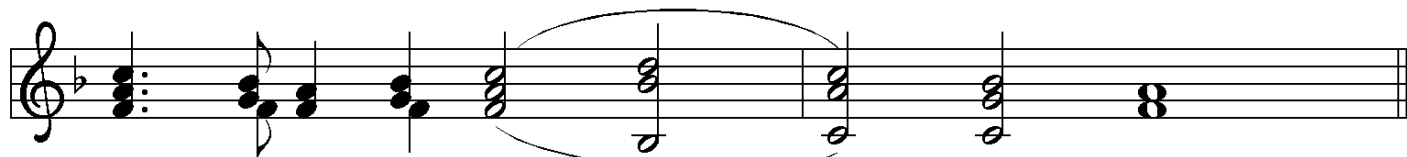
**You have come into our world to live among us, yet we often lose sight of this and seek to manufacture our own truth. We are afraid to share your word lest others judge or mock us. We ignore your wisdom because it isn't convenient. We allow ourselves to be defeated by despair. Forgive our negligence and breathe new life into our heavy hearts.**

God knows our every weakness and still loves us and upholds our life. May your sins be forgiven, your past forgotten, and your hope restored in the name of our incarnate savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## Kyrie



1, 3 Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son.  
2 Chris - te e - lei - son. Chris - te e - lei - son.  
1, 3 Lord, . . . have mer - cy. Lord, . . . . have mer - cy.  
2 Christ, . . . have mer - cy. Christ, . . . . have mer - cy.



Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.  
Chris - te e - le - i - son.  
Lord, . . . have mer - cy.  
Christ, . . . have mer - cy.

## Song

*Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn* Red ELW 242 vv. 1,2,4

**Awake! Awake, and greet the new morn, for angels herald its dawning.  
Sing out your joy, for soon he is born, behold! the Child of our longing.  
Come as a baby weak and poor, to bring all hearts together,  
he opens wide the heav'nly door and lives now inside us forever.**

**To us, to all in sorrow and fear, Emmanuel comes a-singing,  
his humble song is quiet and near, yet fills the earth with its ringing;  
music to heal the broken soul and hymns of lovingkindness,  
the thunder of his anthems roll to shatter all hatred and blindness.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter and cheerless,  
the rising sun shall crown you with light, be strong and loving and fearless.  
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our endless story;  
may God fill ev'ry day we share and bring us at last into glory.**

## Prayer of the Day

God of surprises,  
You blessed Mary and Elizabeth with the gift of holy children, and they faithfully embraced your calling. Give us peace and joy as we await your coming among us, in the form of a humble baby—our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

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## *God speaks to us in scripture, preaching & song*

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*Without fanfare, an angel announced the coming of a baby to Mary. While she waited, she took the opportunity to seek out her support community and prepare for the child's arrival.*

### Invitation to the Word

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel** Red ELW 257

**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 you, O Israel.**

### Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26- 56

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup>But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup>He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

<sup>39</sup>In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, <sup>40</sup>where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>42</sup>and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. <sup>43</sup>And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? <sup>44</sup>For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

<sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and

holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. <sup>52</sup>He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.” <sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

*Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.***

## Message

## Special Music

*Immanuel Comes*

## Proclamation of Faith

**We believe that God creates all things,  
renews all things, and celebrates all things.**

**We believe that God became flesh and blood,  
entered a rebellious, wayward, and broken world  
and absolutely changed everything.**

**We believe that the risen Jesus is the light of the world,  
reconciling all things to God, making all things new,  
and redeeming his creation.**

**We believe the Spirit renews life in creation,  
groans in empathy with the suffering, and waits with us for rebirth.**

**We believe that with Christ we will rise  
and with Christ we will celebrate all being made new.**

## Prayers of the People

We pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*A brief silence.*

As Mary sought support from her cousin Elizabeth, so lead us to those who can help us in times of unusual challenge in our lives, rather than thinking we can take on the world all by ourselves.

God of hope, **Hear our prayer.**

As the longest stretch of darkness approaches, shine your light in our hearts that we might reflect it outward to a cold world waiting for your salvation.

God of hope, **Hear our prayer.**

From the rising of the sun to its setting, all creatures praise your name, O Lord. May we join their song and live as faithful inhabitants of your abundant earth, caring for all that lives and taking only what we need.

God of hope, **Hear our prayer.**

Be with all who are anticipating the birth of a child: the excited and hopeful, the nervous and conflicted, the fearful and anxious. Bless all children, especially those who are born into difficult circumstances and give parents strength to shepherd the new lives they have created. And grant your healing power to all who need it most...

God of hope, **Hear our prayer.**

We celebrate the life of Katharina von Bora Luther and all the renewers of your church, praying for your wisdom to continue their legacy of proclaiming grace.

God of hope, **Hear our prayer.**

*Here other petitions may be offered.*

Our eyes await the fulfillment of all your promises, the answer to all our prayers: your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

Our Fa - ther in heav - en, ho - ly be your name. Your King - dom come.

Your will be done, on earth as in heav - en. Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.

For - give us our sins as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

Keep us from temp - ta - tion, and de - liv - er us from e - vil.

For the King-dom, the pow-er and the glo - ry are yours, now and for-ev-er. A - men.

## Sharing God's Peace

"Comfort, comfort, now my people, tell of peace!" So says our God.  
The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## Reading

Prepare the way of the Lord: A poem by Jeanne Kun

Prepare my heart, O Lord,  
and pave the way for your coming.  
Invade and flood me with your Spirit,  
and fill the spaces you carve out in me with your own presence.

Fill in those depressions dug so deeply in the heart  
by distrust  
or desperation  
or dreams that only disappoint.

Cast down those peaks that loom over me  
of pride  
and pettiness  
and promises broken or unkept by me.

Make whole and straight what is out of shape:  
the truth that's bent by my little lies,  
the troubled thoughts that wind their way so tortuously through my mind,  
and the timidity that deforms my heart (and cheats others of my love).

Remove the stones that block my way  
and make level a path for my feet  
that I not stumble as I run to you!

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

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## Blessing

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting, the long-expected Savior fill you with love, the unexpected Spirit guide your journey, † now and forever. **Amen.**

## Sending Song

*Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers*

**Rejoice, rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;  
the evening is advancing, and darker night is near.  
The bridegroom is arising and soon is drawing nigh.  
Up, pray and watch and wrestle; at midnight comes the cry.**

**The watchers on the mountain proclaim the bridegroom near;  
go forth as he approaches with alleluias clear.  
The marriage feast is waiting; the gates wide open stand.  
Arise, O heirs of glory; the bridegroom is at hand.**

**Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;  
arise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this benighted sphere.  
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see  
the day of earth's redemption that sets your people free!**

## Sending

All earth is hopeful, the Savior comes at last. **Thanks be to God.**

## Postlude

*Coventry Carol*



## **Participants**

- Pastors: Courtney Steitz & Michael TeKrony
- Assisting Minister: Amy Evancheck
- Prelude/Gathering Music/Postlude: Jordan Ortman
- Liturgy Leaders: Chase Evenson, Del Felton, Mike & Donna Madsen,  
Susan Parks, Chris, Brooke, Kamden, Brinley, Taylor Davis
- Liturgy Musicians: Diane & Kevin Klinkerfues
- Opening Song: Diane & Kevin Klinkerfues
- Special Music: Jordan Ortman
- Lord's Prayer: Diane & Kevin Klinkerfues,  
Larry Lagerberg, Karen Novess
- Closing Song: Donna & Mike Madsen, Jordan Ortman
- Photographs: Winston Herbert, Michael TeKrony, Amy Evancheck