

## *Third Sunday in Advent*

# *Advent*

## *A Light in the Darkness*

The word advent means "coming." The Advent Season, which begins on the Sunday nearest November 30 (four Sundays before Christmas Day) is a time of spiritual preparation and reflection in anticipation of Christmas, the celebration of Christ's birth. The beauty and wisdom of Advent is the opportunity we have to ponder the real meaning of Christmas, by using symbols and meditating on passages of Scripture dealing with His coming. Advent reminds us not only of Christ's coming to earth in human form to die for the sins of the world, but also that He will come again in glory at the last trumpet. As in the parable of the virgins with their oil lamps, we are called to prepare ourselves to be ready for Him when He comes.

Purple or dark blue are the traditional colors for Advent. They are colors of royalty, for we await a King. The circular shape of the Advent wreath symbolizes God's never-ending love for us. The wreath is made with evergreens, representing everlasting life, the gift of God to us in Christ. Four candles are set in the wreath, one for each Sunday of the season.

The lighting of an additional candle each week in Advent marks the growing anticipation for the Light who came into the world at Jesus' birth. At the center of the wreath is a white Christ candle, which is lit on Christmas Eve. We encourage you to observe this quiet season of preparation at home in your personal or family devotions.



## Prelude

Kate Laack, piano

### *The First Noel*

- arr. S. DeFord

## Welcome

Pastor Dan L.

## Songs of Christ's Coming

### *O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL*

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!

*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 bright Hosts of heav'n above!  
Glory to God all,  
All glory in the highest!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,  
Born for our salvation,  
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing!

Words and music by John Francis Wade, tr. Frederick Oakeley. Public Domain.

*SING WE THE SONG OF EMMANUEL*

Sing we the song of Emmanuel;  
This the Christ who was long foretold.  
Lo in the shadows of Bethlehem,  
Promise of dawn now our eyes behold.

*God Most High in a manger laid;  
Lift your voices and now proclaim:  
Great and glorious, Love has come to us;  
Join now with the hosts of heaven.*

Come we to welcome Emmanuel;  
King who came with no crown or throne.  
Helpless He lay, the Invincible,  
Maker of Mary, now Mary's son.

*O what wisdom to save us all,  
Shepherds, sages, before Him fall.  
Grace and majesty, what humility;  
Come on bended knee, adore Him.*

Go spread the news of Emmanuel;  
Joy and peace for the weary heart.  
Lift up your heads, for your King has come;  
Sing, for the Light overwhelms the dark.

*Glory shining for all to see,  
Hope alive, let the gospel ring.  
God has made a way, He will have the praise;  
Tell the world His name is Jesus.*

Glo - - - ria, Glor - - - ia.  
Glo - - - ria, Glor - - - ia.

## Intercessory Prayer

### Responsive Reading – Titus 2:11-14, 3:3-7

One: For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.

And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God, while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.

**ALL: He gave his life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us His very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.**

One: Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.

**ALL: But— “When God our Savior revealed His kindness and love, He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.**

One: He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**ALL: Because of his grace he declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.”**

## Songs of Joy

### *GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN*

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay.  
Remember Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas Day:  
To save us all from Satan's pow'r,  
When we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

From God, our heavenly Father,  
A blessed angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same:  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by name:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

18th century English carol. Public domain.

## JOY HAS DAWNED

Joy has dawned upon the world,  
Promised from creation:  
God's salvation now unfurled,  
Hope for ev'ry nation.  
Not with fanfares from above,  
Not with scenes of glory,  
But a humble gift of love:  
Jesus, born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky  
With the songs of angels,  
As the mighty Prince of Life  
Shelters in a stable.  
Hands that set each star in place,  
Shaped the earth in darkness,  
Cling now to a mother's breast,  
Vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb,  
Gazing at the glory;  
Gifts of men from distant lands  
Prophesy the story.  
Gold: a King is born today.  
Incense: God is with us.  
Myrrh: His death will make a way.  
And by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of Heav'n,  
Given as a ransom;  
Reconciling God and man,  
Christ, our mighty champion!  
What a Savior, what a Friend,  
What a glorious mystery:  
Once a babe in Bethlehem,  
Now the Lord of history!

“The Gospel in the Carols:  
*God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*”  
(Author unknown)

Origins: Probably 400-500 years old. First Published in 1833.

I. “God rest ye merry, Gentlemen”

- “rest” =
- “merry” =
- The comma

II. “To save us all from Satan’s pow’r”

- “Satan”
- Satan’s “power”
- “we were gone astray”
- “save us”

III. “to free all those who trust in Him from Satan’s pow’r and might”

- “free”
- “trust in Him”

**Next Sunday, December 20**

*Fourth Sunday in Advent*

“The Gospel in the Carols:  
*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*”

## Song of Response

### *GOD REST YE MERRY, GENTLEMEN*

God rest ye merry, gentlemen,  
Let nothing you dismay.  
Remember Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas Day:  
To save us all from Satan's pow'r,  
When we were gone astray:

*O tidings of comfort and joy,  
Comfort and joy,  
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

From God, our heavenly Father,  
A blessed angel came,  
And unto certain shepherds  
Brought tidings of the same:  
How that in Bethlehem was born  
The Son of God by name:

*O tidings . . .*

The shepherds at these tidings  
Rejoiced much in mind,  
And left their flocks a-feeding  
In tempest, storm and wind,  
And went to Bethlehem straightway  
The blessed Babe to find:

*O tidings . . .*

Now to the Lord sing praises,  
All you within this place,  
And with true love and brotherhood  
Each other now embrace;  
This holy tide of Christmas  
All others doth deface.

*O tidings . . .*



## Blessing

## Postlude

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

- arr. J. Brickman



## Return to in-person Sunday morning worship services next week

Calvary is returning to in-person worship services on Sunday, Dec. 20th. As before, services will take place at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m., and for each service there will be two locations to choose from – in the sanctuary with congregational singing and or in the Fellowship Hall with no singing in the room. **Masks will be required at all times in all areas of the building.** Services will continue to be livestreamed.

**Please RSVP** on the church website as early in the week as possible if you plan to attend in-person worship. Thank you!



## Praying together

**Sunday Morning Prayer** — "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." (Luke 2:14)

Pray that we would experience God's promise of peace this Christmas season, especially in the midst of all the troubling events in our world and in our lives. Specifically, pray that we would experience the peace of Christ's gospel that would...

...give us inner calm in the midst of the troubling circumstances we each face, helping us to trust God even more than we presently do to provide all we need to face whatever circumstances that tend to trouble our hearts.

...enable us to minister the peace of Christ to those in our congregation who are troubled by isolation and loneliness (especially those in care facilities), and by those who are experiencing physical suffering and disability.

...lead us to pursue relational peace and reconciliation with those we may be in conflict with or estranged from in our families, our church body, and other spheres of our lives.

...give us a greater heart for those who are spiritually lost and estranged from God, moving us to share with them how they find “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

...help us to be peacemakers in the midst of the racial divisions that have been troubling our nation, specifically by giving us the courage to stand against racial discrimination and injustice and to build loving relationships across racial and ethnic lines.

...provide us with calm in the midst of this worldwide pandemic, and give us wisdom to discern how best to protect ourselves and our church in a way that most honors God. Additionally, pray for that God would mercifully bring the pandemic to an end.

...increase our longing for Christ’s return, and for the peace that will come when His promise is realized of a new heaven and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21). Pray that this promise would motivate us to holy conduct and godliness (2 Peter 3:11), and to take the Gospel to every nation, tribe, and tongue.

**Friends with health concerns** — Please continue in prayer for:

Wendell Amstutz, John Fitz, Darrel Moe, Jerry Nau, Jordan Padgett, Tim Robeck, Eemou See, and Ray Wiens.

**Praying Scripture for our church leaders** — We are praying for **Brad King**, Leadership Board member, using I Timothy 1:14 as a guide: “May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be poured out abundantly upon Brad along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”

**Praying for our missionaries** — for **Will and Alisa Copeland** (Global World Missions, Tenwek hospital near Nairobi, Kenya): Pray for Will, a neurosurgeon, as he serves at Tenwek hospital which has become extra busy taking overflow from other hospitals due to COVID-19. (They recently removed a brain tumor from a lady who was from Gabon, a country on the opposite side of Africa.) Pray for the new neurosurgery resident program, for the residents, and for the high cost of training them. Pray for Alisa as she ministers to wives in medical marriages through the Side by Side program and for their children.

# Calvary Family News

## *Mourning with those who mourn . . .*

Please be in prayer for **Teresa and Kevin Erickson** and their family, as Teresa’s mother, Judith Hugget, passed away on Saturday, December 5. Teresa also lost her father in June of this year.



## Giving together

### A note from the Leadership Board (Love Offering for Staff)

At Calvary we have a tradition of receiving a love offering to show our love and appreciation to our pastors and support staff. In a typical year, we would highlight this during our services and provide an envelope for you to use to give towards this gift. However, since 2020 has been anything but “typical,” we wanted to provide multiple ways for you to give. As always, you are more than welcome to write a check marked with “Love Gift” on the memo line and either send it in to or drop it off at Calvary. You can also give via Text-To-Give by using the code “cefcare”. More information regarding how to give via text is available on our website. Finally, we have also created an option via our online giving to designate towards this gift. Using this method, you can select “One Time Dec Love Gift” as the fund to which to give.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this as a way to express your appreciation to our pastors and staff.

—The Leadership Board

**Year-end giving information:** Any year-end giving needs to be received or postmarked by December 31, 2020 to be counted in 2020 for tax purposes. On the website, click on the word “Give” to see all the options for giving a year-end gift.

# Christmas Eve at Calvary



## Christmas Eve at Home

### **“A Light in the Darkness”**

*An interactive virtual candlelight service*

*Led by the Calvary Worship Ministry*

Pick up your candles, holders, and service programs in advance. They will be available at the church just inside Door #1 beginning Friday, December 18.

The virtual service will be available online any time beginning at noon on Christmas Eve.

“Attend” the service when it best fits your schedule.

This has been a very dark year for many of us. Join with friends and family in celebrating the Light that has come to pierce our darkness. Hope awakes in Bethlehem.

O come, let us adore Him!

## Christmas Eve Gather Out!

**Join us outdoors at Calvary,  
December 24th 5:00 PM**

In addition to our online Christmas Eve service, join us in person at 5 PM on Christmas Eve for

- Singing Christmas Carols
- Campfires
- Hot Cocoa
- Fellowship

Let’s celebrate together the coming of Emmanuel, God with us. We will be utilizing our FM transmitter for anyone who would like to join us while caroling from their car. Masks are recommended, but not required since this is an outdoor event. And to help us plan accordingly, please RSVP on the church website.

## Bell Ringers Needed!

The **Salvation Army** needs you! Bring your family or group, or you can register to ring alone for one of our most important practical outreach opportunities of the holiday season. There are still some one-hour shifts available between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. at various indoor and outdoor locations through December 22. Click [here](#) to sign up.

