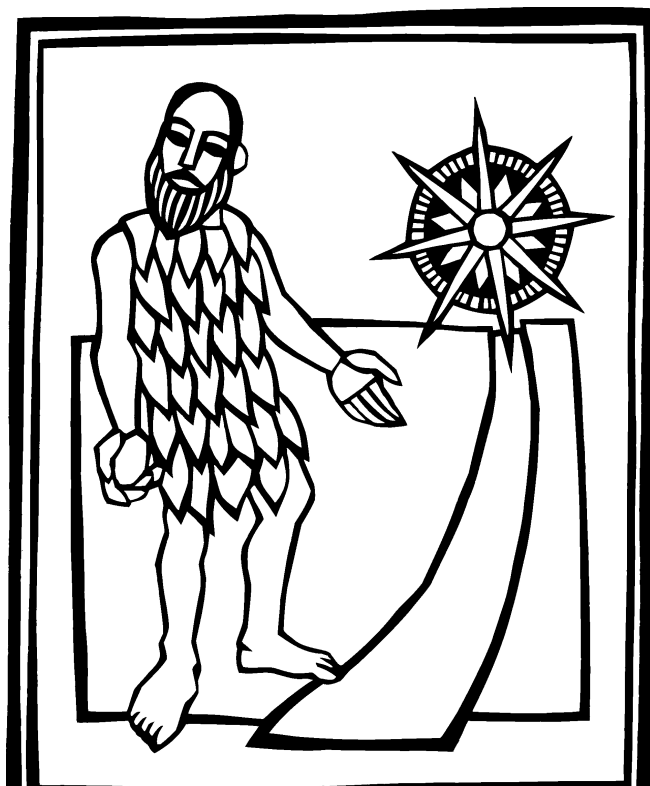


CREATED, SAVED AND GIFTED BY GOD,
WE SEEK, SERVE AND SHARE JESUS CHRIST.



THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
December 14, 2025
10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
901 EAST STROOP ROAD
KETTERING, OHIO 45429-4688
(937) 298-0136

INTRODUCTION

A note of joyful expectation marks today's worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom, and Jesus points to the unexpected and transforming signs of God's reign. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ's advent among us.

LIVING IN THE NOW AND THE NOT YET

In this season of Advent we stand in the discomfiting quiet of waiting for the salvation of the Lord while simultaneously seeing that very salvation breaking into the world around us. Like John the Baptist we ask Jesus "are you here, or should we still wait?" The answer to this question is "yes." Yes, Jesus is here among us in his body and blood at the eucharist. But we wait for the day when he returns. Yes, Jesus is here among us bringing peace and reconciliation. But we wait for the day when he will make all things new. The new life promised by the coming of a savior is both realized and still to come. We who live in the Christian faith do so as people searching the world around us for signs of God's kingdom. Gathering as Christ's body on earth, we have a sort of dual-citizenship in the now and the not-yet as we both proclaim that Christ is among us and also fervently pray "even so, come Lord Jesus." As believers, our hope does not rest in the efforts of our piety or in the comfort of the hereafter. Rather, our hope is in the promises of a gracious, faithful God; promises fulfilled before our eyes and those not yet seen. We long for the day in which, like Isaiah's vision of what will be, the blind see and the lame leap like deer. Yet we tell what we see and hear around us: that the dead are raised and the poor receive good news. The day is here and yet still we wait. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

*** indicates to stand as you are able.*

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

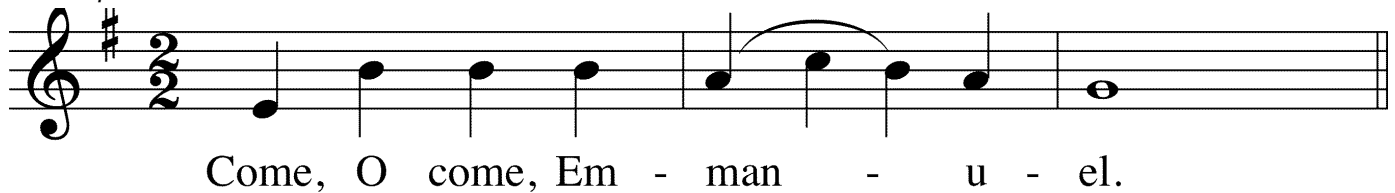
Pastor Mallory Morris

CALL TO WORSHIP

"Come, Emmanuel"

Verse Response

(Corresponds to the bolded text of each verse)



(Verse 1 - Music Ministers / **All**)

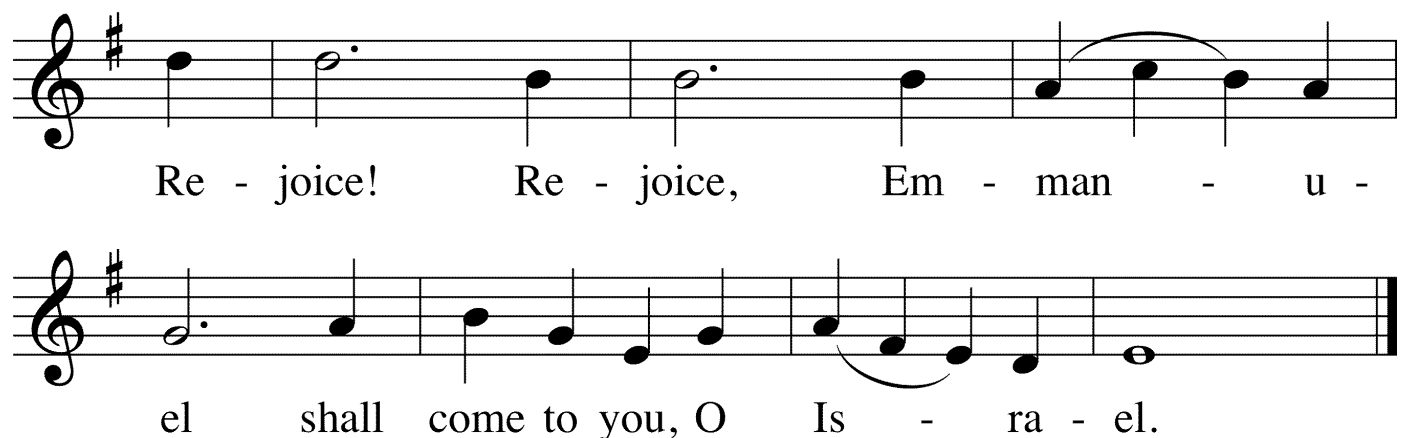
You are Dawn, beauty loved in night. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, lovely as the night. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, dreams from deepest night. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, scatter fears of night. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - **All**)



(Verse 2 - Music Ministers / **All**)

You are Dawn, morning stars shall sing. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, birds awake and sing. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, rising sun shall sing. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, Sun of Justice, sing. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - **All**)

Rejoice, rejoice! Emanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

(Verse 3 - Music Ministers / All)

You are Dawn, wake us now to see. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, earth and sky and sea. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, all creation, see. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

You are Dawn, blest be all we see. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - All)

Rejoice, rejoice! Emanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**** OPENING LITANY**

Hear, O heavens, and listen, O earth.

Let the earth hear, and all that fills it.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,

the desert shall rejoice and blossom.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,

the majesty of our God.

Nations shall come to your light,

and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

This is the Lord for whom we wait;

let us be glad and rejoice in the salvation of God.

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

"He Came Down" (ELW 253)

1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;

he came down that we may have love;
 he came down that we may have light;
 he came down that we may have peace;
 he came down that we may have joy;

hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.

**** CONFESSION**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God
and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,
**we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.**

**Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.
Amen.**

**** FORGIVENESS**

God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.
Amen.

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, **and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**Amen.

** LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Praise to you, O God, who holds our joy and sorrow. You bring water to parched ground and life out of death. Bless us as this light grows, and send sorrow and sighing to flee away. Give us strength and patience, trusting that you are true to your promises. Transform the lives of all who suffer with your wonders near at hand. **Amen.**

Advent Week 1

November 29

Verse 1

Advent Week 2

December 6

Verses 1 & 2

Advent Week 3

December 14

Verses 1-3

Advent Week 4

December 20

Verses 1-4

Verses



1. Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban ish
2. Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban ish
3. Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban ish
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,
dark - ness. He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd,
dark - ness. Lift your heads, and lift high the gate - way
dark - ness. He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings.



God ful - fills the prom - ise.
gent - ly lead them home - ward.
for the King of glo - ry.
Let your lights be shin - ing!

Refrain



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark - ness.



Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to - day.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet describes the return from the Babylonian captivity as a joyous procession to Zion. God's coming reign will bring a renewal of creation in which health and wholeness will be restored. There is no need for fear, for God is coming to save.

A reading from Isaiah.

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 146:5-10

The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;
who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.
The Lord sets the captive free.
The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.
The Lord cares for the stranger;
the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
The Lord shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

SECOND READING

James 5:7-10

In anticipation of the Lord's coming, Christians are called upon to cultivate patience rather than discontent.

A reading from James.

Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the

early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING

Matthew 11:2-11

John the Baptist expects the Messiah to bring God's judgment upon the earth (Matt. 3:11-12). From a prison cell, he wonders whether Jesus is the one who will do this. Jesus' response indicates that God's reign is indeed being fulfilled already through healing and restoration.

The holy gospel according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pastor Mallory Morris

**** APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

**** PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Assisting Minister

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

A brief silence.

Each petition concludes:

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

GATHERING OF THE GIFTS

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

Assisting Minister

Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

**** GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Lift up your heads; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your voices; **we lift them up to God.**

Lift up your hearts; **we lift them up to God.**

**** WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

And so we gather at the table. We come from many different places in life. And as we come together around the table we discover that our differences are not something we just tolerate, but that our differences are indeed a blessing. So come, children of God, just as you are. Wherever you are on this journey of life and faith, you are welcome here - here in this place, here in this community, here at this table. Come, children of God, come and remember. Remember the stories that Jesus' friends tell: Stories of bread broken and shared to feed a multitude; stories of gathering both enemy and friend together around a common table; stories of unlikely guests revealing the face of the sacred.

On a night of both celebration and betrayal Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it; gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." Then Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his disciples saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

And so we pray: Lord, bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. Bless all of us in our eating and drinking that our eyes might be open, and that we might recognize the risen Christ in our midst, indeed in one another.

**** LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

**** INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Here is life. God is with us.
Come, receive what God has promised.

For those communing at home or in the pew:

COMMUNION — *Receiving the Lord's tangible presence*

The body of Christ given for you.
The blood of Christ shed for you.

Each person may respond: Amen.

Communion Statement ~ If you believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is your Savior and Redeemer and would like to receive Holy Communion, then come forward to receive the elements. If you would just like to come forward and receive a blessing, then you may do that also.

NOTE: We invite everyone to come forward for Holy Communion. If you have a gluten allergy, gluten-free wafers are available upon request when receiving Communion. Also, if you prefer not to receive wine at Communion, apple juice is available upon request. For those choosing to remain in the pews, there are communion all-in-one cups containing grape juice available in the Narthex.

REFLECTION DURING COMMUNION

As we prepare to receive the sacrament today, may we quietly take this time to center ourselves on Christ and ponder the amazing gifts of grace and forgiveness that we have been given. As we receive the body and the blood of our Lord, let us reflect upon His sacrifice. Finally, may we take this time to ask the Holy Spirit to enter our hearts, and then to work in us and through us each and every day.

**** TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bless you and always keep you in God's grace. **Amen.**

**** PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Assisting Minister

God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

**** SENDING OF COMMUNION**

*Communion ministers may be sent to take the sacrament to those who are absent.
The presiding minister may lead this prayer of sending.*

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are sick, homebound, and imprisoned. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

**** BLESSING**

May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

**** SENDING HYMN**

“You Are Holy (Prince of Peace)”

(Music Ministers /All)

You are holy. **You are holy.**
You are mighty. **You are mighty.**
You are worthy- **You are worthy-**
Worthy of praise. **Worthy of praise.**
I will follow. **I will follow.**
I will listen. **I will listen.**
I will love you, **I will love you,**
All of my days. **All of my days.**

(All Men)

I will sing to and worship.
The King who is worthy.
And I will love and adore him,
And I will bow down before him.
And I will sing to and worship
The king who is worthy.
And I will love and adore him,
And I will bow down before him.

You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.

(All Women)

You are Lord or lords. You are King of kings.
You are mighty God, Lord of everything.
You're Emmanuel. You're the great I Am.
You're the Prince of Peace who is the Lamb.
You're the living God. You're my saving grace.
You will reign forever, Ancient of Days.
You are Alpha, Omega - beginning and end.
You're my Savior, Messiah, Redeemer and Friend.
You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.

(Men)

**I will sing to and worship
The King who is worthy.
And I will love and adore him,
And I will bow down before him.
And I will sing to and worship
The king who is worthy.
And I will love and adore him,
And I will bow down before him.
You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.
You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.**

(Women)

**You are Lord of lords. You are King of kings.
You are mighty God, Lord of everything.
You're Emmanuel. You're the Great I Am.
You're the Prince of Peace who is the Lamb.
You're the living God. You're my saving grace.
You will reign for ever, Ancient of Days.
You are Alpha, Omega - beginning and end.
You're my Savior, Messiah, Redeemer and
Friend.
You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.
You're my Prince of Peace,
And I will live my life for you.**

**** DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Created, saved and gifted by God,

we seek, serve and share Jesus Christ. Hallelujah, thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

“W + 2” = WORSHIP PLUS TWO

**MAKE A COMMITMENT NOT ONLY TO WORSHIP EACH WEEK,
BUT ALSO TRY TO FIND A WAY TO SERVE IN THE CONGREGATION
AND SEEK OUT A WAY TO SERVE OUR COMMUNITY.**

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD

Upcoming Commemorations

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Sunday, December 14, 2025

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

Las Posadas (LLC)

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

This celebration, long popular in Mexico, takes its name from the "posadas," or lodgings, sought by Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. Their search is reenacted in a neighborhood, unsuccessfully, until finally they are welcomed in, and a party commences.

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Born to an impoverished nobleman, Katie eventually took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin.