

December 18, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Advent



She
will bear
a **SON**, and
you are to name
him **Jesus**

MATTHEW 1:21

Introduction to the day

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.

Lighting the Advent Wreath: Advent 4

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence
in the lowly ones of this earth.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us
in the Word made flesh.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,
whose coming is certain and whose day draws near. **Amen.**

Light all four candles.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.**

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

A reading from 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: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

¹Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth

²before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

**Stir up your might,
and come to save us!**

³Restore us, O God;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

⁴O Lord GOD of hosts,

how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

⁵You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and given them tears to drink in full measure.

**⁶You make us the scorn of our neighbors;
our enemies laugh among themselves.**

⁷Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**¹⁷But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.**

¹⁸Then we will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call on your name.

**¹⁹Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

A reading from 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: 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.**

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 bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights, especially Amnesty International (*others may be named*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our helper, come to the aid of all who cry out to you. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to individuals and families experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today – Evening Prayer 8pm FB Live

Tuesday – Men's Bible Study 6:30pm

Wednesday – Morning Prayer 10am FB Live

Thursday – Women's Bible Study 6:30pm Zoom

Saturday – Christmas Eve Worship 4pm

Next Sunday – Christmas Day Worship 9:30am

Pr. Alena on vacation Dec. 26-Jan 2