

**Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 18, 2022
The Glory of Christmas – Choral Program**

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.

Greeting

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
And also with you.

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be God's name forever.

Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.

Let us confront our sins,
and confess them to the one who is merciful and
just.

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.

People of God,
a new thing is growing in our midst,
a tender branch,
a living sign.

By water and the Spirit you are joined to this
wonder.

You have put on ✠ Christ,
and your sins have been washed away.
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Candle

L: God you call us to live into a life of
immeasurable Love.

**C: We tell ourselves that what we've done keeps
us from experiencing the fullness of that life.**

L: Regardless, You still call us into a life of
immeasurable love.

**C: The light of your love shines bright, even
when we know what we know about ourselves.**

L: As we light our fourth Advent Candle,

**ALL: We look with LOVE towards what you
call us to be, declaring from the beginning what
is to come - the fullness of life in you.**

"The Glory of Christmas"

Reader: - Words of hope sustained God's chosen people as they awaited the promised Messiah. A star will come out of Jacob: a scepter will rise out of Israel.

Song – "Come, Oh Come Emmanuel"

Reader – God's plan for sending a Savior was far different than anyone could have imagined. He chose a young woman by the name of Mary to give birth to this One he was sending to rescue and redeem his children. The angel Gabriel greeted Mary: "Do not be afraid. You have found favor with God. You are to bear a child – a Son –and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. Mary was overwhelmed at the news. In amazement and wonder, she exclaimed, "But how can this be?" The angel responded, "The power of the Most High will overshadow you. And the holy One to be born will be

called the Son of God". In humble response, Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."

Song – "Child of Promise"

Reading – Mary and Joseph, to whom she was to be married, had gone to Bethlehem for a census of the entire Roman world. While they were there, the time came for the Baby to be born. She gave birth to her first-born, a Son. She wrapped Him in cloths and placed Him in a manger, because there had been no room for them in the inn.

Song - "Oh Little Town of Bethlehem"

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Song – "Joseph's Lullaby"

Reading – The Messiah, the Savior of the world, had been born in the remote village of Bethlehem with no one other than Mary and Joseph to witness this miraculous event. But God's plan included a means of making the fulfilled promise public.

There were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks out in the fields nearby that night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. This will be a whom His favor rests sign to you: You will find a Baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

And suddenly, a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to all on whom His favor rests.

Song – "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"

Offertory "Ding Dong Merrily on High"

Heavenly Bells

Reading – When the angels had left them and gone back into heaven, the shepherds, still basking in the glow of the amazing encounter with God's redemption story, said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has happened, and which the Lord has told us about. "So, they hurried off and found Mary, Joseph, and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.

They spread the word concerning what had been told them about this Child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary – the chosen servant of God, the mother of the newborn Christ-child –treasured up all these things as she pondered them in her heart.

Song – "Follow the Light"

Reading – The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has shined.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, during the reign of King Herod, Magi for the east came to Jerusalem in search of the young child, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him?"

After determining where the prophets had foretold that Jesus would be born, Herod sent the Magi to Bethlehem saying, "Go and make a careful search for the Child. Then report to me so that I too may go and worship Him."

They went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east guided them to the place where the Child was. They bowed down and worshipped Him as they offered their gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and myrrh.

Guided by that shining star in the east, these Magi had found the eternal Light of Heaven. Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you!

Song - “How Many Kings”

Words of Institution

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

Communion

“God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman”

Heavenly Bells

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.

Reading – the perfect Light –Jesus, Son of the living God—came to deliver not only Israel from her long dark night, but also to guide us on our journey of faith.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all things were made. In Him was life, and that Life was the light to all people!

Song – “The Glory of Christmas”

Congregation joins:

O come all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant, O come ye, o come ye, to Bethlehem, Come and behold Him, born the King of Angels!

Chorus: O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord

Sing choirs of Angels, sing in exultation, o sing all ye citizens of heaven above. Glory to God all glory in the highest. Chorus:

Dismissal

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!

And all of Good Shepherd said, **AMEN!**

December Financial Snapshot

Through December 14

Total Revenue **\$16,029**

Total Expenses **\$15,711**

+318 Difference

Rest of December

Financial Forecast

\$35,000 Offering Goal

\$25,000 projected expenses

Year-end response:

\$3,000 towards the Boiler Loan Debt

*A huge thank you to folks who have already responded with year-end gifts to the Boiler Fund.

We've nearly paid off that debt with gifts that have come in since year-end giving letter went out!

Please note: Our preference is giving to the general fund and we will handle a surplus when we get there.



Join us as we make our way through the season of Advent. Our Advent Theme this year is: Immeasurable. Going off of Isaiah 46:10 and the promise that God is “declaring the ending from the beginning,” we will wonder as we wander together what it means that from the beginning, we are promised immeasurable HOPE – PEACE – JOY – LOVE in the end. This is Good News! Come and celebrate the season of Advent at Good Shepherd.

Our prayers and sympathies to the family of Jean Houser. There will be a visitation at Lenmark West on Tuesday, Dec. 20 from 4-7 p.m. and at the church on Wednesday, Dec. 21 at 10 a.m. with the service at 11. There will NOT be a luncheon following the service.

Don't forget to get your year end giving in!

Please take note that the church office will be closed Monday, Dec. 26; Friday, Dec. 30; and Monday, Jan. 2. Any donations received in the mail by Dec. 30 will be credited to your giving page.