



ADVENT

IMMINENT ARRIVAL

Service Focus:

Imminent Arrival of Emmanuel

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church | Santa Barbara, California
Fourth Sunday in Advent | December 21, 2025



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Welcome!

Welcome and thank you for joining us for worship today! You have joined us for the most important time we spend together. Each time we gather as a family of faith, we make the gospel (or good news) of Jesus our central focus. It is not just information about what Jesus did to save sinners. It is also the power God uses to work faith in our hearts and transform our lives. In the message and meal (Holy Communion), in specially selected Scripture readings, and in carefully crafted songs, prayers, and creeds, our service proclaims the good news about Jesus from start to finish. Many of the elements of this service have ancient roots in the Christian church. Some are very recent. Lutheran worship is also designed to include the participation of the entire assembly (including children).

Are you visiting with us today? Thank you! We love meeting our neighbors and would be grateful for the opportunity to extend our thanks in a more formal way. **Please consider filling out one of the Welcome/Connect cards in the rack in front of you, or scan the QR code** to the right to help us know you better.

Connect Card



For Your Convenience

- **The order of service** is printed in this folder. If a song is not printed in this service folder, it can be found in the blue hymnal in front of your seat. The pastor will speak the words in normal print. **The congregation is invited to speak those printed in bold.** Please participate as you are comfortable today.
- **Restrooms** are located in the fellowship hall building to the left as you exit church.
- Please reserve the rows in the back of the church for families with small children.
- If you are in need of any other assistance, any one of our members will be happy to assist you.

Participation & Children

Sometimes parents (and even churches) think that worship is not a place for children. At Our Redeemer, we're convinced that nothing could be further from the truth. We want children in church worshipping with their families and learning about Jesus' love for them. Why?

- Even from the earliest of ages, **children are models of faith** from which we can all learn (Luke 18:16,17). Similarly, they learn how to "do church" by watching mom & dad. Model worship for them.
- Our worship format not only encourages families to be together, but is ideally suited for active worship engagement and participation by all, including children, balancing new service elements each week with regular repetition for learning and memorization.
- The **sights and sounds of active children** during worship isn't bad at all – it's a reminder to the adults that the next generation of church leaders is already among us.

We realize that, especially at first, having children in church can be a challenge for parents. To help, we offer the following:

- If your child needs some individual attention to calm them down, an area in the fellowship hall, located just to the left as you exit church, is available. Worship can be watched and heard in this room.
- Other families are willing and ready to help. Let us know if we can offer a hand with your little ones.
- Activity sheets that kids can work on throughout the service are available on the stand in the back.

Current Series: Imminent Arrival

Do you remember the feeling when someone important is about to arrive at your place? It's a mixture of anticipation and excitement and nervousness. Did you make all the correct preparations? Will the person be happy to see you? When and how will the person arrive? Will there be any surprises?

During these weeks before Christmas, we anticipate the imminent arrival of Jesus. He's an important person! We are about to celebrate his birth. He could return on judgment day at any time. But in worship we realize that he impacts our lives when the Bible is read and when the sacraments are administered. Suddenly we feel the excitement of an imminent arrival.

November 30	First Sunday in Advent	Imminent Arrival of the King
December 7	Second Sunday in Advent	Imminent Arrival of the Judge
December 14	Third Sunday in Advent	Imminent Arrival of the Messiah
December 21	Fourth Sunday in Advent	Imminent Arrival of Emmanuel

Service Focus

Emmanuel is an important person. "Emmanuel" means "God with us." It was a special name given to Jesus already 700 years before he was born. Who is with us when Jesus is with us? God himself. God became a human being in a special way, becoming truly human but remaining God.

God is still with us. We encounter him in a special way when we gather with two or three others in worship. He is so near to us that the thrill of anticipation is almost unbearable. Let it wash over you as you celebrate Christmas this week.

Prayer Before the Service

Fill us with the Holy Spirit, O God, as we prepare to greet your Son. May our hearts leap for joy in his presence, and may our mouths be ready to sing praises to this Child who has come to save the whole world. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Serving God and Us Today

Presiding Minister: Pastor Daniel Schroeder

Music Operator: Al Todd

Audio/Visual Booth: Jim Everson, Josh Schueler

Instrumentalists: Marrissa Schueler (guitar); Linka Schroeder (flute); Our Redeemer Handbells

Usher: David Grunewald

Welcome Table: Jan Scheffler

The Service

Welcome

The Advent candle tradition began with 19th-century German Lutherans, turning winter candles into a symbol of Christ's coming. Each weekly candle increases our anticipation, and the evergreen wreath reflects God's enduring love. On Christmas, the Christ Candle shines, declaring that the promised Light of the world has come.

This 20th-century Advent Gathering Song is written in the spirit of Taizé, with a repeated refrain sung by the congregation, and superimposed verses sung by the cantor or minister. The verses are drawn from the Scripture readings of the day.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

We light four Advent candles remembering Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Mary. He came to share our humanity.

We remember Jesus, whose name means Savior.

He came to save his people from their sins.

We light four Advent candles as a sign of our joy and hope.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

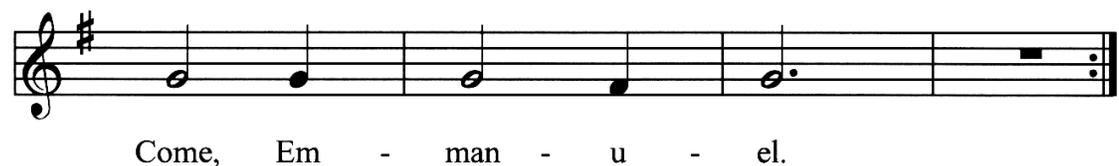
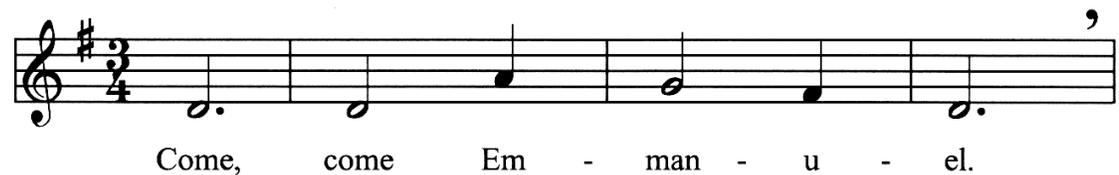
Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.

Four Advent candles are lit.

Advent Gathering Song

The minister will sing the refrain one time and the congregation will then sing the refrain. The minister will sing the verses; all will sing the refrain where indicated.

Refrain



God will give us a sign, so ... **Refrain**

For a child from the virgin will ... **Refrain**

And his name will be Jesus, so ... **Refrain**

Oh the King of glory shall ... **Refrain**

He will save us from sin, so ... **Refrain**

For the Son of God will ... **Refrain**

Stand

Confession

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19

Amen.

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:8,9

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,
I am sinful by nature
and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.
I have not loved you with my whole heart;
I have not loved others as I should.
I deserve your punishment both now and forever.
But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins
with his innocent suffering and death.
Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

God's people live in daily repentance. Now, when gathered in God's presence, the pastor invites them to confess their sins and ask God for his forgiveness.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The minister speaks in the first person, as one authorized by Jesus to forgive the penitent in his name. Listeners can be sure that the word of absolution they hear is the Word of Christ.

Amen.

The Word

The Lord be with you.

Ruth 2:4

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

This prayer has been used by worshipers since about 750 AD.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

Children's Devotion

Handbells

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Arranged and Published by Sondra Tucker

After thousands of years of God's promises, Paul looks back and sees every one of them kept when God became man.

First Reading

Romans 1:1-7

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life was a descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith for his name's sake. ⁶ And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

⁷ To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. (NIV)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Church sings Psalm 89 in services where we thank God for keeping his promises over long periods of time. It is the last psalm in Book III of the Psalter.

Psalm of the Day

Psalm 89

Refrain

I will sing for-ev-er to you, my God, through-out all time I will
sing to you; *through-out all time I will sing to you.

* Repeat bracketed phrase as closing line for final refrain.

1 I will sing of your love all my days, O God, your faithfulness is forever. You are love everlasting and compassion stronger than the sky. **Refrain**

2 The heavens proclaim your wonders; the stars above tell of your love. Where is there an equal? What god can compare with you? **Refrain**

3 O God, how your people rejoice in you! You call us forth to share your light. In your name we find our joy and your justice will be our song. **Refrain**

4 I have sought and found my servant; with holy oil I will anoint you. My hand will always be watchful; my arm will be your strength. **Refrain**

5 All will sing and proclaim to me: “My God, my rock, my safety.”
I will honor my promise; my love will always be with you. **Refrain**

Stand

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

*Joseph knew full well
that Mary would give
birth to a son who
would be Emmanuel,
God with us.*

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. (NIV)

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
Christian Worship 327

This hymn dating back to the 12th century, is a prayerful Advent countdown: God’s people—portrayed as “captive Israel,” weary and exiled—plead for the Savior to come and ransom, rescue, and restore. Each stanza names Christ with a rich biblical title, then asks him to do what that title promises (give wisdom, free the captive, open the way, scatter darkness, reign in peace). The refrain answers the longing with confident joy: “Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.”

Sermon

Isaiah 7:10-14

*Isaiah prophesies that a
virgin would give birth to
God in the flesh.*

“Immanuel: A Sign You Can’t Ignore”

¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹“Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.”

¹³Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of

humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (NIV)

My Christian Life - Immanuel: A Sign You Can't Ignore //

Jesus fulfilled what God promised. God came to us in human flesh and blood to be with us and for us. He is still Immanuel, still God with us. Because of this I can ...

- Begin each day this week by confessing one specific sin—not in despair, but trusting that my substitute has already paid for it.
- Memorize and say outloud several times this week Isaiah 7:14, “*The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*” It will remind me to thank God that the promised sign was given for my salvation.
- Reach out to someone who may feel forgotten or isolated, reminding them—by word or presence—that God has drawn near in Christ. I’ll use one of the Christmas service postcards to invite them to the services where they will be reminded that God has come in flesh for them and is with them.
- Other: _____

Stand

Based on Luke 1:46-55, Luther considered this song one of the most magnificent statements of faith in all the Scriptures. The Magnificat is the song of the faithful church as she waits quietly for the fulfillment of the word of promise.

Song of Mary Magnificat

1, 3 My — soul pro - claims your great - ness, O God, and my
2 You have cast the might - y down from their thrones, and up -

spir - it re - joic - es in you. You have looked with love on your
lift - ed the hum - ble of heart. You have filled the hun - gry with

ser - vant here, and blessed me all my life through.
won - drous things, and left the wealth - y no part.

Great and might - y are you, O Ho - ly One, strong is your
Great and might - y are you, O Faith - ful One, strong is your



kind - ness ev - er - more. How you fa - vor the
 jus - tice, strong your love, as you prom - ised to *Be*



weak and low - ly one, hum - bling the proud of heart. *st. 2*
 Sar - ah and A - bra - ham, kind - ness for - ev - er - more. *st. 3*

Prayer of the Church

Spoken by the Pastor

Offering

The members of Our Redeemer have joined together to do the Lord's work in this community and around the world. **If you are a guest with us this morning**, we are so happy you're here! Please do not feel obligated to participate in the offering. For those who wish to give a gift, you can place an offering in the **offering plate** located near the doors where you entered church today. A plate will be there as you depart today. You may also **scan the QR code** to the right with your smartphone's camera to be redirected to a page where you can give an offering. While the members of Our Redeemer support this ministry with their gifts, we understand that you might want to learn more about us before you choose to do the same.

In offering money as an expression of worship, we are responding to God's claim on our lives and giving him a portion of what he has in fact given us.

Offering



Connect Card



We would greatly appreciate it, however, if you would fill out a **Welcome/Connect Card** (located in the rack in front of you) and place it in the offering plate following the service. You could also let us know you were here today by filling out a card online by **scanning the QR code** to the left.

Hymn

Peace Came to Earth
Christian Worship 330

Jaroslav Vajda wrote this Christmas hymn text in 1984, celebrating the astonishment and joy of Immanuel—God with us. It traces Christ's peace from the manger to his saving wounds and on to his continuing presence that draws us to pray and praise.

Prayer

O Lord of Light, in the darkness of our sin and its death we had no place to turn but to you. You sent forth your Light into our darkness and clothed us in the light of Christ. Grant us your Holy Spirit that we may live in his light and walk in his light, to the glory of your holy name; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

All of our requests, all of our prayers, all of our needs are summed up in the prayer that our Savior, Jesus Christ, taught us to pray. See Matthew 6:9-13.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

Receive the same blessing that God gave to the ancient Israelites (Numbers 6:22-27).

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.
Amen.

Closing Hymn

Behold, a Branch Is Growing
Christian Worship 360 (st. 1-3)

This hymn is an English translation of the late-medieval German carol Es ist ein Ros entsprungen, inspired by Isaiah's prophecy of a shoot from Jesse's line and proclaiming Christ's birth as God's life-giving answer in the world's darkest winter. The familiar melody is preserved and beautifully shaped in Michael Praetorius's 1609 chorale harmonization, whose warm, balanced setting helped establish this carol as a lasting Advent and Christmas favorite.

Acknowledgments

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Attendance

Sunday Morning Worship (December 14) - 45
Starting Point/Christianity 101 Bible Studies This Week (December 17) - 8

Our Redeemer News

Upcoming Bible Studies at Our Redeemer

December 21, 11:00am - Starting Point - Christianity 101
 December 28, 11:00am - Starting Point - Christianity 101

Church Christmas Decorating

Thank you to the 25 or so people who were able to use their time and talents to decorate our church for the Christmas season last Sunday.



Managing God's Gifts to Us

When our God wants to give us something, it's the height of sinful arrogance to deny it. But in this case, God graciously gave Ahaz a sign anyway—the greatest of signs—the sign of the virgin birth of the Savior. What a saving wonder! And now he wants to give you his grace to prepare your heart for his coming. Get as much grace as you can! Make use of the added opportunities in these last weeks of the month to hear his Word and commune with your fellow Christians! Encourage others to join you in

hearing the sweetest news ever: the birth of the Savior. And reflect on how God's gift to us inspires our gifts to him. To help be kept informed of finances to carry out our ministry plans at Our Redeemer, here is the recent offerings report.

	Last Week	Month-to-Date	Year-to-Date
Actual Offerings	\$2,450	\$6,065	\$147,156
Budgeted Offerings	\$2,600	\$5,200	\$134,315
Difference	\$150	\$865	\$12,841

This Week at Our Redeemer

Sunday	December 14	9:30am 11:00am	Sunday Worship Sunday Bible Hour
Tuesday	December 22	7:00pm	Handbells' Practice
Wednesday	December 24	7:00pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service & Fellowship
Thursday	December 25	9:30am	Christmas Day Festival Service (Lord's Supper)
Sunday	December 28	9:30am 11:00am	Sunday Worship Sunday Bible Hour



CHRISTMAS AT OUR REDEEMER

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Lessons & Carols)
7:00pm

Christmas Day Festival Service (with Lord's Supper)
9:30am

About Us

Our Mission

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church has been serving the Santa Barbara community since 1968. As people who have been redeemed through faith in Jesus Christ, our mission is to: **Grow** in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; **Encourage** one another; and **Proclaim** what we have seen and heard.



Our Contact Information

770 Vala Drive
Santa Barbara, California 93111
(805) 967-1128
orlcsb.net

Our Ministry

Sunday Worship: 9:30am
Sunday Online Broadcast available at our YouTube channel.
Bible Study: Sundays at 11:00am; Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Our Pastor

Pastor Daniel Schroeder
pastor.orlcsb@gmail.com
(619) 852-2440

Our Church Body

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church proclaims the truth about Jesus throughout the world as a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). We are united in faith and teaching with the other 1,200 plus churches of our Wisconsin Synod and 33 other church bodies around the world of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC).



Let us know you were here!

