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**4th Sunday of Advent December 18, 2022 Video**

*Good morning. This is Richfield Lutheran Church’s video worship service for December 18, the 4th Sunday of Advent. I’m Pastor Brian, with me today are Paul on the organ and Mary as our vocalist.*

*Our gospel is Matthew 1:18-25.*  *This is Matthew’s account of the annunciation and birth of the one named Emmanuel, which means, “God-with-us.” During these final days of Advent we pray, “O come, O come, Emmanuel,” a beloved hymn based on the “O” Antiphons, ancient prayers appointed for the seven days preceding Christmas. On this final Sunday of Advent, we prepare to celebrate the birth of the one born to save us from the power of sin and death.*

**I. GATHERING**

**Prelude**

**The Advent Wreath**

*(All four candles are lit.)*

Let us pray.

**Praise to you, O God, who lives with us, sharing our flesh and bones. As Mary waited and as Joseph dreamed, so we wait and dream for you. Bless us and let your face shine upon us, more radiant than these candles, and more dear than all else we seek. Restore us when we fail to refuse the evil and choose the good, and banish all our fears. We pray in the name of Emmanuel, your promised child and our Savior. Amen.**

**Gathering song** *Savior of the Nations, Come* **# 263, vv 1-2**

1 Savior of the nations, come;

virgin's son, make here your home.

Marvel now, O heav'n and earth:

God has chosen such a birth.

2 Not by human flesh and blood,

but the mystic Breath of God,

was the Word of God made flesh,

fruit of woman, blossom fresh.

**Greeting and Prayer of the Day**

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.**

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. Amen.**

**II. WORD**

**Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25.** *(*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.*”)*

The holy gospel according to Matthew, the 1st chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon** *There’s Something About Joseph* Pr Brian

**Hymn of the Day** *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* **# 257, vv 1-2**

1O 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*

**Prayers of the People**

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 whose whom we now name, either out loud for all to hear or silently in our hearts….* God, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

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.**

**III. THANKSGIVING**

**Offering**

*You can support this and other of God’s ministries through Richfield Lutheran Church today through our website: Richfield dash Lutheran, dot org, slash give. Thank you for your faithful generosity.*

**Lord's Prayer**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as 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.**

**IV. SENDING**

*On Sunday, December 18, in addition to this video recording and its phone-in option, we have in-person worship at 9:30, we have special music and we celebrate Holy Communion. Afterwards, we share fellowship in Coffee Hour.*

*Saturday, December 24, is Christmas Eve. Our gospel reading is Luke 2:1-20.* Our candlelight Christmas Eve service is in-person at 4 in the afternoon. All are welcome.

*Until then, go forth with God’s blessing.*

**Blessing**

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.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song** *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*  **# 631, vv 1-2**

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,

Joy of heav'n, to earth come down!

Fix in us thy humble dwelling,

all thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesus, thou art all compassion,

pure, unbounded love thou art;

visit us with thy salvation,

enter ev'ry trembling heart.

2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy loving Spirit

into ev'ry troubled breast;

let us all in thee inherit;

let us find thy promised rest.

Take away the love of sinning;

Alpha and Omega be;

end of faith, as its beginning,

set our hearts at liberty.

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Christ is near.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

**This Week’s Daily Bible Readings:**

Monday, December 19. Genesis 17:15-22

Tuesday, December 20. Galatians 4:21-5:1

Wednesday, December 21. Isaiah 9:2-7

Thursday, December 22. Psalm 96

Friday, December 23. Titus 2:11-14

Saturday, December 2. Luke 2:1-10

Sunday, December 25, is Christmas Day, our gospel reading is John 1:1-14. The prologue to the Gospel of John describes Jesus as the Word of God made flesh, the one who reveals God to be “full of grace and truth.”

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