



ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Mission

*Growing Disciples - Making Christ Known*



DECEMBER 17, 2025

ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER

“WELCOMING EMMANUEL: GOD WITH US

7:00 PM

*Advent offerings may be placed in the offering plate at the entrance to the sanctuary.*

GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit gathers us into a community of prayer.*

**Bold** responses are spoken by the congregation.

Prelude

“What Child Is This” from *Four Carol Preludes*

16th century English ballad GREENSLEEVES; Organ setting by Richard Purvis

Welcome

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

*Please stand as you are able*

Gathering Litany

*The pastor begins*

In this Advent season, a voice cries in the wilderness,

“Prepare the way of the Lord!”

preparing us for the birth of Jesus the Savior of the world.

In this Advent season, we await Emmanuel: God with us.

In a world of isolation and exclusion, competition and fear,

**we await Emmanuel: God with us,**

**who will open our hearts to God and to our neighbor.**

In a world that races after money and success,

that hoards and consumes,

**we await Emmanuel who will help us share with others,**

**who will scatter the proud and fill the hungry with good things.**

In a world that hides from death by pursuing youth and beauty,

**we await Emmanuel who gives us true life amid places of despair and death**

**so that we might give life and hope to others.**

In a world where many live in darkness, war, and destruction,

**we await Emmanuel who will guide our feet in the way of peace,**

**who forgives our sins so that we might forgive others,**

**who dwells in us so that we might be his light in the darkness.**

Lord God, bless our time of Advent watching and waiting.

Reveal to us your love for this world in Jesus Christ

and help us to be Christ to others.

You call all people your children. As we wait, help us to see ourselves and our neighbors as beloved members of your holy family.

**Amen.**

### Gathering Hymn

*The assembly joins together in the song below.*

“What Child Is This” ELW 296 stanzas 1

GREENSLEEVES

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898; Music: English ballad, 16th cent.

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing?

Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing?

This, this is Christ the king, whom shep-herds guard and an - gels sing;

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

### Thanksgiving for the Family of God

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

We give you thanks, O God,  
**for you have created humanity in your own image  
and breathed into us the breath of life  
by which we all become living beings.**

**You are the God of all nations, welcoming all people,  
the hungry, the stranger, the sick and the outcast,  
because we are all your children, beloved members of your family.**

**May Emmanuel, God with us, be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path;  
this we pray through your Son Jesus Christ, who is Emmanuel, God with us.**

**Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

### WORD

#### Silence

*During this time of silence we quiet ourselves, entering into the mystery of God's presence. The beginning and the end of this period of silence is marked with the sound of a bell.*

## Responsive Reading      Isaiah 9:6-7

<sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;

**authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named**

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**<sup>7</sup>Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace**

for the throne of David and his kingdom.

**He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness**

from this time onward and forevermore.

**The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.**

## Reading      John 1:9-14

<sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

*The Word of the Lord.*

**Thanks be to God.**

## Advent Reflection

“Power to become the children of God”

Pastor Timothy McKenzie

## Canticle

“Love Has Come” ELW 292 stanzas 1 & 2

UN FLAMBEAU

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950 © 1996 Integrity's Hosanna! Music; F. Seguin, *Recueil de moels composés en langue provençale*, 1856



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -

Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;

hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the

you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.

## Prayers

(Pastor McKenzie, prayers)

*The congregation may kneel or sit for the prayers.*

Emmanuel, God with us, for whom we watch and wait, we come with our prayers for your people, all of creation, the church, and the coming of your kingdom. *A brief silence.*

*The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. (John 1:9)*

Holy One, through faith, you give the power to become the children of God. Enlighten your body, the church, with the true light of your Son that churches in every place might speak and embody your love for this world.

In your mercy,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy One, all things were created through the Word and you continue to speak and to create. Just as all things hold together in him, so too, may we also seek to hold all things in your creation together, caring for your creation as co-creators with you.

In your mercy,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy One, a child is born to us and he is called the Prince of Peace. In your mercy, bless and guide all leaders to work for peace, and in times of discord and difficulty, enable them to seek you as the source of all truth, light, and peace.

In your mercy,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy One, as the Word became flesh and lived among us, may the risen Christ continue to come and dwell with all who suffer, face struggles, addictions, and the fear of death. Fill your children with the light of your hope and raise them to new life in you.

In your mercy,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Holy One, the world came into being through your Son the Word. We have been created to hear and to know your word of life. As we await Christmas, draw near to all who find it difficult to believe, who feel overcome by life, and who have lost hope. Grant them the grace of faith, strength for today, and hope for tomorrow.

In your mercy,

**Come, Lord Jesus.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus teaches us.

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

## SENDING

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

*Please stand as you are able.*

## SENDING BLESSING

May God's peace attend you this night;

whatever challenges you face, know that you are not alone;

whatever divisions you face, know that you are a child of God;

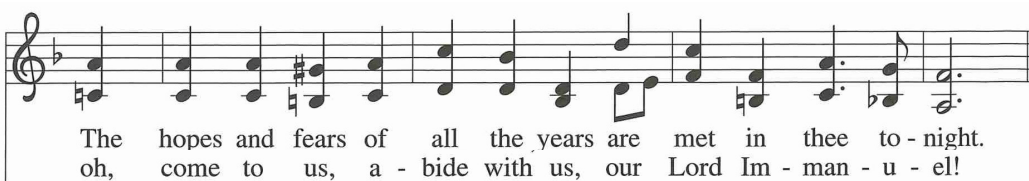
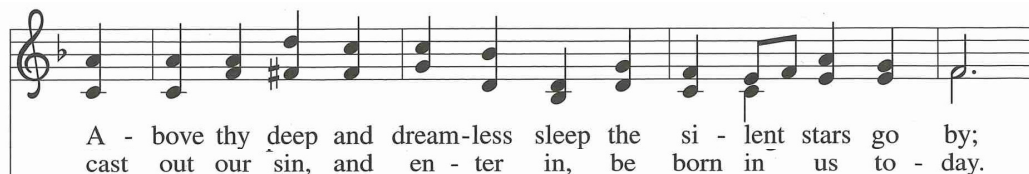
whatever fears you have, know that you are surrounded by God's family;

May Emmanuel, God with us, bless you;

and may Christ the Prince of Peace grant you peace.

In the name of the Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Dismissal**

Go in peace knowing that Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, goes with you.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

“Dance Prelude on ‘Love Has Come’”

French Carol UN FLAMBEAU  
 Organ setting by Christopher Uehlein

✠                      ✠                      ✠

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Worship Leaders: Pastor Timothy McKenzie; Pastor Ali Rode; live streaming camera: A. J. Pridgen; musician: Lester Ackerman, Director of Music Ministry and Organist



Do you feel like you are in crisis? In Isaiah it is written, “Fear not, for I am with you; do not be dismayed for I am your God.” Stephen ministers are here to show the Lord’s love and comfort for you in times of trial. If you would like to confidentially speak to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Tim ([pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))

### St. Mark's Prayer List

Rochelle Dagenhart, Janice Darnell, Pastor Glen Sea, Mark Barbee, Diane Thornton, Polly Needham, John Graham, Mark Thornton, Tom Tolbert, Dr. Samuel Davis, Bob Roach, Payton McAdams, Dale Hopp, Bill Coppedge, Marcia Newlin, Andres & Silivia Puky, Ashlyn Bordelon, Betsy League, Carmelita Harris, Lucille Johnson, Marilyn Stevens, Satoko Yamada, Judy Cox, Ross Boheler, Charlene Oppermann, Elaine Ketner Sherman, Gene Ellington, Tanner Grant, Christopher Shirley, Eileen Dunlap, Dannye Olin Bragdon, Mindy Curley, Louisa and Oakley Coburn, Roxi Tolbert, Bill Schwartz, Arlene Fielding, David Kutscher, Danielle Clausen, Joseph Tolbert, and Jay Harbinson.

Please email Pastor McKenzie with Prayer List and other prayer requests ([pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org))

O COME, LET US ADORE HIM: CHRIST THE LORD!			
ADVENT AT ST. MARK'S	11 / 30, 12 / 7, 14, 21	Sundays of Advent 8:30 & 10:30 am	
	12 / 3, 10, 17	Advent Midweek Worship 7 pm	
CHRISTMAS AT ST. MARK'S	12 / 24	Christmas Eve	5 pm Family Christmas 8:30 pm Nativity of Our Lord Holy Communion. Music begins at 8 pm
	12 / 28	First Sunday of Christmas 10:30 am only	
WINTER MUSICAL OFFERINGS	12 / 7	"Lessons and Carols" - 10:30 am Service	
	12 / 12	Carolina Pro Musica Christmas Concert 7:30 pm	
	12 / 14	Christmas Soprano Concert 2 pm	
	12 / 21	Queen City Ringers "A Winter Star" 5 pm	

### *Our Ministers*

All the people of God at St. Mark's

Rev. Dr. Timothy McKenzie, Senior Pastor  
[pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastortim@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Rev. Alexandra Joy Rode, Associate Pastor  
for Family Ministry  
[pastoralj@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:pastoralj@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Lester Ackerman,  
Director of Music Ministry, Organist  
[les@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:les@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Sue Wadgyman, Parish Administrator  
[admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:admin@saintmarkscharlotte.org)

Eileen Johnson, Financial Administrator  
[finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org](mailto:finance@saintmarkscharlotte.org)