

As We Gather

What a letdown when people break their promises! A father tells his ten-year-old son, "I know I promised to be at your soccer game, but something has come up." Maybe we have been a victim of a broken promise like this, or perhaps we've been the one who's broken a promise. In today's Gospel, however, we see a promise kept. The angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she will conceive and bear a Son. This pledge to Mary is part of the ongoing fulfillment of God's promises. When we see this promise kept in the coming of Jesus, we have the assurance that we can always trust God that He acts according to His Word. Our heavenly Father never breaks His promises!

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GREETING

OPENING HYMN: *"Word of God, Come Down on Earth"* **Hymn #545**

THE INVOCATION

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

Amen.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS AND ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess our sins before God and one another.

(Please kneel)

Most merciful God,

We confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name.

Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for His sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH: ANTICIPATION

The people of the Old Testament took comfort in God's promise that a Savior would be born to take away their sins. In anticipation the people waited for the fulfilling of what was foretold by God's prophets. Our Savior has now come, but we also wait in anticipation for the day He will return again!

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given . . . and his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

THE HYMN: "Jesus, Your Church with Longing Eyes"

**Jesus, Your Church with longing eyes for Your expected coming waits.
When will the promised light arise and glory beam from Zion's gates?**

**Come, gracious Lord, our hearts renew, our foes repel, our wrongs redress,
Man's rooted enmity subdue, and crown Your Gospel with success.**

**Teach us in watchfulness and prayer to wait for the appointed hour,
And fit us by Your grace to share the triumphs of your conquering power.**

(As the hymn stanzas are sung, the Gossman family will light the candles on the Advent wreath.)

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

Dear Lord Jesus, as Your people of old waited anxiously for Your coming to bring forgiveness and salvation, we also wait with anticipation for Your Second Coming to judge the world. With all our sins removed through Your first coming in a cradle, we do not need to fear Your Second Coming in glory; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

(Please be seated.)

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: 2 Samuel 7:1–11, 16 (*"Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever."*)

¹ Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, ² the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent."³ And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you."

⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, ⁵ "Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build me a house to dwell in?' ⁶ I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for my dwelling. ⁷ In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"⁸ Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth.

¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, ¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. ¹⁶ And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever." ¹⁷ In accordance with all these words, and in accordance with all this vision, Nathan spoke to David.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE ANTHEM:

"Advent Prayer"

Sanctuary Choir

THE EPISTLE READING: Romans 16:25–27 (*"To the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ!"*)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE ALLELUIA VERSE:

Al-le-lu-ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e-ter-nal life. Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia.

THE HOLY GOSPEL IS ANNOUNCED:

The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke the first chapter.

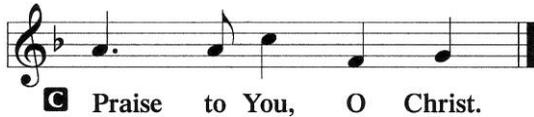
Glo-ry to You, O Lord.

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 1:26–38 (*The angel appears to Mary.*)

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² 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, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ 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. ³⁶ 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. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ 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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



THE CHILDRENS MESSAGE

Tim Jacobsmeyer
Director of Music

THE HYMN OF THE DAY:

"My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord"
(*hymn tune: "On Jordan's Banks"*)

Hymn #934

THE MESSAGE:

Vicar Brad Wellik

THE APOSTLES' CREED:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE GATHERING OF THE TITHES AND OFFERINGS

++ The Stewardship Thought ++
**Advent means "coming" or "arrival." In this season of expectations we
Prepare to celebrate the birth of the Savior who came to us at Bethlehem.**
"Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight," (Mark 1:3)

THE OFFERTORY: *"Come, O Long Expected Jesus"*

**Come, O long expected Jesus
Born to set Your people free.
From our fears and sins release us
By Your death on Calvary.
Israel's strength and consolation
Hope to all the earth impart.
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation
Joy of ev'ry longing heart.**

**Born Your people to deliver
Born a child and yet a king.
Born to reign in us forever
Now Your gracious kingdom bring.
By Your own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Your all sufficient merit
Raise us to Your glorious throne.**

THE PRAYERS: After each petition, the Worship Leader will say, *"Lord in Your mercy,"* and the congregation will respond, *"Hear our prayer."*

THE 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.

THE BENEDICTION
The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.
Amen.

THE CLOSING HYMN: *"Hark the Glad Sound"* **Hymn #349**

A MOMENT FOR SILENT PRAYER

THE POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

This week's altar flowers are provided by Bob & Nancy Gerstenberger in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary, and by Barbara Mabee, to the glory of God.

We received a Christmas Letter from Seminarian Josh LeBorious and it is posted on the office hallway bulletin board.

Christmas Greetings from Former Vicars – We have received a few cards and letters from some of our former Vicars. They are posted on the bulletin board across from the church office.

Just a reminder that next Sunday will be the 5th Sunday in December, so hope you have a few coins in your pocket, and will help the Ladies make some noise. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to all.

Once again we will be collecting "Freebies" to give away at the Christmas Day dinner. There is a box under the table in the entryway to put items. These items could include calendars, notepads, pens, warm things like mittens or hats or whatever you think would be appropriate.

Primetimers - Just a reminder the last day to pay for the dinner at the Southern Landings Restaurant is Sunday December 10th. Checks must be made out to EDNA HICKS. One dinner is \$22.50 and \$45 for two. Please bring a wrapped White Elephant Gift. One per couple.
Thank you! - Marie, Edna and Don

Projectionists Needed - Can you operate a computer? Can you locate and press the "down" arrow? Then you have the skills to serve as a projectionist during worship! We desperately need people to serve in this role, particularly at the 10:45 service. Call or text Brian Harper at 478-284-6031 if you're interested.

Sunday School Offering Projects! Those dollars add up over the course of the year. In 2017 the offerings collected in our Sunday School baskets helped support the following ministries: Military Bible Sticks (\$523), UGA's Campus Ministry (\$500), Hurricane Harvey Relief (\$500), First Reader Program (\$500), Rebecca's Garden @ Mt. Calvary (\$500), and True Light Transportation (\$500).

Macon Mayhem Tickets! We have 30 tickets for the Macon Mayhem game on Friday, January 5th, at 7:35 (vs. Evansville). Tickets are \$12/each and are on a first paid – first seated basis. See Pete to get your Mayhem tickets TODAY!

No Education Hour! There will be no classes during Education Hour this weekend or next (December 24th & 31st). Sunday classes will resume January 7th at 9:30 am.

Wednesday Night Christian Fellowship & Education! Our midweek classes will resume January 10th with dinner at 5:30 and classes beginning at 6:00 & 6:15.



**The Flower Chart for 2018 is posted.
Now would be a good time to get the
weekend that you want reserved.**

PRAYER CONCERNS

The family of Grover Hobbs, Suzanne O'Daniels' brother-in-law, who died recently.
The family of Diana Iverson, Bonnie Hudlin's sister-in-law, who died December 20th.
Richard Uitto, who had gall bladder surgery.
JoAnn Burge, who is hospitalized.
JoAnn Smith, who is hospitalized with pneumonia.
Dwight Miller, who is again having heart concerns.
Chet Branscom, who has been diagnosed with acute leukemia.
Dick Kesler, who is hospitalized with pneumonia.

Keep In Your Prayers

Pastor Brighton, Charles Smith (Joan's husband), Susan Wallace, Libby McCarty, Paul Brown, Tracie Frey, Anita McIntyre, Bill Gragg, Mike Hope, Merlin Schumann (Joan Steese's brother), Patti Griswold, Regina Ragan, Joe Hill (Cynthia Nelson's dad), Michelle Jones (Leo & Joann Ladzinske's daughter), Glen Mabee, Deloris Denzine and Karen Johnson.

(NOTE: Those listed under "Keep in your prayers" are removed from the list after eight weeks. If there is someone you would like to keep on the list for another eight weeks, please contact the church office.)

Those Battling Cancer

Joe Hill (Cynthia Nelson's dad), Jeanne Day (Bob's mom), Chet Branscom, Jace Cumbie (Amanda McVay's boyfriend's son), Barry Rice (Becky McVay's brother), Norma Young (Melinda Hopf's aunt), Kathy Grube, Mary Schwope (Michele Durbin's aunt), Jeannette Poniske (Fred Tamer's mom) and Bruce Oswalt (Krystal Ferguson's father).

Those Serving our Country in Dangerous Areas

Christopher Dierking, Chris Mittuch, Darrin Landis, Jonathan Fetchik and Christian Corbitt, for safety and good health as they serve our country in dangerous areas.

SERVING US TODAY

PREACHER: Vicar Brad Wellik. **LITURGIST:** Pastor David Brighton. **ELDER:** Don Netzinger. **ACOLYTE:** Zoe Babcock. **USHERS:** Mike Hopf, Bruce Bauman, Dave Harter, Ed Bodony, Earl Bogardus & Joshua Johnson. **ALTAR GUILD:** Lois Harter, Suzanne O'Daniel, Maureen Young. **LAY READER:** Dave Radcliff. **SLIDE PREPARER:** Debi Cole. **PROJECTIONISTS:** Open (8 am) & Open (10:45 am).

SERVING US NEXT WEEK

ELDERS: Open (Sat 6 pm), Brian Harper (Sun 8 am) and Roger Moeller (Sun 10:45 am). **ACOLYTES:** Tucker Gossman (Sun 8 am) and Morgan Hagemann (Sun 10:45 am). **ALTAR GUILD:** Lois Harter, Suzanne O'Daniel, Maureen Young. **LAY READERS:** Becky McVay (Sat 6 pm), Steve Kirchoff (Sun 8 am), Barb Mabee (Sun 10:45 am). **GREETERS:** Eileen Mittuch (8 am) and Jan Clark (Sun 10:45 am).

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 and Romans 16:25-27

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK

Saturday 6 pm – 44 Sunday 8 am – 76 Sunday 10:45 am – 126 Total – 246

THIS WEEK AT MOUNT CALVARY

Today	10:00 am	Worship
	5:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship for Young Families
	7:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight
	10:00 pm	Christmas Eve Worship – Candlelight with Holy Communion
Monday	12 – 3 pm	Helping Hands Christmas Dinner
		Church Office Closed for Christmas
Wednesday	9:30 am	Craft & Chat
Saturday	5:00 pm	Adult Bible Study
	5:00 pm	Praise Team Rehearsal
Next Sunday		No Sunday School

VANCO
Online
Giving

