

ADVENT

A TIME OF WAITING

St. Matthews Church

WHERE COMMUNITY GATHERS AND GROWS

December 22, 2024

Advent 4

Sunday, December 22, 2024

(* indicates the assembly stands)

Gathering

Prelude "Creator of the Stars of Night" H. Schroeder

Words of Welcome & Service Announcements

*Confession and Forgiveness (see page 4)

*Hymn 254 "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

*Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*Hymn 247 "Come Now, O Prince of Peace"

*Greeting

*Kyrie p. 120

*Prayer of the Day

Anthem "Magnificat in G" C.V. Stanford

Word

First Reading Micah 5:2-5a

Canticle Hymn 552 "Blessed Be The God of Israel"

Second Reading Hebrews 10:5-10

*Gospel Acclamation "Alleluia" p. 124

*Gospel Reading Luke 1:39-55

Sermon

*Hymn of the Day (see page 5) "Unexpected and Mysterious"

*Nicene Creed p. 126

*Prayers of Intercession **A: receive our prayer**

*Peace

Meal

*Offering Hymn (see page 6)	<i>"We Are Waiting"</i>
*Offering Prayer	
*Great Thanksgiving	p. 129
*Holy, Holy, Holy	p. 130
*Thanksgiving at the Table III	p. 132
*Lord's Prayer (<i>Our Father in heaven...</i>)	p. 134
Lamb of God	p. 135
Communion Hymns 241, 242	
Table Blessing	
Prayer after Communion	

Sending

General Announcements	
*Blessing	
*Hymn 257	<i>"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"</i>
*Dismissal	A: Thanks be to God.
Postlude	<i>"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"</i> R. Powell

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Cradle and cross are inextricably connected on the fourth Sunday of Advent. Between a lovely tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and Mary's magnificent song of praise, the letter to the Hebrews reminds us in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." It is the kind of tension in which the church always lives as when in holy communion—with high delight—"we proclaim the Lord's death."

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the ...

God of mercy,

A: we confess that we have sinned.

We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.

We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P: God of might,

A: we confess that we have sinned.

We have turned away from our neighbors.

We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

A: we confess that we have sinned.

We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: A righteous branch springs forth:

it is Christ the Lord, our Savior,

in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy.

By the power of the Holy Spirit,

receive the grace and forgiveness of God

through † Christ Jesus,

whose day draws near.

Amen.

Church Fire Plan For everyone's awareness, a copy of the Church Fire Plan for safe exit from the Sanctuary appears in the back of the worship books. Please take a moment to review for your own safety. The AED and a first aid kit are in the hallway by the office.

258 Unexpected and Mysterious

Beach Spring



1 Un-ex-pect-ed and mys-ter-i-ous is the gen-tle word of grace. Ev-er-
2 In a mo-men-ta-ry meet-ing of e-ter-ni-ty and time, Mar-y
3 We are called to pon-der mys-t'ry and a-wait the com-ing Christ, to em-

5



lov-ing and sus-tain-ing is the peace of God's em-brace. If we
learned that she would car-ry both the mor-tal and di-vine. Then she
bod-y God's com-pas-sion for each fra-gile hu-man life. God is

9



fal-ter in our cour-age and we doubt what we have known, God is
learned of God's com-pas-sion, of E-liz-a-beth's great joy, and she
with us in our long-ing to bring heal-ing to the earth, while we

13



faith-ful to con-sole us as a moth-er tends her own.
ran to greet the wo-man who would re-cog-nize her boy.
watch with joy and won-der for the pro-mised Sa-viour's birth.

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The Advent Wreath

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting amid growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

We Are Waiting for Jesus



1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.



Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.



We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957

Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen

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Leading Worship Today

Minister: Rev. Sebastian Meadows-Helmer

Assisting Minister: Linda McLellan

Diaconal Minister of Music: Deacon Scott Knarr

Choral Scholars: Nicole Hamilton, Hannah Swiderski, Sarah Hu-A-Kam, Dylan Siebert

Solo: Sarah Hu-A-Kam

Communion Server: Lynda Karn

Broadcast: Jason Smolak

Building Monitor: Dennis Diebolt (519-571-4525)

Worship Notes

All are welcome at the meal where Jesus is present loving and forgiving us. For the wine, there is a common cup station and a pouring chalice station (please take an empty small glass). There is also a small tray of pre-poured grape juice glasses. Gluten-free wafers are also available; please indicate this request to the Pastor. If you would (also) like to receive a blessing, please approach the Pastor with your arms crossed over your chest. If you'd like to receive Communion in your pew, the pastor will come to you. Please let an usher or the pastor know before worship if possible.

In our prayers George, Anneke, Judy, Clare, Yvonne, Jeanette, Meaghan, Henry, Grace, Maureen and John.

Important Information for today's worship

- **Offering:** Please place your offering in one of the offering plates in the Narthex (entranceway) upon entering. The offering plates will be presented at the High Altar during the service.
- **The Peace:** We support people's choices for passing of the peace.
- **Exiting:** At the end of the service, please remain in place until the end of the postlude.
- **Please join us for Fellowship Time** after worship in the Community Hall. Use any of the staircases (Narthex, west stair tower, parking lot tower) to go down.
- **Downstairs Washrooms** can be accessed via any of the staircases. There is one wheelchair accessible washroom, and the rest are all-gender washrooms. A further all-gender washroom is also available via the west stair tower door (front left of the Sanctuary) on the same level. Turn right at the hallway.

General Announcements

Please have your 2024 donations to the office before 11:00 am on December 31, 2024.

If you need to be reimbursed for expenses, please submit receipts by December 31, 2024.

Boxed Envelopes are ready for pick up outside the church office.

Christmas Worship



Christmas Eve (German)

December 24th

5:00 pm

Christmas Eve (English)

December 24th

7:30 pm

New Year's Eve

December 31st

4:30 pm

Christmas Day

December 25th

9:30 am

Merry Christmas