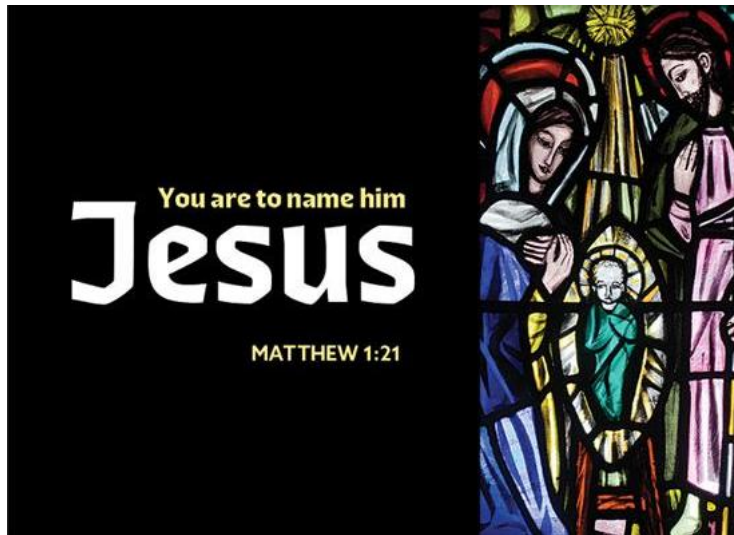




SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2025
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



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.

— GATHERING —

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING MUSIC- JOYOUS CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS

DING, DONG MERRILY ON HIGH
WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT
HARK THE HERALD ANGELS SING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: The desert will rejoice and blossom; the dry land will burst into song.

People: We come to witness God's joy breaking into weary places.

Leader: Strengthen the weak hands, make firm the feeble knees; say to the fearful heart: "Be strong, do not fear!"

People: We come seeking courage, trusting that our God is on the way.

Leader: The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the lame shall leap like a deer.

People: We come hoping for the healing that Christ brings.

Leader: John asked, "Are you the one who is to come?" And Jesus answered with the signs of God's kingdom unfolding.

People: We come with our own questions and expectations, ready to hear the good news again.

Leader: The ransom of the Lord shall return with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads.

All: We gather in joyful expectation. Come, Lord Jesus—renew, restore, and redeem!

APOSTOLIC 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.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH Fourth Sunday of Advent —Love (Angel's Candle)

*Today, we light the fourth candle, the **Candle of Love**, also known as the **Angel's Candle**. The angels proclaimed God's love breaking into the world through the birth of Jesus. As this final candle shines, we celebrate the boundless love that draws near to us and to all creation.*

Leader: God's love is made known among us.

People: In Christ, God's love takes on flesh.

Leader: The angels proclaimed good news for all people.

People: We receive that good news with grateful hearts.

Leader: We light this candle as a sign of God’s redeeming love.

People: Come, Lord Jesus, Love made flesh.

Prayer of the Day

God of love, dwell with us and fill our hearts with Your compassion. Prepare us to welcome Christ with open arms and faithful lives. **Amen.**

———— **WORD** ————

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 7:10-16

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

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Congregation:

Al-le-lu - ia, al-le-lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we

go? You have the words of e - ter - nal

life. Al - le - lu - ia! *Optional Repeat*

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

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

²³ “Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

SERMON

ARE YOU THE ONE, JESUS?

MEL SIEBERT

1. Is Jesus truly the Messiah for me and not just who I imagined?
2. What signs of God's kingdom do I see, or miss in my life/world?
3. Am I willing to move past my preconceived notions to embrace the real Jesus, even in suffering or doubt, and accept His way of salvation?

HYMN OF THE DAY

“MARY, DID YOU KNOW?”

Music and lyrics: Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry
© 1991, 1993 Rufus Music; Curb Word Music
Admin: Capitol CMG Publishing, CURB | Word Music Publishing

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition will end with “God of grace” and the response will be “**hear our prayer.**”

SHARING OF CHRIST’S PEACE

————— MEAL —————

OFFERING

Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting the ongoing ministry of Bethel Lutheran Church! In-person gifts may be placed in the offering plates, mailed to Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (2077 N. Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603), given online at www.bethelwinchester.com or using the adjacent QR code.



MUSIC FOR REFLECTION – MIDNIGHT NOEL

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God,

Everything in heaven and earth belongs to you . **We joyfully release** what you have entrusted to us. **May these gifts be the signs of our whole lives returned to you,** dedicated to the healing and unity of all creation, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord**

Let us give thanks to the lord our god. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

HOLY HOLY HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho-ly are you, God of pow - er and



might; Heav-en and earth are filled with your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est!



Bless - ed is the One who comes in your name. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high-est!

JESUS' WORDS ABOUT COMMUNION

LORD'S PRAYER



Words: Matthew 6:9-13; adapt by Mark A Miller and Laurie Zelman Music: Mark A Miller Adapt and music ©2008 Abingdon Press admin by the Copyright Company

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Emmanuel.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Welcome to the Lord's Table!

Everyone, regardless of age and denomination, is invited to join us for Holy Communion. If you prefer a blessing, simply inform the communion distributors. The ushers will direct your row when it is time to come forward.

You will receive the bread from the first Holy Communion distributor. You will pick up the cup of wine or juice from the tray held by the second distributor. For those who need gluten free a pre-packaged **gluten-free** wafer and a cup of **grape juice** is also available.

Once you have communed, you are invited to return to your seat for silent reflection or singing

LAMB OF GOD

1. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;
2. Lamb of God, you break the chains of ha - tred and fear;

have mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us, mer-cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world:

grant us peace, grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN- O COME, LITTLE CHILDREN

COMMUNION BLESSING

_____ SENDING _____

BENEDICTION

SENDING SONG- JOYOUS CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS

JOY TO THE WORLD

DISMISSAL

Advent & Christmas 2025 at Bethel

Sunday, December 21st - 4th Sunday in Advent 9:30am Worship, 3pm Blue Christmas Worship (TVOR)

Wednesday, December 24th Christmas Eve

3:00pm Christmas in a Barn Worship (Cloverdale Barn)

7:00pm Candlelight Communion Worship (Bethel Sanctuary)

BETHEL STAFF & COUNCIL

Rev. Dr. David N. Young, Pastor

pastordave@bethelwinchester.com

Kristal Cutler, Director of Music

music@bethelwinchester.com

Edie Donovan, Parish Nurse

emcgoff@gmail.com

George W. Donovan, Sr., Director of Safety and Security

security@bethelwinchester.com

Shawn Garner, Facility Management

facility@bethelwinchester.com

Financial or Giving Questions

office@bethelwinchester.com

Matt Meade & Lexy Grymala Nursery Managers

office@bethelwinchester.com

Mel Siebert, Youth Ministry

youth@bethelwinchester.com

Nina Davis, Office Manager

office@bethelwinchester.com

Patty White, Parish Custodian

annwhite54@aol.com

Council Executive Committee

RACHEL CARLSON, PRESIDENT, TEXT/CALL 540-533-4312, EMAIL rachel.carlson@bethelwinchester.com

BRIAN DAVIES, VICE-PRESIDENT & MINISTRY TEAM TEXT/CALL 540-305-7529, EMAIL brian.davies@bethelwinchester.com

CHERIE LAUCK, SECRETARY & COMMUNICATIONS TEAM TEXT/CALL 540-336-0300, EMAIL cherie.lauck@bethelwinchester.com

LYNDA GRIMALA, TREASURER & FINANCE TEAM TEXT/CALL 540-222-9408, EMAIL lynda.grymala@bethelwinchester.com

DAVID YOUNG, PASTOR

COUNCIL GENERAL MEMBERS

MATT LYMAN, EMAIL MATT.LYMAN@BETHELWINCHESTER.COM

MEL SIEBERT, EMAIL MEL.SIEBERT@BETHELWINCHESTER.COM

LEEANNE MARPLE EMAIL LEEANNE.MARPLE@BETHELWINCHESTER.COM

RENE HOLLEBRANDSE, MINISTRY TEAM EMAIL C.J.HOLLEBRANDSE@GMAIL.COM

JENNIFER LAFOLLETTE, FINANCE TEAM JNANLAFOLLETTE@GMAIL.COM

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

2077 North Frederick Pike, Winchester, VA 22603, 540-662-3245

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

www.bethelwinchester.com

