

PASTOR: Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

JOY TO THE WORLD

G. F. Handel | I. Watts

Joy to the world the Lord is come / Let earth receive her King
Let every heart prepare Him room / And heav'n and nature sing
And heav'n and nature sing / And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing

Joy to the earth the Savior reigns / Let men their songs employ
While fields and floods Rocks hills and plains / Repeat the sounding joy
Repeat the sounding joy / Repeat, repeat the sounding joy

No more let sins and sorrows grow / Nor thorns infest the ground
He comes to make His blessings flow / Far as the curse is found
Far as the curse is found / Far as, far as the curse is found

He rules the world with truth and grace / And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness / And wonders of His love
And wonders of His love / And wonders, wonders of His love

CLOSING & BENEDICTION

*East Charlotte Pres is a church that strives to be defined by the Gospel-
inviting everyone to See, Savor, and Serve Jesus as the Author & Perfecter of our faith.*

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**EAST
CHARLOTTE
PRES**

CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 24TH, 2020

**MAKING THE
FAMILIAR STRANGE**



WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Advent is about WAITING on God and celebrating His ARRIVAL. We enter & participate in the story of God's people waiting & yearning for the coming of the Messiah – Jesus of Nazareth. We fixate on the past arrival of our King (when He was crucified), and we also look with eager-urgency to his return.

READER#1: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, all the creatures that move along the ground, and finally - men and women in His own image, to rule and reign and care for every square inch of God's good creation.

TOGETHER: And when God saw all that He had made, He said, "It is VERY GOOD."

READER#1: But humanity rebelled against God, and came under His curse:

TOGETHER: "Dust you are, and to dust you will return."

READER#1: But even in the midst of receiving the consequences of our sin, God promised that He would one day send a Redeemer who would take what we intended for evil and repurpose it for good.

TOGETHER: "He will crush the serpent's head, though the serpent will bruise His heel."

READER#1: God sought a heathen named Abram and made him the father of a great nation, a nation that would do justice and righteousness, a nation that would bless all the nations of the earth. From Abraham's seed would come the One, the Messiah, who would rescue not just Abraham's seed, but the whole world.

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

H.S.Coffin, T. Helmore, J.M. Neale

O come, O come, Emmanuel / And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here / Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free / Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save / And give them victory o'er the grave
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

J. Carter J.W. Work

chorus

*Go tell it on the mountain Over the hills and everywhere
Go tell it on the mountain That Jesus Christ is born*

While shepherds kept their watching, over silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens, there shone a holy light

The shepherds feared and trembled, when lo! above the earth
Rang out the angels chorus, that hailed the Savior's birth

Down in a lowly manger, the humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation, that blessed Christmas morn

READER #6: And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.
For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
for he who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;
he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

C. Wesley | F. Mendelssohn

Hark! The herald angels sing / Glory to the newborn King
Peace on earth, and mercy mild / God and sinners reconciled
Joyful, all ye nations, rise / Join the triumph of the skies
With angelic host proclaim / Christ is born in Bethlehem
Hark! The herald angels sing / Glory to the newborn King

Christ, by highest heav'n adored / Christ, the everlasting Lord
Late in time behold Him come / Offspring of the virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see / Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with men to dwell / Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing / Glory to the newborn King

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace / Hail the Sun of Righteousness
Light and life to all He brings / Ris'n with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by / Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth / Born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing / Glory to the newborn King

READER #5 – In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He 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 father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

READER#2: A bizarre man named Isaiah prophesied about this mysterious Messiah saying:

"People who walked in darkness have seen a great light, and those who dwelt in a land of DEEP DARKNESS - on them has light prevailed."

TOGETHER: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulders, and His name shall be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

READER #2: Of the increase of His government & of peace there will be NO END; He will sit on the throne of David & forever reign over His kingdom, and He will establish and uphold justice and righteousness forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

H.S.Coffin, T. Helmore, J.M. Neale

O come, Thou Day-Spring, come and cheer / Our spirits by Thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night / And death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Thou 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
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel

READER #3: Of the Messiah to come, the prophet Isaiah declares that though He was despised and rejected by men, oppressed and afflicted, and cut off from the land of the living; yet out of the anguish of His soul - this Righteous Servant shall see and be satisfied; and by His suffering He shall make many to be accounted righteous, and He shall bear their iniquities

In that day "No more shall be heard in Jerusalem the sound of weeping and distress," nowhere shall a child live only a few days, or an old man not fill out his days to the full. They shall build houses and inhabit them, they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

TOGETHER: "Behold, the Messiah will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind."

READER #3: And so God's people WAITED for the sign of the coming One, the sign of Emmanuel, God with Us, the sign of Messiah.

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

H.S. Coffin, T. Helmore, J.M. Neale

O come, O come, Emmanuel / And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here / Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel / Shall come to thee, O Israel

PASTOR: We believe that Emmanuel has come! ...& though we have NOT seen Him, we LOVE Him. Though we do not now see Him, we believe in Him & rejoice with joy that is inexpressible & filled with glory. ...We also groan with creation as we AWAIT His Second Coming. As we WAIT - we choose to LAMENT the devastating effects of OUR SIN, but we don't GRIEVE like the world ...we can actually LOOK at OUR SIN, & we are liberated by Christ to participate in healthy lamentation as we groan with creation.

LET ALL MORTAL FLESH KEEP SILENCE

G. Moultrie

Let all mortal flesh keep silence And with fear and trembling stand
Ponder nothing earthly minded For with blessing in His hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth Our full homage to demand

King of kings, yet born of Mary As of old on earth He stood
Lord of lords, in human vesture In the body and the blood
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heavenly food

Rank on rank the host of heaven Spreads its wings on the way
As the Light of light descendeth From the realms of endless day
That the powers of hell may vanish As the darkness clears away

At His feet the six wingèd seraph Cherubim with sleepless eye
Veil their faces to the presence As with ceaseless voice they cry
Hallelujah, hallelu - jah Hallelujah, Lord Most High
Hallelujah, hallelu - jah Hallelujah, Lord Most High

CANDLE LIGHTING

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

J. Wade, J. Reading

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.
Come and behold Him, Born the King of Angels;

chorus
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, Glory in the highest;

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Son of the Father, Now in flesh appearing;

READER #4: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...He was with God in the beginning. ...Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the Light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it. There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning the Light of men, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the Light; he came only as a witness to the Light. The true Light that gives light to every man was coming into the world!
...He was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him.
...He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him.
...Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God. Children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, but born of God. The Word became flesh and tabernacled among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.