

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



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025
10:30 AM

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
901 EAST STROOP ROAD
KETTERING, OHIO 45429-4688
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INTRODUCTION

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.

A MEANING-MAKING NAME

Names are powerful makers of meaning both in the scriptures and in our lives. Consider how much we associate people with their names. A name is merely a word, a sound, yet it can completely represent a person. And our names can be powerful. Think about the resurrection account in John 20 when a distraught Mary Magdalene does not recognize Jesus in the garden. She does not recognize him until when? He speaks her name.

The texts for the fourth Sunday of Advent invite us to explore the name "Emmanuel." "Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). And he shall be called "Emmanuel," God with us. This reality changes everything. Never is God so with us as in Jesus of Nazareth. Here is God-made-flesh, and in his very name, the Son of God proclaims just how with us and for us God really is. This fulfillment of prophetic promise offers us a delicate and dramatic reality: God has slipped into skin and walks among us in a totally new way, offering us life and salvation.

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

GATHERING

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

PRELUDE

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor Mallory Morris

** CONFESSION

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

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

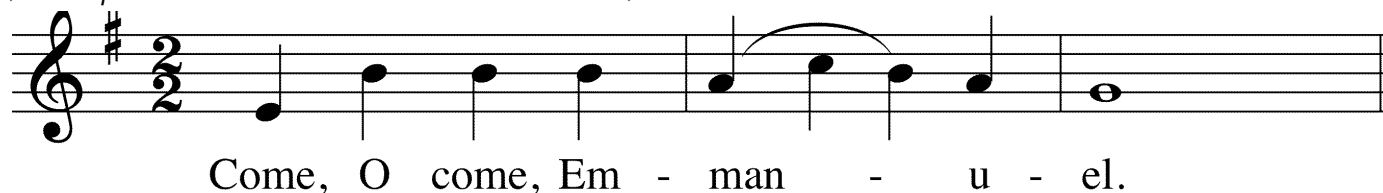
God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**

** GATHERING HYMN

"Come, Emmanuel"

Verse Response

(Corresponds to the bolded text of each verse)



(Verse 1 - Music Ministers / All)

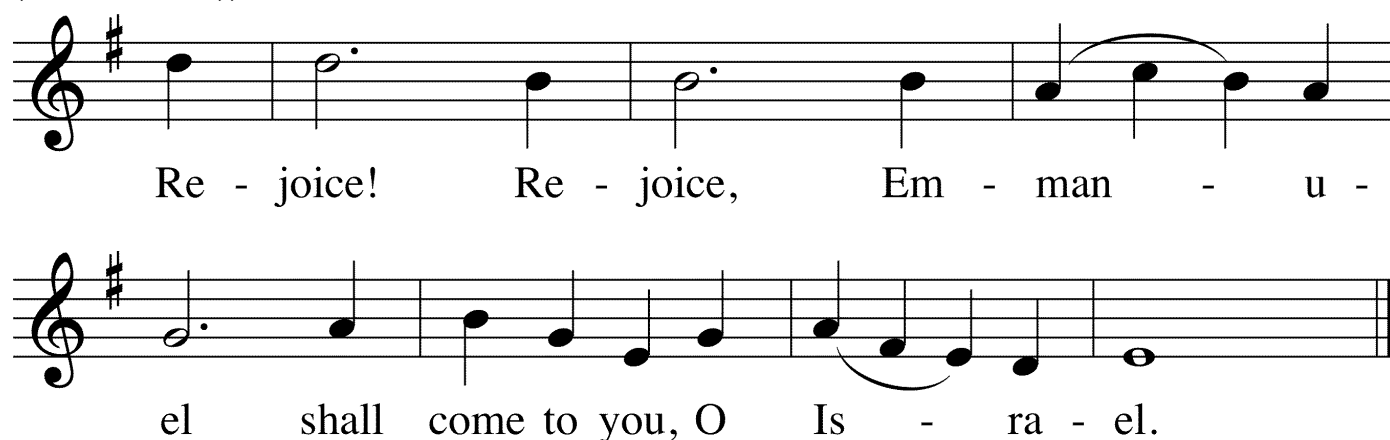
O Beloved, all-creating God. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, grieving for us God. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, come to court us, God. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, wed to us, O God. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - All)



(Verse 2 - Music Ministers / All)

O Beloved, Word made flesh, we cry. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, dwell is us, we cry. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, full of grace, we cry. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, grace on grace, we cry. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - All)

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

(Verse 3 - Music Ministers / All)

O Beloved, hear us night and day. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, seeks us night and day. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, hide us night and day. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

O Beloved, wake us night and day. **Come, oh, come, Emmanuel.**

(Refrain - All)

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

**** GREETING**

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

**** KYRIE**

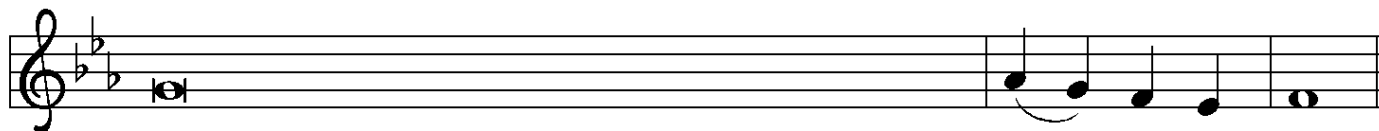
Assisting Minister



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



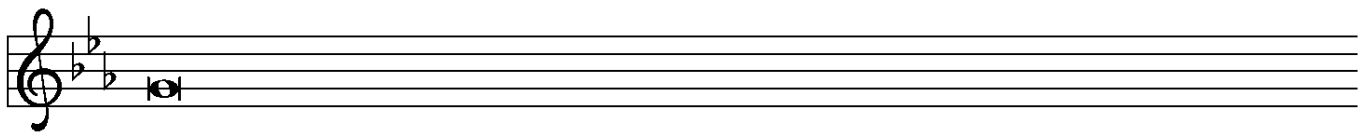
Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



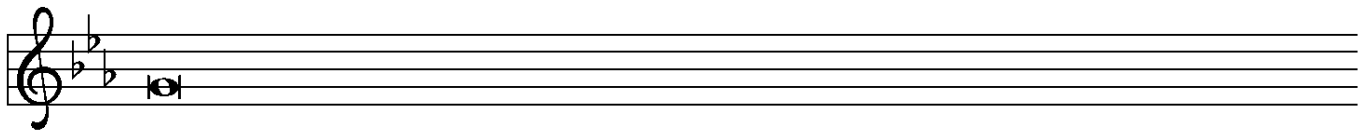
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men, a - men.

****LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and Joseph dreamed, so we dream and wait for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. **Amen.**

Advent Week 1
 Advent Week 2
 Advent Week 3
Advent Week 4

November 30
 December 7
 December 14
December 21

Verse 1
 Verses 1 & 2
 Verses 1-3
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.

**** PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Assisting Minister

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.**

**** PASSING OF THE PEACE**

WORD

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

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

A reading from Isaiah.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, "Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore 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. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For 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."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Ps. 80:7)

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

**In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

Restore us, O God;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

O Lord God of hosts,

how long will your anger fume when your people pray?

You have fed them with the bread of tears;

you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

**You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

**Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

And so will we never turn away from you;

give us life, that we may call upon your name.

Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;

let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

A reading from Romans.

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To 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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

** GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



**** GOSPEL READING**

Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

The holy gospel according to Matthew.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now 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 pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But 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. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTH MESSAGE

MESSAGE

Pastor Mallory Morris

**** HYMN OF THE DAY**

"Emmanuel" (W&P 36)



**** 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.

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.

**** COMMUNION HYMN**

"Come Now, O Prince of Peace" (ELW 247)

O - so - sŏ o - so - sŏ, pyong - hwa - ũi - im - gŭm

1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.
 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.
 3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Sav - ior.
 4 Come, Hope of u - ni - ty, make us one bod - y.

u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sŏ.

Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile all na - tions.

**** 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

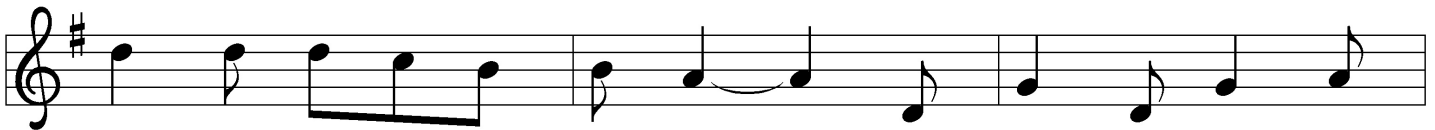
May God who comes among us,
Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

** SENDING SONG

"Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn" (ELW 242)



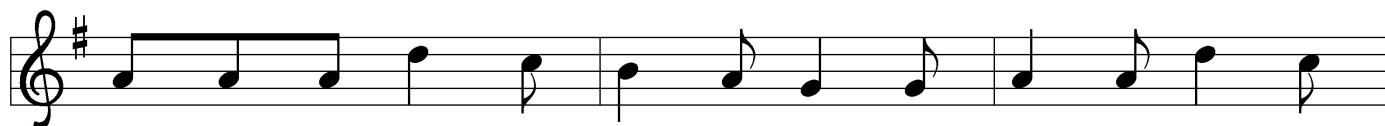
1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - jice, re - jice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing, his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

**** DISMISSAL**

Assisting Minister

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

Stephen, Deacon and Martyr Friday, December 26, 2025

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

John, Apostle and Evangelist Saturday, December 27, 2025

The son of Zebedee and brother of James, John was one of the twelve disciples and witness to the transfiguration. Tradition has named him also the writer of the Gospel of John, the three New Testament letters bearing his name, as well as Revelation.