

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

• 216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, December 18th, 2022 •

The Fourth Sunday of Advent



COLORED BY BRYN BAILEY

WELCOME/GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Here We Come A Caroling*

Handbell Choir

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism,
as the presiding minister begins.*

P Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who alone does wondrous things. Blessed be God's name forever.

C Amen.

P Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep. Let us confront our sins, and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P God of new beginnings,

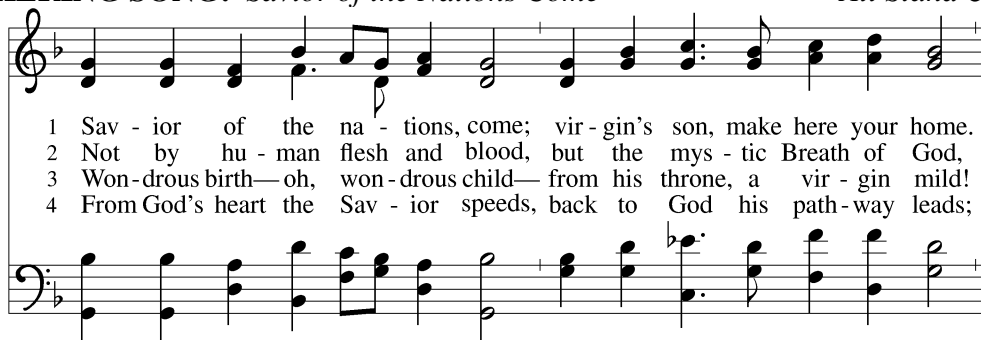
C we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign. We have strayed from your paths. We prepare for war instead of peace. We dishonor one another and your creation. Purify us with your refining fire and set us again on your way of love, that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance, and welcome your coming among us. Amen.

P People of God, a new thing is growing in our midst, a tender branch, a living sign. By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder. You have put on ☩ Christ, and your sins have been washed away. Rejoice in the way of the Lord.

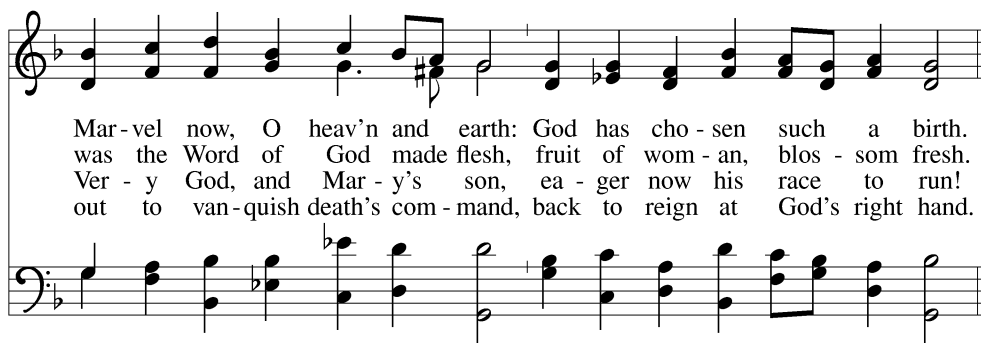
C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: *Savior of the Nations Come*

All Stand & Sing



1 Sav - ior of the na - tions, come; vir - gin's son, make here your home.
2 Not by hu - man flesh and blood, but the mys - tic Breath of God,
3 Won - drous birth—oh, won - drous child— from his throne, a vir - gin mild!
4 From God's heart the Sav - ior speeds, back to God his path - way leads;



Mar - vel now, O heav'n and earth: God has cho - sen such a birth.
was the Word of God made flesh, fruit of wom - an, blos - som fresh.
Ver - y God, and Mar - y's son, ea - ger now his race to run!
out to van - quish death's com - mand, back to reign at God's right hand.

5 Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.

6 Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

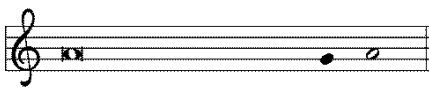
Text: attr. Ambrose of Milan, 340-397; Martin Luther, 1483-1546; tr. hymnal version
Music: NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND, J. Walter, *Geistliche Gesangbüchlein*, 1524
Text © 2006 Augsburg Fortress.

GREETING


P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.

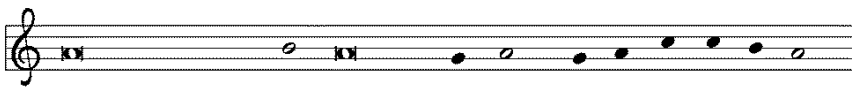
KYRIE

P 

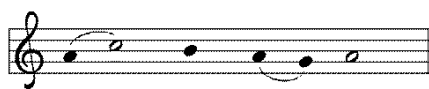
In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C 

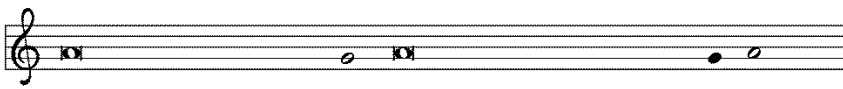
Lord, have mer - cy.

P 

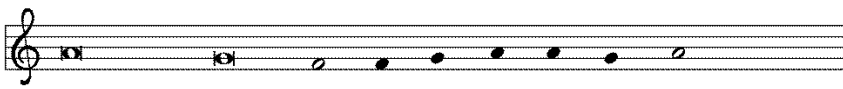
For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.

C 

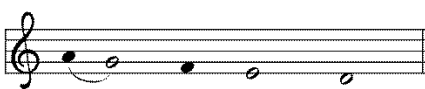
Lord, have mer - cy.

P 

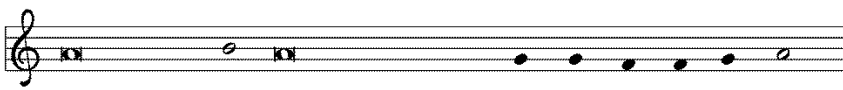
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



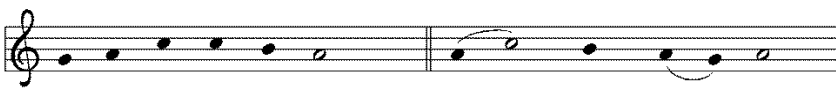
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

C 

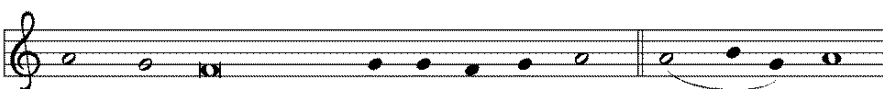
Lord, have mer - cy.

P 

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.

All



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain
has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: The fourth candle represents **LOVE**. Because of his love, all people are saved. Since God's love for us is perfect, may we perfect our answering love by loving one another.



4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954
Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune
Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

CHILDREN'S SERMON

We invite children to come forward for a children's message before moving to children's church.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 7:10-16

A reading from Isaiah, the seventh chapter.

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. ¹²But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. ¹³Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. ¹⁵He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

A The word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING

Romans 1:1-7

A reading from Romans, the first chapter.

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

¹Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ²which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵through whom we have received grace

and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



GOSPEL

Matthew 1:18-25

P The holy gospel according to St. Matthew, the first chapter.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

¹⁸Now 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 with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰But 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. ²¹She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, “God is with us.”²⁴When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,²⁵but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

P The gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly is seated

SERMON

Pastor Micah

Silence is Kept for Reflection.



HYMN OF THE DAY: *Awake, Awake*

All Stand & Sing



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night, though



an - gels her - ald its dawn - ing. Sing out your joy, for
man - u - el comes a - sing - ing. his hum - ble song is
all the world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so
dark the win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall



soon he is born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing.
qui - et and near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing;
qui - et and free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing.
crown you with light, be strong and lov - ing and fear - less.



Come as a ba - by weak and poor, to bring all hearts to -
mu - sic to heal the bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing -
Then shall the mute break forth in song, the lame shall leap in
Love be our song and love our prayer and love our end - less



geth - er, he o - pens wide the heav'n - ly door and
kind - ness, the thun - der of his an - thems roll to
won - der, the weak be raised a - bove the strong, and
sto - ry; may God fill ev - 'ry day we share and



lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
shat - ter all ha - tred and blind - ness.
weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
bring us at last in - to glo - ry.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: REJOICE, REJOICE, Marty Haugen

Text and music © 1983 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.

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APOSTLES CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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 INTERCESSION

As we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence, let us pray for a world that yearns for new hope.

A brief silence.

God our shepherd, let your Spirit move with power throughout the church. Give discernment and wisdom to our bishops, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders. Take away our fear, so that we serve and love, confident that you are guiding us. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our source, awaken us to the beauty of the earth and the marvelous variety of life. Unite humankind in repairing and caring for your creation. Protect creatures and habitats in peril due to rising seas and warming temperatures. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our vision, raise up leaders in every nation who dream of freedom and justice for all people. We pray for the work of international organizations that promote peace and human rights. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our helper, come to the aid of all who cry out to you. Shelter migrants, refugees, and those fleeing war and famine. Bring relief to individuals and families experiencing hunger, homelessness, or impoverishment. Comfort any who are isolated or lonely. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our Emmanuel, you are with us in our life together. We give you thanks for gathering us in worship and fellowship, and we remember those who cannot be present. Watch over those who travel. Heal the sick and speed their recovery (*especially*). God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our hope, you bring life out of death, and you promise to be our God forever. Shine upon the faithful who now rest in the fulfillment of your promise and bring us also into your blessed reign of peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of our longing, you know our deepest needs. By your Spirit, gather our prayers and join them with the prayers of all your children. In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.


C **And also with you.**

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Christmastime*

Church Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *What Child is This*

All Stand & Sing



3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to own him.

The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the response, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The second staff continues the melody for the second line. The lyrics are written below the notes, with a '3' indicating a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure of the first line.

Raise, raise the song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;
joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C Eternal God, you make the desert bloom and send springs of water to thirsty ground. Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money, and make us messengers of your mercy and love for all in need of your healing and justice. We ask this through Christ our Savior. Amen.

DIALOGUE

Pastor

Congregation

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

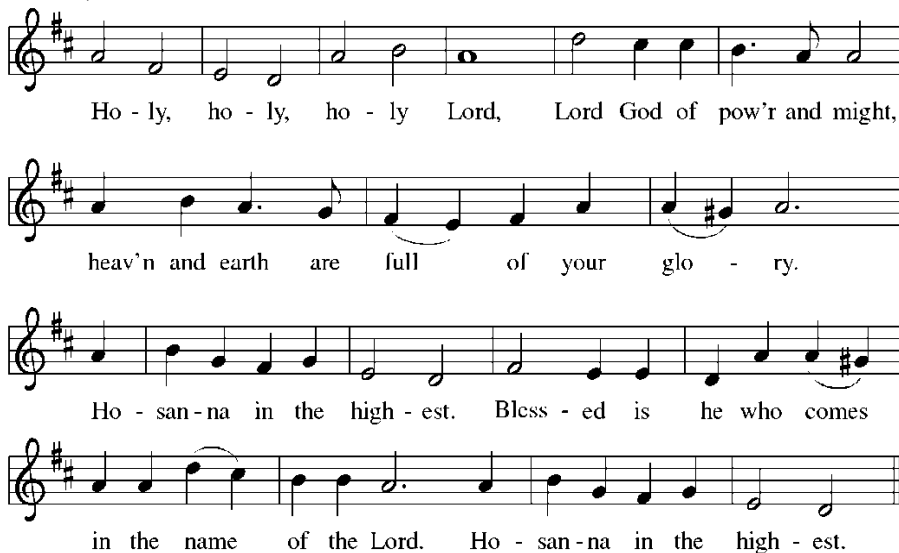
Cong.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P ...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
Ho - san-na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san-na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 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.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

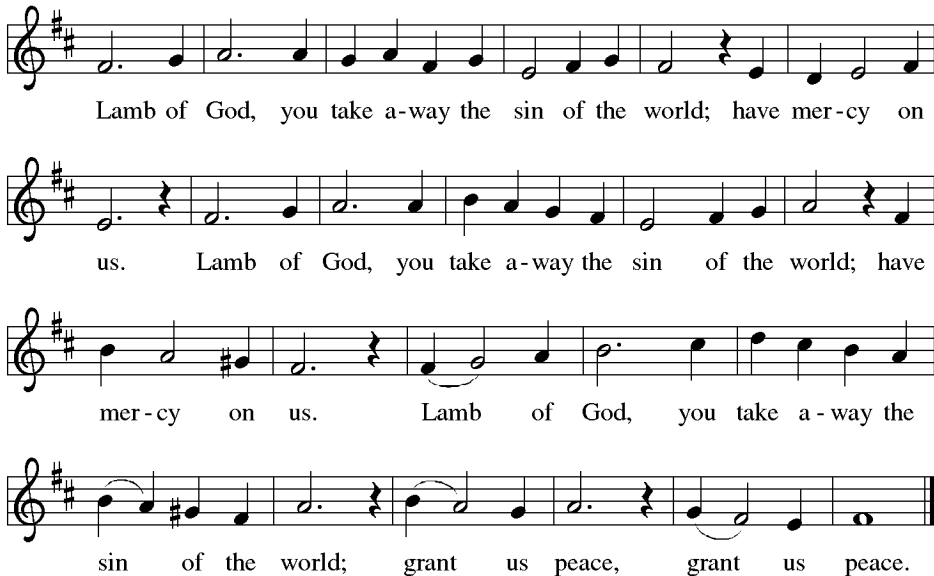
P Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, who has come to save you.
C Thanks be to God.



COMMUNION

During communion the congregation is invited forward by rows, beginning in the back, and will receive the bread and wine at the front of the aisle. You may either eat and drink then, or return to your seat to do so, and place the cups in the bin in your pew.

LAMB OF GODAll Sing



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION: *Whence Comes This Rush of Wings*-Chamber Choir

P The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his
grace.

C Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Faithful God,

C in this meal you have remembered your mercy, bringing heaven to earth in the
body and blood of Christ. As we wait for the day when all your promises will be
fulfilled, sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery. Guide us toward your
promised future, coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BLESSING

P God the eternal Word, who dwells with us in Jesus, and who holds us in the grace of the Holy Spirit, ☩ bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: *All Earth Is Hopeful*

All Stand & Sing



1 All earth is hope-ful, the Sav-ior comes at last!
2 Peo-ple of Is-rael, you heard the proph-et tell:
3 Moun-tains and val-leys will have to be pre-pared;
4 We first saw Je-sus a ba-by in a crib.



Fur-rows lie o-pen for God's cre-a-tive task: this, the
"A vir-gin moth-er will bear Em-man-u-el"; she con-
new high-ways o-pened, new pro-to-cols declared. Al-most
This same Lord Je-sus to-day has come to live in our



la-bor of peo-ple who strug-gle to see how
ceived him, "God with us," our broth-er, whose birth re-
here! God is near-ing, in beau-ty and grace! All
world; he is pres-ent, in neigh-bors we see our



God's truth and jus-tice set ev-'ry-bod-y free.
stores hope and cour-age to chil-dren of this earth.
clear ev-'ry gate-way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je-sus is with us, and ev-er sets us free.

Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946

Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé

Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

SENDING

P Go in peace. Christ is near.

C Thanks be to God.

Thank you to our lector, Ashley Hyman.

This Week's Schedule:

Sunday, December 18th

9:45am - Handbells

10:10 am - Church Choir in balcony

10:30 am - Worship

4:00 pm - Advent Exhibit

4:40 pm - Church Choir sings in Fellowship Hall

5:00 pm - Church Choir practice

6:00 pm - Church Choir Party

Wednesday, December 21st

5:30 pm - Youth Handbells

6:00 pm - Advent Dinner & Worship

7:15 pm - Chamber Choir

Saturday, December 24th

4:00 pm - Christmas Eve Service

10:40 pm - Choir Prelude

11:00 pm - Traditional Candlelit Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 25th

No Sunday School

10:30 am - Worship



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2022



TO THE GLORY OF GOD:

Greg Byrum

IN HONOR OF:

Greg Byrum in honor of Mary (Libby) Byrum

Greg Bryrum in honor of Julia Gunter

Jill Cassel in honor of Greg Cline, Deacon Beka Forst, Pastor Micah Kearney

Shirley Causby in honor of Greg Cline

Greg Cline in honor of Shirley Causby

Greg Cline in honor of Faye and Warren Heller

John & Leslie Crist in honor of our grandchildren: Wyatt & Brooklyn Suttentfield, Max & Olive McCotter, Patrick & Jacob Crist

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in honor of Jennifer Hass Kearney

Jack Howard in honor of his cousins: Elizabeth, Emalee, Lily, Charlie & Mackenzie

Carole Jolley in honor of Pastor Micah, Jenn and boys

The Kearney Family in honor of the saints of Holy Comforter, past and present

Leigh & Shari Leverenz in honor of Emmaleigh and Jackson Bears

Mark & Anne Reese in honor of Barbara Reese

Harold & Jo Singleton in honor of Angela Bunney and Alan Daniel's Christmas Eve wedding

Mark & Rebecca Yount in honor of Luke and Alec Via

IN MEMORY OF:

Donna Bean in memory of Faye H. Bean

Jim & Jan Buell in memory of Carmen Buell

Jim & Jan Buell in memory of Carol Terry and Bob Haubenreich

Shirley Causby in memory of Tommy Causby

John & Leslie Crist in memory of Ray and Rita Broome, Bill and Rosa Crist

Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. Raul E. de la Vega

Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. William Kannapel

Jeff & Abby Featherstone in memory of Ned, Becke, and Ann Featherstone

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in memory of Robert Hass, John Hass, Albert and Jean Hass

Jimmy & Ellie Holloway in memory of Sam and Martha Ann Holloway, and Tom Holloway

Carole Jolley in memory of Sybil Jolley

Diana Kooser in memory of family members

Debbie Mendez in memory of Alice and Mark Lyerly

Mark & Ann Reese in memory of Jim and Shirley Robertson

Mark & Ann Reese in memory of Jim Reese

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of Heather Mauney Yount

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of Paul and Judy Outlaw

Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of John and Myra Yount

This is the list that the church office received. We apologize if there were any names omitted.



"Journeying through faith in a joyful, safe community, welcoming and serving Belmont and beyond."

Our core values are: **Embrace, Grow, Connect, and Give**

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street Belmont, NC 28012 704-825-2483
holycomforter@gmail.com

Church Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am - 2:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor - email: mkearney@holyc.org

Beka Forst, Deacon of Discipleship - email: rforst@holyc.org

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Chelsea Spicer, Office Manager