Welcome and Announcements

Organ Prelude
“Veni, Emmanuel” Marilyn Biery

We Address Ourselves to God

Call to Worship
Luke 1:46-49
Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord;
People: My Spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
Leader: The Mighty One has done great things for me,
People: Holy is God’s name!
Leader: With Mary, we will offer our praises
People: and lift our voices in song.
All: Let us worship the Lord!

Hymn
“O Lord, How Shall I Meet You” Hymn No. 104

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (The people joining)
Almighty God, who can be compared to you? You transform mangers into cradles of glory and cries of despair into songs of praise. Sometimes, we confess, we resist your transformation. We are distressed by injustice but hesitant to demand change, afraid we might make ourselves a target. You invite us to extend our hand to the lowly and to fill the hungry, but we are slow to share the abundance we possess. Forgive us when we turn away from messengers who carry an invitation to your holy work. Dispel our fear; open our hearts, minds, and hands to say yes, to your call on our lives—even as we wait in December’s darkness to welcome once again the Babe born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Silent Confessions

Assurance of Pardon

Response to Confession
“Come Now, O Prince of Peace” Hymn No. 103

The Passing of the Peace
Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.
People: And also with you.
Leader: Let us share that peace with one another.

Lighting of the Advent Candle of Love
We Hear God’s Word

Gospel Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Leader: The Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

Canticle of Mary

“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”
Stanzas 1, 5, and 6 sung by all
Stanza 2 sung by high voices
Stanza 4 sung by low voices

Sermon

“Here I Am, the Servant of the Lord”
The Rev. Susan Hilley Niesen

We Respond to God’s Word

Hymn

“While We Are Waiting, Come”

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Offertory Sentences

Offertory Anthem

“The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came”
Paul Manz

Prayer of Dedication

We Depart to Serve the Lord

Hymn

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Benediction
Choral Response
“Prepare the Way of the Lord”
Prepare the way of the Lord, and all people will see the salvation of our God!
Jacques Berthier

Organ Postlude
“The King Shall Come”
David M. Johnson

Worship Leaders:
The Rev. Susan Hilley Niesen, Guest Preacher
The Rev. Dr. Karen Blanchard, Associate Pastor

Music Ministry:
Chancel Octet; Bill Stein, Director of Music Ministries; Travis Evans, Music Associate

Thank you for worshiping with us.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

PLEASE NOTE:
- The days to drop off food for KirkCare and school supplies and food for the Kirkwood School District are Tuesday and Thursday from 9am-12pm.
- Church office hours will be 9am-12pm between Christmas and New Year’s

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT EDUCATION
- **Zoom Series:** Today, December 20, at 9:30am, Betsy Solomon of the Shepherd’s Center, will continue her series about artwork of the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany seasons. This week the topic is *The Nativity Story in Painting.*
- **January Sunday Morning Adult Ed on Zoom, 9:30am:** Our next Sunday morning series begins in January. All classes will begin at 9:30am and will be presented on Zoom. The speakers will be connected to local police departments and share with us about various aspects of their work. On January 10 Rabbi Mark Shook and on January 17 and 24, Sgt. Bryan Watson will speak about their work as chaplains to police officers. On January 31, a member of the Crisis Intervention Team will speak about the program that trains officers to respond and work with the mentally ill.

Special thanks to Becky Craig, Donna Stonerook, Molly Wainwright, Missy Wulff, and Rebecca Weimer for their contributions to help defray the cost of purchasing poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary for the holidays.
THIS WEEK

Sunday, 12/20  Fourth Sunday in Advent
9:30am   Zoom Adult Ed: Betsy Solomon
11:00am  Live-Streamed Worship Service
7:00pm   Sr. High Study Time - Fellowship Hall

Monday, 12/21
12:00pm  Sr. High Study Time - Fellowship Hall
12:00pm  Prayer Time - Sanctuary (reservations required)
3:30pm   Grief Group - Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, 12/22
12:00pm  Prayer Time - Sanctuary (reservations required)

Wednesday, 12/23
12:00pm  Prayer Time - Sanctuary (reservations required)
5:30pm   Midweek Advent Worship Service - Live Streamed
7:00pm   Bell Choir Rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday, 12/24  Christmas Eve
5:00pm  Christmas Eve Service - Live Streamed
8:00pm  Christmas Eve Service - Live Streamed

Friday, 12/25  Christmas Day

Saturday, 12/26
11:00am  Men's Bible Study - Zoom

Sunday, 12/27  First Sunday of Christmas
11:00am  Live-Streamed Worship Service - Lessons and Carols

If you would like to be on our email list to receive information on the life of the congregation, please email Paula at paulab@kirkwoodpres.org
O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you a-right?
Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!
O kindle, Lord most holy, a 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 loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

3 You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,
to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.
In patient expectation we live for that great day
when your renewed creation your glory shall display.


Though many Advent hymns address Christ with entreaty and invitation, this more contemplative text considers how an individual prepares for and responds to Christ’s coming. It also brings together a recollection of the First Coming with an anticipation of the Second Coming.
103 Come Now, O Prince of Peace

1 Come now, O Prince of Peace; make us one body.
2 Come now, O God of love; make us one body.
3 Come now and set us free, O God, our Savior.
4 Come, hope of unity; make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus; reconcile all people.
My Soul Gives Glory to My God
Song of Mary

1. My soul gives glory to my God; my heart pours out its praise. God lifted up my heart.

2. My God has done great things for me: yes, holy is God's 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 near and far, dismissing selfish hearts, satis-fied; the rich seem sud-den-ly poor.

4. Love casts the mighty from their thrones, pro-mises with pres-ent faith-ful-ness. luxury in many mar-vel-ous ways.


This 20th-century paraphrase is based on the Song of Mary (Luke 1:46–55), commonly known by its opening Latin word, Magnificat. This song of praise offers clear reminders that God's purposes often lead to the reversal of human values, exalting the poor and dethroning the mighty.
While We Are Waiting, Come

1 While we are waiting, come;
2 With power and glory, come;
3 Come, Savior, quickly come;

while we are waiting, come.
with power and glory, come.
come, Savior, quickly come.

Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,

while we are waiting, come.

This simple and meditative Advent hymn is so uncomplicated in both text and tune that it can be learned quickly and sung without reference to a book, which might make it effective as a prayer response. It would also lend itself to improvised stanzas on appropriate occasions.

TEXT: Claire Clominger, 1986
MUSIC: Don Cason, 1986

Text and Music © 1986 Word Music, LLC
**JESUS CHRIST: ADVENT**

**88 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

1 O come, O come, Em-man-u-el, and ransom captive Is-rael, that mourns in lonely exile
   all things mightily: to us the path of knowledge shows; and teach us in her ways to go. Rejoice! Rejoice!
2 O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, who or-derest law in cloud and maj-es-ty and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice!
   Lord of might, who to thy save and give them victory o’er the grave.
3 O come, O come, thou Root of Jes-se, free thine own from Satan’s tyr-an-ny; from depths of hell thy people here until the Son of God appear.
4 O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
   make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

5 O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.
   bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
   fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.

One stanza of this paraphrase of the great O Antiphons may be sung on each of the last days of Advent as follows:

Dec. 18: O Lord of might (3) Dec. 21: O Dayspring (6)

These titles of the coming Christ appeared in daily Vesper antiphons sung during the week before Christmas; their roots date at least to the reign of Charlemagne. Both text and tune are the fruit of 19th-century efforts to reclaim Christian treasures from pre-Reformation sources.

**TEXT:** Latin prose; pre-9th cent.; trans. composite
**MUSIC:** Plainsong; adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1852; arr. John Weaver, 1988
**Music Arr. © 1998 John Weaver**