



*You are welcome here!*  
**We are disciples of Jesus, growing  
in Faith, Hope, and Love**

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✘

Worship Times  
Sunday 10:15 am  
Wednesday 7:00 pm

✘

Pastor  
Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal



*December 18, 2022*  
*Fourth Sunday of*  
*Advent*

# Gathering

## ✘ 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.*

## ✘ CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things.

**C Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.**

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sin, and confess it to the one who is merciful and just.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P God of new beginnings,

**C we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.**

P People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign.

By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on + Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

**C Amen.**

## ✘ GATHERING HYMN All Earth Is Hopeful (ELW#266)

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## ✘ GREETING

P 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.**

## ✘ LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

P Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. In your Son, Emmanuel, you have shown us your light and saved us from the power of sin. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Increase our longing for your presence, that at the celebration of your Son's birth his Spirit might dwell anew in our midst, for he is our light and salvation. Blessed be God forever.

## ✘ ADVENT HYMN – Light Four Candles to Watch for Messiah (ELW #240) verse 4

Light four candles to watch for Messiah:  
Let the light banish dark-ness.  
He is coming, tell the glad tidings.  
Let your lights be shining!

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## ✘ PRAYER OF THE DAY

A 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.

C Amen.

# Word

## ✘ FIRST LESSON – Isaiah 7:10-16

<sup>10</sup>The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup>Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. <sup>12</sup>But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. <sup>13</sup>Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup>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.”

L The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

## ✠ RESPONSIVE READING – Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

- <sup>1</sup> Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- <sup>2</sup> **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and come to help us.**
- <sup>3</sup> Restore us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- <sup>4</sup> **O Lord God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**
- <sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- <sup>6</sup> **You have made us the derision of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**
- <sup>7</sup> Restore us, O God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.
- <sup>17</sup> **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**
- <sup>18</sup> And so will we never turn away from you;  
give us life, that we may call upon your name.
- <sup>19</sup> **Restore us, O Lord God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

## ✠ SECOND LESSON – Romans 1:1-7

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup>which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup>the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup>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, <sup>5</sup>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, <sup>6</sup>including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, <sup>7</sup>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.

L The Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as you are able, to welcome the Gospel.*

✘ **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION – Prepare the Royal Highway  
(ELW#264 verse 1)**

Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!  
Let every hill and valley a level road appear!  
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God’s word!

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✘ **GOSPEL – Matthew 1:18-25**

P The Holy Gospel, according to Matthew, the first chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>18</sup>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 with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup>“Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,”

which means, “God is with us.”<sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

✘ **SERMON**

✘ **HYMN OF THE DAY – There Is a Longing in Our Hearts (ACS#1078)**

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## ✠ APOSTLES' CREED (ELW p. 105)

P With the whole Church, let us confess our faith:

**C 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 the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. 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

A As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

*A brief silence.*

A God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

A God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

A God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights, especially Amnesty International. God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

A God our helper, come to the aid of all who cry out to you. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to individuals and families experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely. God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

A God our Emmanuel, you are with us in our life together. We give you thanks for gathering us in worship and fellowship, and we remember those who cannot be present. Watch over those who travel. Heal the sick and speed their recovery.

God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

A God our hope, you bring life out of death, and you promise to be our God forever. Shine upon the faithful who now rest in the fulfillment of your promise and bring us also into your blessed reign of peace. God, in your mercy,

**C hear our prayer.**

P God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray.

**C Amen.**

## ✠ PEACE

P The peace of the Lord be with you all.

**C And also with you.**

## ✠ OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, here and around the world.*

*After the offering is gathered, the gifts are brought forward. Please stand, as you are able.*

## ✠ OFFERING PRAYER

A Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

**C Amen.**

# Meal

## ✠ GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

**C And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

**C We lift them to the Lord.**

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## ✠ HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW#190)

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Holy, holy, hold Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
Heaven and earth are full, full of your glory,  
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.

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## ✠ EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life...

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P With this bread and cup...

We look with hope for his coming.

**C Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P Holy God, we long for your Spirit....

Bring the gift of peace on earth.

**C Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.**

P All praise and glory are yours...

one God, now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## ✘ LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C 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

P Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.

## ✘ DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

## ✘ COMMUNION HYMN – Wait for the Lord (ELW#262)

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## ✘ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Faithful God, in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord

**C Amen.**

## ✘ BLESSING

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ✚ bless you now and forever.

**C Amen.**

## ✘ ANNOUNCEMENTS

## ✘ SENDING HYMN – Savior of the Nations, Come (ELW#263)

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## ✘ DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

**C Thanks be to God.**

## **Monthly Bible Study in the Fellowship Hall**

**Next Session:** Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m.

*We will begin a four-session study based on the Ten Commandments. This study will help us see that the Commandments are more than they appear at first glance.*

**Session One:** Dancing the Decalogue – Commandments 1 and 2.

Bring a friend and a Bible. Contact Hattie at [hattie.hammer@sbcglobal](mailto:hattie.hammer@sbcglobal) or 972-637-3191 for more information or if you need a ride.

*Hope to see you there!*

### **The following items are being collected on an ongoing basis for the Grand Prairie Food and Clothing Co-op:**

- Men's medium and large long sleeved shirts
- Men's pants/jeans (32, 34, 36)
- Shoes for kids and men (all sizes)
- Men's and Women's jackets (all sizes)

PLUS, volunteers are always needed!

The Co-op is open 9am-11am Tuesday thru Friday.

If anyone is able to volunteer even one or two days a month, anything is welcome!

### **OFFICE HOURS for the rest of December –**

Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Will come in as needed Tuesday – Friday.

Emails will be checked remotely when not present in the office.

You may also email questions and concerns to [johnzacharias19@gmail.com](mailto:johnzacharias19@gmail.com)

## Things to Know

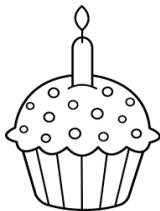
**Prayer Cards** – We now have prayer cards available in the Narthex. Please fill one (or more) out with any special prayer requests. These will be used to keep our prayer list updated.

**Coupons for Military Personnel** – We continue to send coupons to the Ramstein Commissary in Germany. Please bring your coupons for nonfood, food, and pet items and put them in the box. Thank you.

**Feel free to donate housekeeping items needed for the church** – paper dinner napkins, toilet paper, Lysol or Chlorox wipes (anti-viral/disinfecting), Pine-sol concentrated cleaner, and soft-soap and dish soap refills.

### Happy Birthday!

John Zacharias 12/24  
Leah Adix 12/28  
Parma Kersten 12/29



### Happy Anniversary!

Jerry and Parma  
Kersten 12/18



### Merry Christmas!

We **WILL** have a very



special Christmas Eve  
service this Saturday  
evening, at 7:00 pm.  
(No service on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>)

## ✘ **SERVING TODAY**

Presiding Minister:	The Rev. Julio Cruz-Natal
Music Director:	John Zacharias
Assisting Minister:	Kris Davies
Lay Reader:	Steve Curry
Communion Cup Holder:	Cassi Bennett
Usher:	Julie Bothun
Videographer:	Gene Davies
Altar Care:	Kris Davies
Sunday School:	Cheri Oertel

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