



FOURTH SUNDAY OF

Advent

Sunday, December 24, 2023
Advent 4

Service Theme

**THE KING SHALL COME
JUST AS GOD PROMISED**

In Eden, mankind fell into sin, bringing death and despair to Paradise. God immediately promised to send a Savior who would undo that devastation. This Savior would be a descendant of Adam and Eve—a human being. Century after century, through the prophets, God reiterated and expanded upon that promise of a Savior-King. In a manger in Bethlehem, on that first Christmas, God's promise was fulfilled. The perfect faithfulness God demonstrated in keeping all his promises about Christ's first coming at Christmas is what gives us the certainty and comfort that God will keep his promises about Christ's second coming on judgment day. The King shall come!.

Invocation and Lighting of the Advent Candles

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

M: We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary. He came to share our humanity.

C: We remember Jesus, whose name means Savior. He came to save his people from their sins.

M: We hear his call to give him a place in our hearts.

C: We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.

M: Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

C: Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

ADVENT

23

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel



1 Oh, come, oh, come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
2 Oh, come, O Root of Jes - se, free Your own from Sa - tan's
3 Oh, come, O Day-spring from on high, And cheer us by your
4 Oh, come, O Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen wide our



Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
tyr - an - ny; From depths of hell your 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.
And bring them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re-joice! Re-joice!
And death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
And close the path to mis - er - y.



Em - man - u - el Shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin hymn, c. 12th century, abr.; tr. John M. Neale, 1818–66, alt.
Tune: VENI, EMMANUEL (LM with Refrain) Plainsong melody, 15th century, alt.

Order of Service:
Service of the Word (p.38)

M: The grace of our Lord (+) Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

Confession of Sins

M: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give us strength to live according to his will.

C: **Amen.**

Prayer and Praise

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

C: *(Sing)* **Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed are they who take refuge in him.
Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.
Your faithfulness continues forever.
Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good.
Blessed are they who take refuge in him.**

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: *(sing)* **Amen.**

First Lesson

2 Samuel 7:8-16 (EHV)

⁸ You are also to say the following to my servant David.

This is what the LORD of Armies says. I took you from the pasture, from following sheep, to be ruler over my people, over Israel. ⁹ I have been with you wherever you went. I have cut off all your enemies from before you. I will make your reputation great, like that of the great ones on the earth. ¹⁰ I will set up a place for my people Israel, and I will plant them there. They will dwell there, and they will not be disturbed again. Violent men will not afflict them again as they did at the beginning ¹¹ and ever since the day I appointed judges over my people Israel. I will give you rest from all your enemies.

The LORD also declares to you that the LORD himself will make a house for you. ¹² When your days are complete and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your seed, who will come from your own body. I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will discipline him with a rod used by men and with blows of the sons of men. ¹⁵ My faithful mercy will not depart from him as I removed it from Saul, whom I removed to make room for you. ¹⁶ Your house will stand firm, and your kingdom will endure forever before you. Your throne will be established forever.

Psalm 139a (p.116)

Refrain



To you, O Lord, I lift my soul; in you I trust, my God.

Psalm tone



O Lord, you have searched me and you know me;*
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down;*
you are familiar with all my ways.

Refrain

Where can I go from your Spirit?*
Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there;

If I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,*
Your right hand will hold me fast.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son*
and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning,*
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Refrain

Second Lesson

Romans 16:25-27 (EHV)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you—according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was veiled in silence for long ages past, ²⁶ but now has been revealed through the prophetic Scriptures and made known to all the Gentiles, in keeping with the command of the eternal God, resulting in the obedience of faith—²⁷ to God, who alone is wise, be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Verse of the Day

Alleluia. The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel.
Alleluia. (Matthew 1:23)

C: (sing) Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
These words are written that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Gospel

Luke 1:26-38 (EHV)

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women."

²⁹ But she was greatly troubled by the statement and was wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, because you have found favour with God. ³¹ Listen, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Listen, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age even though she was called barren, and this is her sixth month. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible for God."

³⁸ Then Mary said, "See, I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

C: (sing) Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn 24

ADVENT

24 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came, His
2 "I come from heav'n to tell the Lord's de - cree: A
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head; "To
4 Of her Im - man - u - el, the Christ, was born In



wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame; "All
bless - ed vir - gin moth - er you shall be. Your
me be as it pleas - es God," she said. "My
Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn, And



hail," said he to meek and low - ly Mar - y, "Most
Son shall be Im - man - u - el, by seers fore - told, Most
soul shall praise and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly name." Most
Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say, "Most



high - ly fa - vored maid - en." Glo - ri - a!
high - ly fa - vored maid - en." Glo - ri - a!
high - ly fa - vored maid - en, Glo - ri - a!
high - ly fa - vored maid - en." Glo - ri - a!

Text: Basque carol, paraphrase Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924, alt.
Tune: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE (10 10 12 10) Basque carol.

Sermon

Luke 1:26-38. . . **Let this GOOD NEWS sink in!**

Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**
**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
**He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.**
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Offertory Prayer

Prayer for Advent

Come, dear Saviour. We long for your appearing!

Come to cheer us with your promises, as you once cheered your ancient people throughout their long night of waiting and watching.

Come to restore our hope. Rouse us from the slumber of despair; lift our hearts from petty, earthbound goals; and direct our eyes above, from where you will soon come to make all things right again.

Come and work in us a godly grief and a genuine sorrow over sin. Forgive us for the shameful way we have dishonored you and the shabby way we have dealt with one another. Through your mighty Word, stir up in us a ceaseless yearning to give ourselves to others, as you have given yourself for us.

Come also to rekindle our joy as we prepare to celebrate your first coming. Do not permit a frenzied busyness to rob us of your peace or to deprive us of times to ponder and to wonder at your Word. Set our hearts apart from the bustle and the clamor and the jostle of these days. Fill us with the quiet delight of finding you in the manger, and keep hearts and minds undisturbed by the great throng that streams by uncaring. We pray also for those enduring great sorrow, for those undergoing spiritual trial, and for those whose restless hearts have no knowledge of your coming. Comfort, strengthen, and illumine them with the sweet peace born of your love, and keep them in the way of peace by your Holy Word.

Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayer.

Come quickly, dear Lord, and fill our longing eyes with the light of your coming! We wait, we keep watch, and in you we put our hope. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

C: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out the Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: (sing) Amen.

The Blessing

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and (+) give you peace.

C: (sing) Amen. Amen. Amen.

Hymn 47

CHRISTMAS

47

Behold, a Branch Is Growing



1 Be - hold, a Branch is grow - ing Of
2 I - sa - iah had fore - told it In
3 The shep - herds heard the sto - ry Pro -
4 This flow'r, so small and ten - der, With
5 O Sav - ior, Child of Mar - y, Who



love - liest form and grace, As proph - ets sang, fore -
words of prom - ise sure, And Mar - y's arms en -
claimed by an - gels bright, How Christ, the Lord of
fra - grance fills the air; His bright - ness ends the
felt our hu - man woes, O Sav - ior, King of



know - ing; It springs from Jes - se's race And
fold it, A vir - gin meek and pure. Through
glo - ry, Was born on earth this night. To
dark - ness That kept the earth in fear. True
glo - ry, Who con - quered all our foes, Bring



bears one lit - tle flow'r In midst of cold - est
God's e - ter - nal will This child to her is
Beth - le - hem they sped And in the man - ger
God and yet true man, He came to save his
us at last, we pray, To the bright courts of



win - ter, At deep - est mid - night hour.
giv - en At mid - night calm and still.
found him, As an - gel her - alds said.
peo - ple From earth's dark night of sin.
heav - en And to the end - less day.

Text: *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng*, Köln, 1599, abr.; tr. composite.
Tune: ES IST EIN ROS (76 76 676) *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng*, Köln, 1599.

Announcements

Church Cleaners:

December 31 - Timothy // January 7 - Mark

DIVINE WORD'S TWO-WEEK CALENDAR

Su (24)	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 3:00 pm 7:00 pm	Sunday School Layled-Worship Coffee Hour <i>Poltimore's</i> Christmas Eve Service Christmas Eve Service
Mo (25)	11:00 am	Christmas Day Service
Su (31)	10:30 am	Worship
We (3)	6:30 pm	"Test the Spirits" Bible Information Class.
Th (4)	10:30 am 6:30 pm	Devotion at Longfield Manor Youth Confirmation (W)
Su (7)	9:00 am 10:30 am 11:30 am 3:00 pm	Sunday School & Confirmation Worship & Communion First Fellowship Worship & Communion in Poltimore



Divine Word

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