

THE ORDER *of* WORSHIP



“Annunciation; Crucifixion” (1385–1395) Altar piece panel painting by Giuliano di Simone on display in the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA)

✠ THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT ✠

December 20, 2020 | 11.00 a.m.

FIRST UNITED
METHODIST CHURCH
Salisbury, North Carolina
ESTABLISHED 1783



THE FOURTH SUNDAY *in* ADVENT

THE LORD'S DAY, 20 December, *Anno Domini* 2020

Eleven o'clock in the morning | The Sanctuary

✦ denotes the People standing, in body or spirit, as able.

The People's responses are printed in **bold**.



SILENT PRAYER of PREPARATION for WORSHIP

O Lord, just as Mary rejoiced, so we too come to magnify You with our souls and entire being. Whether we come to worship, blissful, belligerent, bashful, or ashamed – we will not be afraid because we have found favor with You, O God. We bring our bodies and brains that bear the burdens of birthing and brokenness – offering all that we are as holy and living sacrifices of praise. For You, O God, have done great things for us, and we long for the continued fulfillment of Your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GREETING

Pastor Mark Conforti

INTROIT

Joshua Starnes, *solo*

Veni Emmanuel

Veni, veni, Rex Gentium, veni, Redemptor omnium, O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; ut salvas tuos famulos peccati sibi conscios. bid every strife and quarrel cease and fill the world with heaven's peace. Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel, nascetur pro te Israel! Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!

Veni, veni Emmanuel captivum solve Israel, O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, qui gemit in exilio, privatus Dei Filio. that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Gaude! Gaude! Emmanuel, nascetur pro te Israel! Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel!

✦ CALL to WORSHIP

based on Luke 1.46b-55

The womb of a young virgin leaps for joy,
and the ultimate gift prepares to come into the world as a babe.
Come God, in flesh, to Your Church.

Now is the time of watching and waiting.
The time of pregnant expectation of new life.

Now is the season of hope unfolding.
The dark winter season when hope is waiting to be born.

Let us come before God with receptive and willing spirits.
May our souls magnify God's Name and may our spirits rejoice in God our Savior!

God, You have done great things, and they continue.
You have flipped the script for the sake of connecting with a people,
a young couple, and us.
Come God, in flesh, to Your Church.

Rejoice! God comes to bring the birthday of life and hope.
Amen.

✦ LIGHTING of THE ADVENT WREATH

BEHOLD: Mary's Candle of Love

(you are invited to light a candle in your home)

Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Christ, the true, the only Light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise, triumph o'er the shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near; Daystar, in my heart appear.

2. Dark and cheerless is the morn unaccompanied by Thee;
Joyless is the day's return, till Thy mercy's beams I see;
Till they inward light impart, cheer my eyes and warm my heart.

3. Visit then this soul of mine; pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
Fill me, Radiance Divine, scatter all my unbelief;
More and more Thyself display, shining to the perfect Day.

*Words: James Montgomery, 1821 (Psalm 72).
Music: Gesangbuch der H. W. k. Hofkapelle, 1784, alt.; adapt. And harm. W. H. Monk, 1868.*

✠ CALL to CONFESSION

Prepare the way of the Lord!

Let us humbly make our confession to Almighty God and one another.

(a brief period of silence follows for personal confession)

✠ PRAYER of CONFESSION *(in unison)*

Faithful God, we know that You are always there to guide us,
yet we often make plans without listening to You
and discover that our human agendas can drown out our ability to hear Your will for us.

We repent of these faults and turn to You in love.

Forgive our offenses and pardon our sins,
that our lives may magnify Your Holy Name forever. *Amen.*

✠ WORDS of ASSURANCE

Sisters and brothers, by the faith of Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Blessed be the God of our salvation, whose mercy is everlasting.

✠ DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

VENI EMMANUEL

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below;
praise God above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

*Words: Thomas Ken, 1674, alt.; Refrain IX Century Latin.
Music: XV Century French; arr. And harm. Thomas Helmore, 1854.*

Astonishing God,
Send Your Holy Spirit upon us as we await the coming of Your Son.
Fill us with good things that we may conceive Your reign on earth
and glorify You according to Your Word;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

Luke 1.46b-55

...“My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

✠ THE *MAGNIFICAT*: NO. 198

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

MORNING SONG

My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.

2. My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is His Name.
All people will declare me blessed, and blessings they shall claim.
3. From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,
Dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.
4. Love casts the mighty from their thrones, promotes the insecure,
Leaves hungry spirits satisfied, the rich seem suddenly poor.
5. Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
Remembering past promises with present faithfulness.

Words: Miriam Therese Winter, 1987 (Luke 1.46b-55); © 1978, 1987 Medical Mission Sisters.

Music: Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second, 1813; harm. Charles H. Webb; © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House.

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³²He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

SERMON

Pastor Stacey Lundy

AFFIRMATION of FAITH (*in unison*)

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],
who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,

[continued overleaf...]

who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic* and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

[*universal]

OFFERING

(You may support the ministries of FUMC by clicking the "Offering" link above to make a donation through our secure Online portal.)

PASTORAL PRAYER of INTERCESSION and THANKSGIVING

concluding with THE LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)

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. *Amen.*

✠ SENDING CAROL: NO. 196

O Lord How Shall I Meet You

ST. THEODULPH

O Lord, how shall I meet You, how welcome You aright?
Your people long to greet You, my hope, and heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord Most Holy, Your lamp within my breast
to do in spirit lowly all that may please You best.

2. Love caused Your Incarnation, love brought You down to me;
Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.
O love beyond all telling, that led You to embrace,
in love all love excelling, our lost and fallen race!
3. Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted, who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn o'er joys departed and tremble at your doom.
Despair not, He is near you, yea, standing at the door,
who best can help and cheer you and bids you weep no more.
4. Sin's debt, that fearful burden, let not your souls distress;
your guilt the Lord will pardon and cover by His grace.
He comes, for men procuring the peace of sin forgiven,
for all God's sons securing their heritage in heaven.

*Words: Paul Gerhardt, 1653; trans. composite.
Music: Melchior Teschner (ca. 1615).*

✠ BENEDICTION *and* COMMISSION

(Please bow your head and extend your hands to receive the Advent blessing.)

In all your Advent preparations, remain watchful with your eyes on Christ, whose birth in a manger is but a promise of His coming again in glory. And may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord is coming soon. Even so, Lord Jesus, come and do not tarry.

Therefore, let us go forth in peace and in the Name of Christ,
to make and nurture Christian disciples
through the presence and power of God.

Thanks be to God!

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Ave Maria

Joshua Starnes, *piano*
Franz Schubert (1797–1828)



THE FLOWERS ADORNING THE CHANCEL ARE LOVING GIVEN TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD
IN THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S FAITHFULNESS AND IN CELEBRATION OF THE MINISTRY OF
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH THROUGHOUT THIS YEAR.



THOSE SERVING IN WORSHIP

(listed alphabetically)

THE REVEREND DR. MARK CONFORTI	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
MR. PHILLIP CONRAD	<i>Lector</i>
MS. JEN FOGT	<i>Video Producer</i>
THE REVEREND STACEY LUNDY	<i>Associate Pastor of Discipleship & Pastoral Care</i>
MASTER NATE SHAFFER	<i>Acolyte</i>
MR. JOSHUA W. STARNES	<i>Director of Music & Organist</i>



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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

217 SOUTH CHURCH STREET, SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA 28144-4927
704.636.3121 ✦ WWW.FUMCSALISBURY.ORG

*The Mission of First United Methodist Church is
To Make and Nurture Christian Disciples Through the Presence and Power of God.*