

December 18, 2022

After Countdown

IMMANUEL

A sign shall be given: a virgin will conceive a human baby bearing undiminished Deity.
The glory of the nations, a light for all to see,
and hope for all who will embrace His warm reality.

Immanuel, our God is with us. And if God is with us, who could stand against us?
Our God is with us, Immanuel.

All those who live in the shadows of death, a glorious light has dawned.
For all those who stumble in the darkness, behold: a light has come.

Immanuel, our God is with us. And if God is with us, who could stand against us?
Our God is with us, Immanuel.

So what shall be your answer? Oh, will you hear the call
of One who did not spare His Son, but gave Him for us all?
On earth there is no power, there is no depth or height
could ever separate us from the love of God in Christ.

Immanuel, our God is with us. And if God is with us, who could stand against us?
Our God is with us, Immanuel.

Opening Hymn

BLESSED BE THE GOD OF ISRAEL

Blessed be the God of Israel, who comes to set us free,
who visits and redeems us and grants us liberty.
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release.
God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.

Now from the house of David a child of grace is given.
a Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.
Before Him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,
the prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.

On prisoners of darkness the sun begins to rise,
the dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes,
to guide the feet of pilgrims along the paths of peace.
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease!

Prayer Response

COME, EMMANUEL

Love that begins us, pardons, and wins us, come and reign in us, Emmanuel.
Come and speak to us, fill, and renew us, come, and live through us, Emmanuel.
Come, Emmanuel; come, Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel; come, Emmanuel.

Gospel Lesson

Matthew 1:18-25

Dan Potts, lector

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.

May this scripture inspire us all...

§ to walk in the way that leads to life.

NOEL

Praise Team

Love incarnate, love divine. Star and angels gave the sign.

Bow to Babe on bended knee, the Savior of humanity.

Unto us a Child is born. He shall reign forevermore.

Noel, noel. Come and see what God has done.

Noel, noel. The story of amazing love, the light of the world given for us, Noel.

Son of God and Son of man, there before the world began.

Born to suffer, born to save, born to raise us from the grave.

Christ, the everlasting Lord, He shall reign forevermore.

Noel, noel. Come and see what God has done.

Noel, noel. The story of amazing love, the light of the world given for us, Noel.

Noel.

Sermon Response JOSEPH HEARD THE TROUBLING NEWS

Joseph heard the troubling news: Mary was expecting!

What should He, a just man, do? He sought God's directing.

Joseph thought to send her home — leave her, without blaming.

Then an angel in a dream spoke of joy, proclaiming:

"Go, take Mary as Your wife; Joseph, don't you fear it —

God has formed a precious life by the Holy Spirit!

Mary soon will bear a son; you shall name Him Jesus.

When the prophet spoke of Him, He said, "God is with us!"

God of love, we too may face times of doubt and trouble.

May we know Your daily grace, even when we struggle.

Just as Joseph answered, "Yes!" with new dedication,

We rejoice, for we've been blessed by Your incarnation.

Offertory: I HEARD THE BELLS ON CHRISTMAS DAY

I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play.

And mild and sweet their songs repeat of peace on earth, good will to all.

And the bells are ringing, "Peace on earth!"

Like a choir they're singing, "Peace on earth!"

In my heart I hear them, "Peace on earth, goodwill to all.

And in despair I bowed my head. "There is no peace on earth," I said.

“For hate is strong, and mocks the song of peace on earth, goodwill to all.
 But the bells are ringing, “Peace on earth!”
 Like a choir they’re singing, “Peace on earth!”
 Does anybody hear them? “Peace on earth, goodwill to all.

Then rang the bells more loud and deep: “God is not dead, nor doth He sleep.”
 The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, goodwill to all!”

Then ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day.
 A voice, a chime, a chance sublime of peace on earth, goodwill to all.
 And the bells, they’re ringing, “Peace on earth!”
 Like a choir they’re singing, “Peace on earth!”
 And with our hearts we’ll hear them, “Peace, peace on earth, goodwill to all.

Do you hear the bells, they’re ringing, “Peace on earth!”
 Like the angels singing! “Peace on earth!”
 Open up your hearts and hear them, “Peace, peace on earth, goodwill to all.
 Peace on earth, peace on earth. Peace on earth, goodwill to all.”

Sending Forth HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING (WITH KING OF HEAVEN)

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King;
 Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!”
 Joyful all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies.
 With angelic hosts proclaim, “Christ is born Bethlehem!”

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”
 King of heaven, come down; King of heaven, come now;
 Let Your glory reign, shining like the day, King of heaven, come;
 King of heaven, rise up, who can stand against us;
 You are strong to save, in Your mighty name, King of heaven, come.

Hail the heav’n born Prince of Peace, hail the Sun of Righteousness.
 Light of life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.
 Mild He lays His glory by, born that we no more may die.
 Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.

Hark! the herald angels sing, “Glory to the newborn King!”
 King of heaven, come down; King of heaven, come now;
 Let Your glory reign, shining like the day, King of heaven, come;
 King of heaven, rise up, who can stand against us;
 You are strong to save, in Your mighty name, King of heaven, come.
 King of heaven, come. King of heaven, come. King of heaven, come.
 King of heaven, come down; King of heaven, come now;
 Let Your glory reign, shining like the day, King of heaven, come!