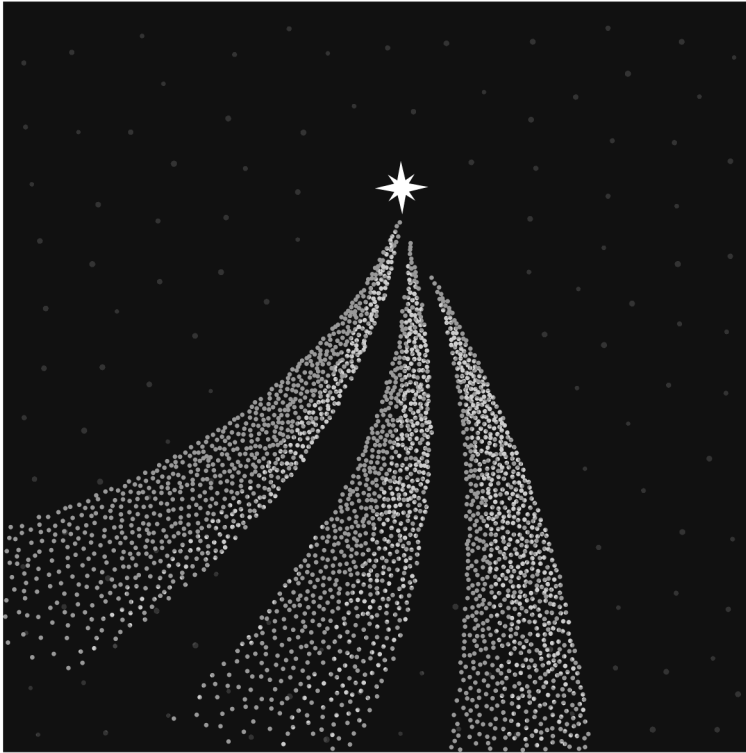


Surprising Encounters



Immanuel Advent Sermon Series

December 19, 2021

Who We Seek to Be

In our love for Christ and guided by God's Word we seek to be a community of

Joyful Worship, thoughtfully centered in the wonder and wisdom of the living God and celebrating the diversity of the body of Christ.

Loving Fellowship, encouraging and serving one another in the unifying love of the Holy Spirit.

Life-changing Learning, biblically-based preaching and teaching to equip children, youth, and adults to grow in their relationship with God.

Enthusiastic Service, reflecting the servant heart of Jesus as we proclaim the gospel near and far in word and deed.

WE GATHER IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

CHURCH FAMILY NEWS

ANNETTE LAPLACA

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE

WECKESSER FAMILY

Leader: Advent is a time to praise.

All: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Leader: During Advent we remember God's past faithfulness.

All: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Leader: During Advent we remember God's present goodness.

All: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

Leader: During Advent we remember God's future promises.

All: Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.

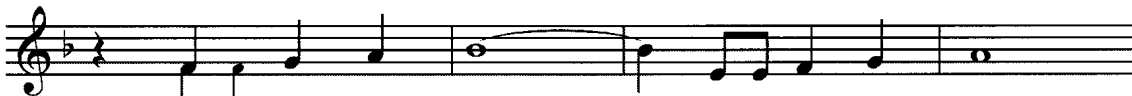


(1st Sunday) We wait in
(2nd Sunday) We watch in
(3rd Sunday) We pre - pare in
(4th Sunday) We praise with
(Christmas Eve) We pro - claim with

} hope _____ for the morn - ing Light,



for the love of Christ to il - lu - mi - nate _____ the night. _____



We wait with
We watch with
We pre - pare with
We praise with
We pro - claim with

} joy _____ for the Sav - ior's birth;



we wait in
we watch in
we pre - pare in
we praise with
we pro - claim with

} hope for peace on earth.

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OPENING PRAYER



1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes, on
3. O come, thou Rod of Jes - se, free thine own from Sa - tan's
4. O come, thou Day-spring from on high, and cheer us by thy
5. O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come and o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here,
 Si - nai's height, in an - cient times didst give the law
 • tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple save,
 draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 • and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
 and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 and close the path to mis - er - y.



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



Latin antiphons, 12th cent.
 Latin hymn, 1710
 Tr. by John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1961

VENI EMMANUEL. L.M.ref.
 Plainsong, 13th cent.
 Arr. by Thomas Helmore, 1856

WE ARE RENEWED BY GOD'S GRACE

CALL TO CONFESSION

SHEROLL RITCHIE

Leader: Lord Christ, we confess our willingness to be loved
but also our reluctance to love.

**All: We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love
but also our refusal to forgive.**

Leader: We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love
but also our resistance to follow you without question.

All: In this Advent time, forgive us our failure to respond as we should.

Leader: Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive you
with joy, as the shepherds;

All: With gratitude, as Simeon; with obedience, as Mary;

Leader: With love, as you have loved us.

All: Even so; come Lord Jesus. Amen.

Adapted from The Worship Sourcebook

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Almighty God—by whose providence our Savior, Jesus Christ, came
among us in great humility—will sanctify you with the light of his blessing and
set you free from all sin.

* ACCLAMATION

**All: To him in whom God's fullness dwells,
To him through whom God reconciles all things to himself,
To him be glory and honor and praise throughout all generations
forever and ever! Amen.**

* PASSING OF THE PEACE

Leader: The peace of the Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

(Please share God's peace with those around you.)

WE BRING OUR PRAISES, PRAYERS AND GIFTS

OFFERING AND OFFERTORY: *Still, Still, Still*

arr. John Carter
JOHN ZIMMERMAN

* DOXOLOGY

All: Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR VERITY YOUNGEUN MAYELL

BAROCHA

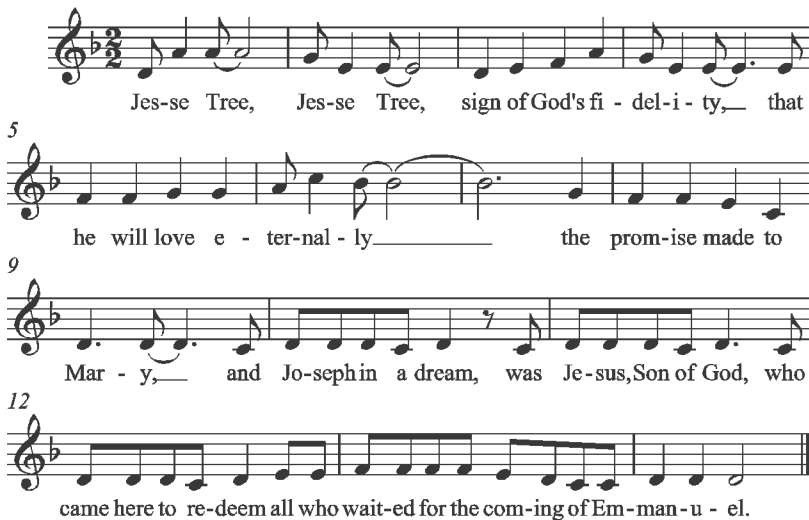
Michael Card



The Lord bless you and keep you. The
The Lord be gra - cious to you. The
3 We wel - come you to Im - man - u - el. We
Lord make His face shine up - on you, and give you peace,
Lord turn His face to - ward you, and give you peace,
6 pledge to raise you; may you know well God's per-fect peace,
and give you peace, and give you peace for - ev - er.
and give you peace, and give you peace for - ev - er.
God's per-fect peace, God's per-fect peace for - ev - er.

JESSE TREE

Dennis J. Newman



Jes-se Tree, Jes-se Tree, sign of God's fi - del - i - ty, that
5 he will love e - ter - nal - ly the prom - ise made to
9 Mar - y, and Jo - seph in a dream, was Je - sus, Son of God, who
12 came here to re - deem all who wait - ed for the com - ing of Em - man - u - el.

(Children 3 years through 5th grade are dismissed to go downstairs to continue their worship.)

* INTERCESSORY PRAYER

CARL PICKARD

* HYMN: *My Soul in Stillness Waits*

Refrain Am Dm9 F G A

For you, O Lord, my soul in still-ness waits;

Bb C Am7 Dm9 *Fine* Am

tru - ly my hope is in you.

- 1 O Lord of
- 2 O Spring of
- 3 O Root of
- 4 O Key of

Dm9 Am Dm9 Am

Light, our on - ly hope of glo - ry, your ra-diance
 Joy, rain down up - on our spir - its; our thirst - y
 Life, im - plant your seed with - in us, and in your
 Knowl - edge, guide us in our pil - grim-age; we ev - er

Dm9 Am Dm9 Am

shines in all who look to you. Come, light the
 hearts are yearn-ing for your Word. Come, make us
 ad - vent draw us all to you, our hope re -
 seek, yet un - ful-filled re - main. O - pen to

Dm9 Am G C Am7 Dm9 *Refrain*

hearts of all in dark and shad - ow.
 whole; be com - fort to our hearts.—
 born in dy - ing and in ris - ing.
 us the path-way of your peace.—

WE HEAR GOD SPEAK

(Please remain standing for the reading of God's Word.)

READER: VIRGINIA SHAFFER

* OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE: *Psalms 80*

Leader: Hear us, Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who sit enthroned between the cherubim,
shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

**All: Awaken your might;
come and save us.**

Leader: Restore us, O God;

**All: make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.**

Leader: How long, LORD God Almighty,
will your anger smolder
against the prayers of your people?
You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.
You have made us an object of derision to our neighbors,
and our enemies mock us.

**All: Restore us, God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.**

NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE: *Luke 1:39-56*

(Be seated for a dramatic reading.)

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

⁴⁶ And Mary said:
“My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

* SERMON: *Pre-Birth Blessedness*

WE ARE DISMISSED TO LOVE AND SERVE

* CLOSING HYMN: *Joy to the World*

HYMN 195

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her
 2. Joy to the earth! The Sav - ior reigns: let men their songs em -
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions

King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 play; while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow
 prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness

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

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.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

Based on Psalm 98
 Isaac Watts, 1719

ANTIOCH C.M. 185
 George Frederick Handel, 1741
 Arr. by Lowell Mason, 1820

* BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

TODAY

If you are in need of prayer, [elder Sheroll Ritchie](#) will be at the front of the sanctuary following the service.

Musicians and other participants: Mary Hopper, Beth Bauer, John Zimmerman, Kent Richer, Joyce Economides, Amy Danusiar, Ellie Durbin, Heather Reyes, Russ Adkins, Rachel Ehorn.

1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m.

Food Pantry

Iglesia Roca Eterna

Youth Group (White Elephant exchange)

Adult Ed Zoom (Mark Noll)

THIS WEEK

Tuesday

11:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

No Women's Bible Study until January 11

Food pantry open

COMING

Friday

6:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve candlelight service

IN IMMANUEL AND BEYOND

The Advent readings are from "We Wait in Hope," words and music by Joel Raney.

Join us for our Candlelight Christmas Eve Service, Friday, December 24, at 6:00 p.m.

END-OF-YEAR GIVING: In order to have donations credited to your 2021 giving report, please note that the last regular offering for the year will be taken next Sunday, December 26. Checks sent by mail must be postmarked by Friday, December 31 (if you use online banking be aware that there can be a delay of several days before the check is actually mailed and postmarked).

Why do we baptize infants?

In our culture today, we are not accustomed to thinking of the head of a household as deciding the spiritual commitments of all its dependent members. However, the biblical perspective is that the head of a household represents the family to God and commits them to his worship. The representative role of heads of households has great Scriptural precedent and rich implications in both the Old and New Testaments. (cf Eph. 5:25-27; Heb. 11:7)

Does the requirement of faith for salvation preclude the possibility of administering a covenant sign to children of believers? It did not in the Old Testament practice of circumcision, and the New Testament tells us why. The apostle Paul says in the book of Romans that circumcision was a “seal” as well as a “sign” of the righteousness that Abraham had by faith (Rom 4:11).

The seal acted as a visible pledge by the author to honor what He had covenanted to do in a document when the conditions it described were met. Like the seal of a document, the seal of circumcision could be applied long before the recipients of promised and signified blessing met the conditions of the covenant.

The Apostle Paul was very explicit about the continuation of the Abrahamic covenant and proclaimed, “Those who believe are children of Abraham” (Gal. 3:7). He goes on to say that the law of Moses “does not set aside the covenant previously established by God. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal.3:17,29). Since the shedding of Christ’s blood to remove our sin was prefigured by circumcision, baptism with water has become the sign of the washing away of our sin (cf. Acts 22:6; 16:1; I Cor. 6:11; Heb. 9:14). While the sign of the covenant changes, the features of the covenant do not.

In addition to baptism as the new sign and seal of God’s covenant promise, we also feel there is other Scriptural evidence to embrace this sacrament for infants. If the apostles had chosen to exclude infants from baptism, such an important change would have been recorded. The absence of a scriptural command to prohibit administering the sign of the covenant to children after two thousand years of observing such a practice weighs significantly against the view that the apostles wanted only those who were able to profess their faith to be baptized. In fact, when we read the New Testament accounts of baptism, every person identified as having a household present at his or her conversion also had the entire household baptized.

Finally, the devotion of the parents who present their children for baptism places each child in a privileged position both to hear and to understand the truths of the Gospel. The parents together with the covenant community of the church provide spiritual nurture and instruction for the child. The child is surrounded and embraced by the testimony of Christ at every turn in life. In this atmosphere, faith generally germinates and matures so that it is possible, even common, for the children of Christian parents never to know a day that they do not believe that Jesus is their Savior and Lord. Such covenantal growth of a child is, in fact, *the normal Christian life* that God intends for his people based on the Biblical account of his covenant with them throughout history. Thus we consider it a privilege to baptize [Verity Youngeun Mayell](#) today.

Adapted from *Why Do We Baptize Infants* by Bryan Chapell

ELDERS

Katherine Anderson (Clerk of Session), Dan Balzer, Ron Netzel, Carl Pickard, Sheroll Ritchie, Leon Sinclair, Gaby Sosa, Alva Steffler, Steve Westfall, Ken Wolgemuth

DEACONS

Phebe Balzer, Becky Eggimann, Seth Ehorn, Debby France, Dee Netzel, Tom Nguyen, Katie Pickard, Heather Reyes (chair), Jack Swanson, Amy Treier, Rebecca Williams