



Saint James Lutheran Church



A Parish of the North Carolina Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

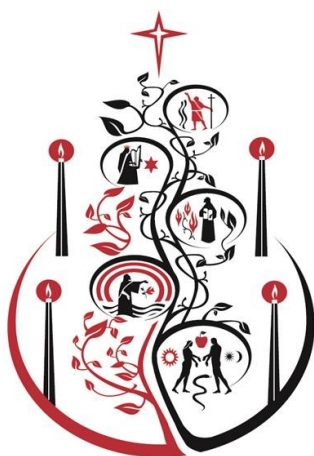


"Growing in Christ Through Worship, Learning, Fellowship, and Service"

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Concord, North Carolina 28025

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FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT DECEMBER 20, 2020



God keeps the promise made to David to give him an everlasting throne. The angel tells Mary that God will give David's throne to her son Jesus. She is perplexed by Gabriel's greeting and by the news of her coming pregnancy, but she is able still to say, "Count me in." We who know that Jesus is called king only as he is executed still find it a mystery hard to fathom, but with Mary today we hear the news of what God is up to and say, "Count us in."

WELCOME

CHORAL PRELUDE

Once in Royal David's City

Once in Royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, Where a mother laid her Baby in a manger for His bed. Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little Child.

For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above. He shall lead His children on To the place where He is gone.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, And His shelter was a stable, And his cradle was a stall. With the poor and mean and lowly, Lived on earth our Savior holy.

Not in that poor lowly stable with the oxen standing by, We shall see Him, but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high. When like stars His children crowned, all in white shall wait around. Once in royal David's city, Once in royal David's city He was born!

And our eyes at last shall see Him through His own redeeming love;

LIGHTING ADVENT WREATH

~ Joseph Beasley, Christine and Simon Lovelace

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent. As we light the candles on this wreath, open our eyes to see your presence in the lowly ones of this earth.

Enlighten us with your grace, that we may sing of your advent among us in the Word made flesh. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

Almighty God, in his mercy, has given his Son to die for us and, for his sake, forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Instead of David building a house (temple) for God, God promises to establish David's house (dynasty) forever. Centuries later, after the Babylonian exile, no king sat on the throne. Even then, however, the people of Israel remembered this promise and continued to hope for a king, the messiah, God's anointed.

A reading from 2nd Samuel, the seventh chapter.

Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, ²the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." ³Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you." ⁴But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: ⁵Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? ⁶I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. ⁷Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ⁸Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; ⁹and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹⁶Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: *Romans 16:25-27*

Paul closes his letter to the Romans by praising God because, in the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, God has revealed the promised, divine plan of salvation for all humanity. Paul proclaims this gospel of Christ in order to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations.

A reading from Romans, the sixteenth chapter.

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL: *Luke 1:26-38*

In this annunciation, Luke makes clear that God comes with good news for ordinary people from little known places. This king will not be born to royalty in a palace, but to common folk in a stall. Here Luke highlights the role of the Spirit, a special emphasis in this gospel.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

In 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.

PSALM: *Luke 1:46b-55*

A reading from Saint Luke, the first chapter.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

⁴⁷my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for you, Lord, have looked with favor on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:

⁴⁹you, the Almighty, have done great things for me
and holy is your name.

⁵⁰You have mercy on those who fear you, from generation to generation.

⁵¹You have shown strength with your arm and scattered the proud in their conceit,

⁵²casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.

⁵³You have filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴You have come to the aid of your servant Israel,
to remember the promise of mercy,

⁵⁵the promise made to our forbears,
to Abraham and his children forever.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

HYMN

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

- 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

- 2 O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way. **Refrain**

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. **Refrain**

- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight. **Refrain**



APOSTLES' CREED

God has made us his people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we profess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary,

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of power and might, fulfill your promise and come quickly to this weary world. Hear our prayers for everyone in need.

A brief silence.

Gracious God, all generations call you blessed. In this holy season we pray for our neighbors of other denominations and faiths. Inspire the faith of their people. Cultivate understanding among us and strengthen us in love and service to our community. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You scatter the proud. Everything we have belongs first to you. Bless and protect the seas, mountains, plains, forests, skies, and soils that surround us. Give us humility as we tend them. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You humble the powerful and lift up the lowly. We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they amplify the voices of people in need. Guide all people entrusted with leadership, to create societies in which everyone can flourish. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You fill the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty. Nourish those who lack access to adequate food and nutrition. Bless the work of advocates, community organizers, and food pantries. Encourage others to provide for their neighbors in need. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You pour out mercy to all who cry out to you. Surround everyone in need of healing in body, mind, or spirit with your tender presence. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You are faithful to the promises you made to our forebears. We give thanks for the ministry of our ancestors who organized, planned, dreamed, encouraged, and reached out as they served you. Inspire others with their steadfast witness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Draw near to us, O God, and receive our prayers for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

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 and ever.

Amen.

BLESSING

As we await the coming of Christ, Almighty God, Father, ✚ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you peace and joy, hope and gladness.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace, remember the poor!

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Reprise on "Even So Lord Jesus Quickly Come"

Paul Manz

The Liturgy Has Ended; The Service Begins!

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WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please e-mail all information to the church office at keith@sjnc.net

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CHURCH OFFICE 704.786.0166
WEBSITE www.sjnc.net

PRAYER LIST

All health care professionals and first responders including:

- Deb Bradshaw**
- Lauri Fowler**
- DeeDee Gilbert**
- Annette Propst**
- Meagan Lambert**
- Alison Monk**
- Jason and Stephanie Matthews**
- Dr Bradley Propst**, son of
Kenny and Annette Propst
- Sam Hurley**, son of *Elizabeth Hurley*
- Julie Greathouse**, friend of
Lois Marlow
- Betsy Waselovich**, sister of
Golda Jay
- Lauren**, daughter of *Angie Buchanan*
- Dr. Stephanie Garrison**, daughter-in-law of Margaret Garrison
- Dr. Kevin Burns**, son-in-law of Margaret Garrison.

If you have someone you would like to add to the prayer list, please contact Keith. 704-786-0166 and leave a message or email at keith@sjnc.net

BIRTHDAYS THIS WEEK

- 20-Dec.** Rory Kartheiser
- 23-Dec.** Lauren Irvin
- 25-Dec.** Bub Craver
- 25-Dec.** Ryan Hardister
- 26-Dec.** Todd Walker

ASSISTING IN WORSHIP

- Lector/Intercessor:**
Elizabeth Hurley
- Vocalist:**
Choir Ensemble

OUR STEWARDSHIP
Contributions and Receipts
for December 13, 2020
\$12,817.00
(\$8,414.00 needed for weekly)

CUDDLE UP COAT DRIVE

The Cabarrus Partnership for Children kicked off its 14th annual Cuddle Up Coat Drive on October 1st. This winter, more than ever, we need your help to ensure all of our community's children are warm. In an effort to keep our families, children, and staff safe, we will not be accepting coats, socks, underwear, mittens or hats this year. Instead we are asking for checks (written to St. James Lutheran Church, note Coat Drive in the memo line), so that the Partnership staff can purchase the coats and winter items that local children need.

ONLINE GIVING

Giving online is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions or make a one time contribution and view your complete online giving history from anywhere you have access to the Internet. In a few short minutes, you can make a one-time gift or set up a donation that will process automatically on a recurring basis. Recurring donations are convenient and provide our church with much needed consistent support throughout the year.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

We will be offering two outdoor worship services on Christmas Eve at 5:30 and 7:30 pm. You may also park in the back Portico Lot and listen to the service on your car radio at 93.9 FM. An online version will also be available on YouTube and Facebook.

DIRECTORY

- Members of Saint James.....Ministers
- The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton...Presiding Bishop
- The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith.....Bishop

SAINT JAMES STAFF

- The Rev. Tony Bradshaw.....Senior Pastor
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- Jill Irvin.....Finance Administrator
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- Mike Holt.....Youth and Family
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- Keith Sutton.....Parish Administrator
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- Cindy Cruse.....Hospitality Director
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- Kathryn Radcliffe.....Nursery Coordinator
krad3700@gmail.com

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

- Kenny Propst.....President**
- Joseph Beasley.....Vice President**
- Golda Jay.....Secretary**
- Beth Huss.....Treasurer**

- Ann Blackwelder
- Samantha Hillegass
- Elizabeth Hurley
- Hunter Huss
- Nick Lovelace
- Mac Mullins
- Mark Murphy
- Al Pieschel
- Jodi Ramirez



@stjamesnc

OFFICE HOURS

M-Th 8:30-4:00, F 8:30-1:00
Closed for lunch 12:30 - 1:00

Join Saint James Lutheran Church Facebook and Instagram groups—send Jeremy Jay any pictures and/or articles you would like to have posted at jeremy@pbnjay.com

St. James YouTube Channel
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