

Lutheran Church of the Holy Comforter

216 N. Main Street • Belmont, NC 28012 • Sunday, December 17, 2017

Third Sunday of Advent



By Olivia Sarrazin

GATHERING/WELCOME

PRELUDE: *Comfort, Comfort Ye My People* Chamber 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 holy Trinity, † one God, who comes to wake us from sleep, who leads us into the light of grace.

C Amen.

P Let us prepare the way of the Lord by confessing our sin against God and neighbor

Silence for reflection and self-examination.

P God of all time,

C we confess that we have not prepared for your merciful reign among us. We ignore our neighbors in need and fail in the labor of justice and peace. In your mercy forgive us. Grant us wisdom to welcome your light and to seek the things that will endure until Christ comes again in glory. Amen.

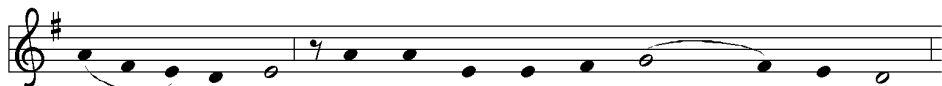
P Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. In † Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven and all things are made new. Rejoice in this good news!

C Amen.

GATHERING SONG: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel All Stand & Sing



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joice! Re-joice!
in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



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*

Text: *Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum*, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent.
Text sts. 2, 6, 7 © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.



CHRISTMAS PLAY

The children of Holy Comforter



HYMN: *O Come, All Ye Faithful* Children Sing

HYMN: *O Little Town of Bethlehem* Solo

HYMN: *O Holy Night* Solo

HYMN: *Away in a Manger* Children Sing

HYMN: *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* Congregation

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

Refrain: **Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn king!”**

HYMN: *Silent Night* Children Sing

HYMN: *Joy to the World* Congregation

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Congregation is Seated

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

A reading from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah.

Though the people had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon, they continued to face hardship and oppression. In the language of the jubilee year described in Leviticus 25, the prophet, moved by the spirit of the Lord, announces deliverance for those who are oppressed and comfort for those who mourn.

¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,

and release to the prisoners;
²to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
³to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
⁴They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

⁸For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
⁹Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**



LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: The third candle represents **JOY**. There is everlasting joy in our hearts because of the birth of our Savior.



Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

A reading from the fifth chapter of 1 Thessalonians.

Paul concludes his letter to the Thessalonians by encouraging them to live lives of continual joy, prayer, and thanksgiving. The closing blessing is grounded in the hope of Christ's coming.

¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰Do not despise the words of prophets, ²¹but test everything; hold fast to what is good; ²²abstain from every form of evil.

²³May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

A The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

THE GOSPEL

John 1:6-8, 19-28

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

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

John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

¹⁹This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" ²⁰He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." ²²Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

²³He said,

"I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness,

'Make straight the way of the Lord,' "

as the prophet Isaiah said.

²⁴Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. ²⁵They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" ²⁶John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, ²⁷the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." ²⁸This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

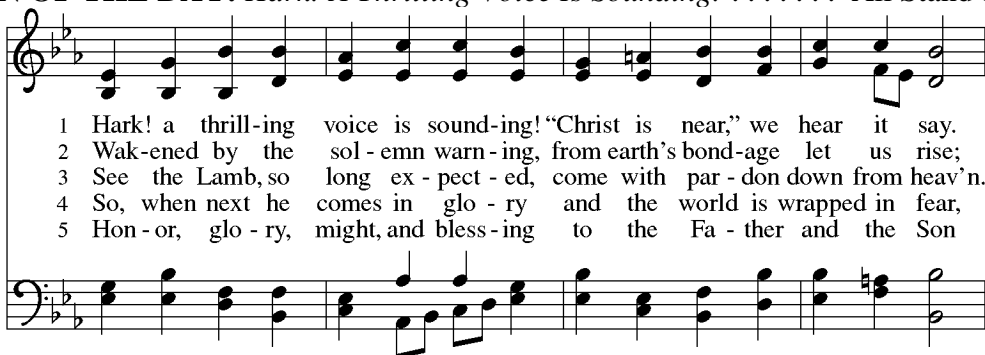
P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

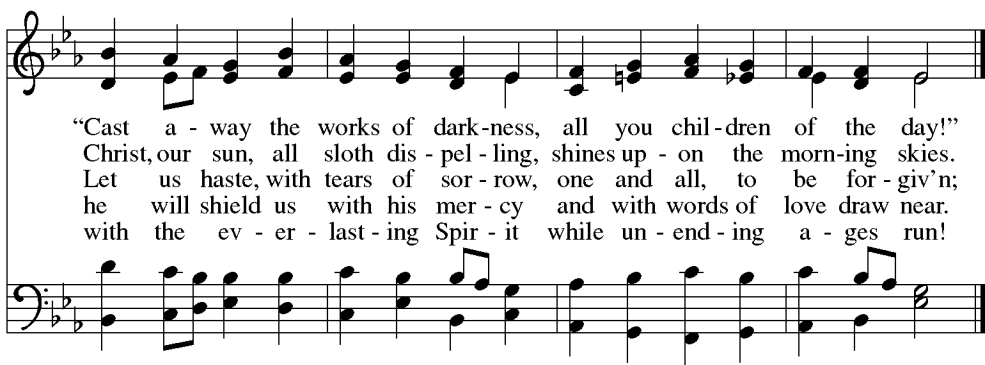
The Congregation is seated.

SERMON Pastor Micah

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding! All Stand & Sing*



1 Hark! a thrill-ing voice is sound-ing! "Christ is near," we hear it say.
2 Wak-ened by the sol- emn warn-ing, from earth's bond-age let us rise;
3 See the Lamb, so long ex-pect-ed, come with par-don down from heav'n.
4 So, when next he comes in glo-ry and the world is wrapped in fear,
5 Hon-or, glo-ry, might, and bless-ing to the Fa-ther and the Son



"Cast a-way the works of dark-ness, all you chil-dren of the day!"
Christ, our sun, all sloth dis-pel-ling, shines up-on the morn-ing skies.
Let us haste, with tears of sor-row, one and all, to be for-giv'n;
he will shield us with his mer-cy and with words of love draw near.
with the ev-er-last-ing Spir-it while un-end-ing a-ges run!

Text: Latin hymn, 1632; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814-1878
Music: MERTON, William H. Monk, 1823-1889

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.**

PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY ANTHEM: *Walk in the Light* Church Choir

OFFERTORY RESPONSE: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* All Sing



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir-it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev-'ry na - tion, joy of ev-'ry long-ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer-it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

OFFERING PRAYER

A Let us pray.

C Savior of the nations, come. Make your home here in us. Feed us with your love, that our faith shine ever new and our lives reveal your light. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Guided by the light of Christ, let us pray for the coming dawn of joy, healing, and comfort for all God's people.

A brief silence.

Guiding Lord, bless church leaders, volunteers, teachers, musicians, acolytes, deacons, pastors, seminarians, and those discerning a call to ministry. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Creating God, protect Earth's wilderness, especially where the lands are isolated and unexplored. Watch over all living creatures who remain free from human exploitation. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Prince of Peace, send us your Spirit of unity, so that justice may spring up among the nations. Give us the will to repair the broken systems that perpetuate injustice. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Merciful God, comfort your children who are mourning, bind up the brokenhearted, and heal our wounds. We pray for those who are homeless or imprisoned, refugees, those who struggle with addiction or mental illness, and all in need (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Lord of justice, strengthen and increase the ministry of food pantries, meal service deliveries, employment training programs, and advocacy for equity among all classes and races. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Eternal God, clothe us in your garments of salvation, so that together we may rejoice in your presence with the saints who have died and with those unable to be with us today. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We raise our prayers to you, O God, in the name of the one who is, who was, and who is to come, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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.**

BLESSING

P May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path. Almighty God, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

C **Amen.**



SENDING SONG: *People, Look East* All Stand & Sing

1 Peo - ple, look east. The time is near of the crown - ing
 2 Fur - rows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is
 3 Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim, one more light the
 4 An - gels an - nounce with shouts of mirth him who brings new

of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
 plant - ed there. Give up your strength the seed to nour - ish,
 bowl shall brim, shin - ing be - yond the frost - y weath - er,
 life to earth. Set ev - 'ry peak and val - ley hum - ming

trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look
 that in course the flow'r may flour - ish. Peo - ple, look
 bright as sun and moon to - geth - er. Peo - ple, look
 with the word, the Lord is com - ing. Peo - ple, look

east, and sing to - day— Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Star, is on the way.
 east, and sing to - day— Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881–1965

Music: BESANCON, French carol; arr. Barry Rose, b. 1934

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SENDING

A Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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A CORDIAL WELCOME is extended to all our visitors on this **Third Sunday of Advent**. We pray that you will find a warm fellowship while you are among us and that you will return home with a renewed sense of dedication to Jesus Christ. Please sign our guest register or a visitor's card so that we can become acquainted with you. If you are without a church home, we invite you to investigate membership in this family of God.

CHILDREN are welcome in worship. Jesus said, "let the children come to me!" Parents are encouraged to utilize the Kids Worship Kits found in the Narthex for older toddlers through early elementary age. Nurseries for children (**infants through 3 years old**) are in the Education building. Let an usher know if you need assistance.



KIDS' WORSHIP CENTER: Pick up kits as you enter for worship! **Please return the tote bag** with the plastic bag of crayons, scratch pads, and pencils to the stand in the narthex. The children may take any papers home with them.

• **PRAYER REQUESTS:** A notebook has been placed in the narthex for your prayer requests during the week. The book will be in the narthex on Sundays and in the church office during the week. **If you wish a name to be added to our prayer list, please fill out a form from the prayer book or fill in a form online at www.holyc.org.**

• **THE FLOWERS ON OUR ALTAR TODAY** are given to the glory of God by Angie Morton in honor of Mason's birthday; and by Ron & Pat Speck in memory of David Speck (Ron's brother).

Those who have placed flowers on the altar may use the containers to take them home, but please return the containers to the church.

Carmen Buell, Worship & Music

Attendance & Budget Report for Sunday, December 10, 2017:

Attendance: 189

<u>Budget Report</u>	<u>December 10, 2017</u>	<u>Year-To-Date</u>
Current Offering	\$ 7,563.00	\$261,590.93
Expenses	\$ 5,656.42	267,284.71
Offering less Expenses	\$ 1,906.58	<u>(\$ 5,693.78)</u>
Budgeted Expenses		<u>\$277,696.79</u>
Offering less Budgeted Expenses		(\$ 16,105.86)

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

LECTOR: Brian Achor

GREETER: Sue Lahr

ACOLYTES & CRUCIFERS: Volunteers

TELLERS: Janet & Brian Achor

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 3)

Fran Holland, Co-Captain

Tracey Nault, Co-Captain

Amanda Kelly Katie Kessen

Rebecca Yount

USHERS: Volunteers

CHILDREN'S CHURCH:

Krystyna Sarrazin

NURSERY: (9:30-11:45 am) *Infants:* Staff

Toddlers: Volunteer

BIRTHDAYS FOR THE WEEK: December 17-23

Today, December 17 Mason Morton

December 19 Dennis Tucker

December 21 Denise Jenkins

December 22 Remi Ince



THE ANGEL IS ADDED TO OUR CRECHE this morning to remind us that in the Advent Season, the angels announced the birth of John the Baptist to the old priest, Zechariah, and the foretelling of Jesus' birth in the fields of Bethlehem. Our Hymn of Praise, "Glory to God in the highest," is our recognition of the beautiful message the angels proclaimed.

THE BLUE CANDLE in the crèche reminds us that we are to keep our hearts and minds in confession and prayer this entire Advent Season.

THIS WEEK'S MEETINGS:

Today, Sunday, December 17

9:00 am Adult Handbells
9:30 am Adult S.S.
10:10 am Church Choir prep
10:30 am **Children's Christmas Play**
5:00 pm Church Choir with
Christmas party after
HCY, Christmas party

Wednesday, December 20

6:00 pm Dinner
6:45 pm Advent Worship with
Holy Communion
7:30 pm Chamber Choir

Tuesday, December 19

7:00 pm Nar-Anon



SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES:

December 17: 10:30 am ***Children's Christmas Program*** with
Worship Service

December 24: 10:30 am Worship Service with **Holy Communion**
10:45 pm Prelude
11:00 pm ***Candlelight Service*** with **Holy Communion**

December 31: 10:30 am Regular Service with Christmas Carols

NOTE: ALL year-end reports from church council and committee chairs are due to Dianne in the church office by January 2, 2018. These reports will be included in the annual report distributed to the congregation at a meeting the middle of January.



PRAYERS FOR OUR FAMILY OF HOLY COMFORTER

Cathleen Allen
Carmen Buell
Brenda Dabrowski
Ardean Ewing
Becke Featherstone
Ned Featherstone
Dot Holland

Zac Hullander
Jo Irwin
Chase Lineberger
Holly Peche
Sherry Perry
Marguerite Shive
Ron Speck

Denise Taylor
Jack Tench
Beverly Reynolds
Kathie Schaumburg
Jerri Wesson

GREATER FAMILY OF GOD

Jeanne Bernhardt
Barbara Bingham
Amy Beale Blythe
Doug Brewer
Karen de la Vega

Carol Fox
Larry "Poss" Garrett
Brandi Hager
John McDermid
Clarence McLain

Jennifer Lineberger
Anne Murdy
Brody Thornburg
Dennis Yates



OUR SERVICEMEN

Beau Carroll

Tom Kasmer

Leo Kasmer

Please remember these people in your prayers.
**If anyone has a person who needs to be added or removed from this list,
please inform the church office.**

The sign-up prayer forms are in the narthex and online at www.holyc.org



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS 2017

GLORY TO GOD:

Greg Byrum to the glory of God for Cullen McKay
Pastor Micah & Jenn Kearney (2 poinsettias)

IN HONOR OF:

Greg Byrum in honor of Libby Byrum, mother
Greg Cline in honor of Shirley Causby and Faye & Warren Heller
Carmen, Arden & Merritt De Nicholas in honor of Dianne Lail (Grandma)
Charles & Beverley Mauney in honor of our children, grandchildren and Al McCoy
Mark & Anne Reese in honor of Jim & Barbara Reese and Jim Robertson
Luke & Alec Via and Noah Rawlins in honor of Fran Holland

IN MEMORY OF:

Donna Bean in memory of Faye Hamilton Bean
Greg Byrum in memory of Olin Byrum, father
Dr. Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. Raul E. de la Vega
Dr. Raul & JoAnne de la Vega in memory of Dr. & Mrs. William L. Kannapel
Tim & Shelia Kelly in memory of Herbert & Pauline Christenbury
Tim & Shelia Kelly in memory of Robert & Mary Kelly
Sue Lahr in memory Stan Lahr
Dianne Lail in memory of A. O. Lail, father
Chuck, Ginger & Jake MacDonald in memory of Heather Mauney Yount
and Pamela Yount
Charles & Beverley Mauney in memory of Heather Mauney Yount
and Betsy & Ray Mauney and Mary McCoy
Debbie Mendez in memory of Alice & Mark Lyerly
Nancy Powell in memory of James & Margaret Sipe, parents
Mark & Anne Reese in memory of Shirley Robertson
Gary & Karen Rogers in memory or Harry & Helen Laver
Harold & Jo Singleton in memory of their parents
Lynne Sudarich in memory of her parents Leonard & Marie Sudarich
Mark & Rebecca Yount and Luke & Alec Via in memory of Heather Mauney Yount

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR 2018

If you are willing to serve as a ***Greeter, Lector, Usher, Eucharist Presenter*** OR help in the **nursery** for the **2018** year, please sign your name on the sign-up sheet for each position you are volunteering for. Each volunteer position is listed on a separate clipboard. The clipboards are in the narthex. If willing to volunteer for the whole month, then sign your name at each date for that month. **The chief lector will serve on festival Sundays. To help with the nursery, contact Melissa Bocchino.**



Holy Doodles



BCO December Items of the Month



Grits & Oatmeal



PB&J CAMPAIGN

The North Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program is conducting its annual **Peanut Butter & Jelly Campaign**. Please place your donations of peanut butter and/or jelly in the labeled box located in the fellowship hall. Your donations will be taken to the Guardian ad Litem office in the Gaston County courthouse. Donations will then be distributed to the food banks in the county. The collection of peanut butter and jelly runs through January 12.



The **National Youth Gathering** is exactly what it sounds like,
30,000 + youth will gather in Houston.

We are excited to serve, worship and gather in large community.



**There are 192 days till our group
of 7 travels to Houston!**

For more information or looking to help,
talk to Beka.

- Narrator: Arden De Nicholas
- The Angel: Leah Koehler
- Angels (Scripture):
Lucy Bocchino
Merritt De Nicholas
Hailey Ange
Kaylin Leitner
- Mary: Ginny Shoemaker
- Joseph: Will Kline
- Innkeepers: Olivia Sarrazin
Zanetta Sarrazin
Austin Kellogg
- Shepherds: Erin Cassel
Jagger Shaw
Maddox Shaw
Jake MacDonald
Henry Bocchino
Justin Koehler (Scripture)
Jack Bryant (Scripture)
- Wisemen: Gabriel Kearney
Beckham Bryant
Alex Bocchino
- Soldier: Reid Passer
- Animals/Angels: Tyler Cassel
Nathaniel Kearney
Milly Kline
Eva Kline
Khloe Tench
- Soloist: Bella Ince



Holy Comforter Lutheran Church

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

SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 9:30 am Sunday School, 10:30 am The Service
Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday, 8:30 am — 3:00 pm

Micah Kearney, Pastor email: MicahKearney@gmail.com

Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster

Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries

Dianne Lail, Communications/Office Manager