

Advent Season 2022

Lead Me Back to Bethlehem



December 18, 2022

Advent Lutheran Church
8840 University City Blvd
Charlotte, NC 28213
(704) 549-1555
www.adventlu.org

Pastoral Welcome

Prelude

Advent Ringers

Lighting the Advent Wreath

L: Into our world as into Mary's womb . . .

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

L: Into the forgotten places as into the stable . . .

C: Come, Lord Jesus.

L: Into the lives of the poor, bringing hope.

Into the lives of the powerful, bringing caution.

Into the lives of the weary, bringing rest.

Into the lives of the complacent, bringing restlessness.

And into our lives . . . every moment . . . making our hearts Your Bethlehem.

C: Come, Lord Jesus and be born in us.

Gathering Song "Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah" (vv. 1-4)



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra - el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Advent Announcement

L: This is the good news: Christ is coming and blessed are those who wait on the Lord.

C: Therefore, come quickly, Lord. Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

L: Merciful God,

C: We confess that we are not at peace with others or with ourselves. We bring to you all that tears us apart:

Discord in our families.

Deliberate ignorance of the suffering of others.

Violence in our world.

Our own conflicted hearts.

In your mercy, come to us, open our hearts, and reconnect us to you and to one another.

L: In the Word who has come to dwell with us, God has given us grace upon grace. Forgiveness that is stronger than our sins and love that heals every broken heart. Hear this word of God's pardon and peace: God has set you free from all your sins; prepare God's way with love.

C: Amen.

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

Prayer of Illumination

L: Let us pray. Immanuel, God with us:
In muscle and sinew, breath and bone.
In vulnerability and risk, escape and refuge.
In parable and healing, encounter and sign.
In suffering and death, Word became flesh.
In resurrection, ascension, and Spirit come down.
In justice and grace, patience and peace.
Immanuel, God with us. Glory be to God.

C: Amen.

The First Reading

Isaiah 7:10-16

L: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God!

The Gospel Acclamation

“Emmanuel”

Emmanuel, Emmanuel
His name is called Emmanuel.
God with us revealed in us,
His name is called Emmanuel.

The Holy Scripture

Matthew 1:18-25

Christmas Cantata

Lead Me Back to Bethlehem (Pepper Choplin)

“Come, Emmanuel!” – Sanctuary Singers

Mary, Pondering – Meredith Tunnell

“Breath of Heaven” – Laura Torrence, soloist with Sanctuary Singers

Mary’s Journey – Marvelous Dwanah

We Distrust Angels – Gloria Strickert and Congregation

“Lead Me Back to Bethlehem” – Sanctuary Singers

Tonight, is the Meeting Place – Michael Goerke

“Come Down to Bethlehem” – Daniel Pietruszka, soloist with Sanctuary Singers

The Wiseman’s Journey – Claude Ingolia

“Frankincense, Myrrh and Gold” – Sanctuary Singers

Light Looked Down – Gloria Strickert and Congregation

“You Are Lord” – Sanctuary Singers

Prayers of the Faithful

L: Lord Jesus Christ, in the hushed anticipation of your coming, remind us that you are always with us, that like Joseph we might always be eager to fulfill your will, and be eager to pray.

A brief silence.

L: Lord Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, we pray for our Ukrainian brothers and sisters, as well as other countries that are dealing with political unrest and conflict; for Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Yemen, Israel-Palestine, Haiti and Myanmar. As we offer our prayers, may we be among those who are blessed to live as your peacemakers.

L: Come, Lord Jesus,

C: hear our prayer.

L: Lord Jesus Christ, in the fulness of time you entered human history, child of God and child of Mary . . . our Emmanuel, God with us. As we speak the names of those for whom we pray, we bring them to you in the confidence that you love them, that you know their every need, and that your healing power will bring comfort and restoration.

L: We especially pray for:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| ▪ Dale Blish | ▪ Jane Ogilvie |
| ▪ Terence Connelly | ▪ Reagan Poli |
| ▪ Charliese Eichler | ▪ Joyce Quigley |
| ▪ Sandra Eliassen | ▪ Denny Refsnider |
| ▪ Vincent Frisina Sr. | ▪ Mary Rohlk |
| ▪ Dwight Hartsell | ▪ Carol Schierlmann |
| ▪ Susan Hartsell | ▪ Hudson Searcy |
| ▪ Tracy Heberlig | ▪ Eric Sossoman |
| ▪ Ann Hess | ▪ Ron Stemple |
| ▪ Bernie Hess | ▪ David Townsend |
| ▪ Jim Hintz | ▪ Laura Tucker |
| ▪ Carol Hollingsworth | ▪ Michelle Veit |
| ▪ Gary Homesley | ▪ Augustin Villacis |
| ▪ Donnell Horton | ▪ Laverne Waskielis |
| ▪ Shmel Hughes | ▪ Herbert Watson |
| ▪ Ashley King | ▪ Renate Wilson |
| ▪ Waylon Kuklantz | ▪ Chuck Wolfe |
| ▪ Kevin Middleton | |

L: In silence, let us make our own specific prayers for those on our hearts and minds today.

(Silence)

L: For our *Room in the Inn* guests on December 12: Gloria, Afton, Gerald, Selbrani, Kymber-leigh, Jeffrey, Theresa, Douglas, Carlotta, Malinda

L: We remember and celebrate the lives of those who have died, especially:

- James Connelly, brother of Chris Connelly, died on November 29.
- Michelle Scott, friend of Pastor Karen Battle, died on December 3.
- Loretta Frazier Grimsley, niece of Ida Chisolm, died on December 4.
- Jarno Syrenius, nephew of Ida Chisolm, died November 21.
- Joe Moeller, member, died December 10
- Steve Bollinger, uncle of Tony Poovey, died December 14

L: By your Holy Spirit, comfort their families, and all who grieve, give peace to those who mourn, strengthen all through the promise of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

L: Come Lord Jesus,

C: hear our prayer.

- L: Lord Jesus Christ, by your Holy Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your people as we wait with patience for your return and prepare our hearts for your arrival.
- C: **Amen.**

SHARING THE MEAL

Offering (Please sign and pass the pew pads)

Offertory Song "Joseph's Lullaby" Daniel Pietruszka, soloist

Table Prayer

- L: God of mercy and grace,
- C: **you open your hand in blessing and your abundance flows unending. Fill us with good things at your table, that we may come to the help of all in need, through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.**

The Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer Traven Harrington, soloist

Communion Songs "Come, Shepherds, Rise!" Advanced Bells

The Blessing

- L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the gifts of his body and blood strengthen, keep and unite us, now and forever.
- C: **Amen.**

SENDING GOD'S PEOPLE

Benediction (*A Holy Land Blessing, Father Potter of Peckham*)

- L: May the babe of Bethlehem bring you peace.
May the child of Nazareth bring you joy.
May the man of Galilee bring you strength.
May the Christ of Calvary bring your courage.
May Risen Jesus bring you hope.
May the ascended Christ bring you a foretaste of his glory.
- C: **Amen**

Sending Song

"I Have Seen the Light"

Rob Beyersdorf, Traven Harrington and David Poe, trio with Sanctuary Singers

Dismissal

L: Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**