



Sunday, December 21, 2025

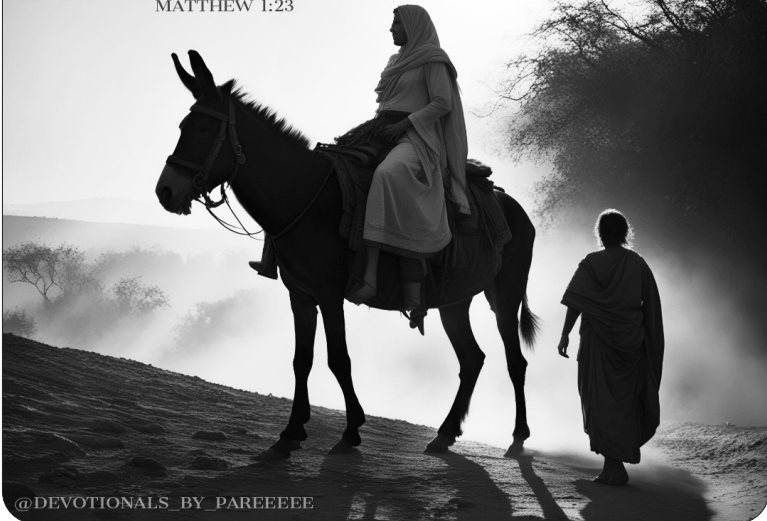
10:00 a.m.

4th Sunday of Advent

BEHOLD, A VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BRING FORTH A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME

EMMANUEL,
WHICH BEING INTERPRETED IS,
GOD WITH US.

MATTHEW 1:23



“Emmanuel - God With Us”

Pastor Erik Allen

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP

Prelude

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Hal Hopson

Announcements

Gathering Song

Emmanuel

Call to Worship

L: At every beginning there is a yearning for the one who is coming.
O Emmanuel,

C: Surprise us by your coming.

P: We gather together to let God’s good news reorient our lives. O Emmanuel,

C: Surprise us by your coming.

P: We wait for the day when all the world will see the sign that God is with us.
O Emmanuel,

C: Surprise us by your coming.

P: We are shocked by how God comes close, even at this very moment. O Emmanuel,

C: Surprise us by your coming.

P: Jesus, we welcome your presence now with the lighting of these candles, whose
flames bring warmth to winter and fill this place with your unending love.

C: Amen.

Fourth Candle of Advent is Lit

Candle Lighting Song

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord!
A voice cries out in the wilderness
“Prepare the way of the Lord, Prepare the way of the Lord.”

O come little children, And light the candle of love,
For Jesus is coming, from heaven above.

Prepare the way of the Lord, prepare the way of the Lord!
Make straight in the dessert a highway,
A highway for our God, a highway for our God.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

(pass the peace as you feel comfortable)

Song

To Know You More

Call to Confession

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

C: **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

(Silence is kept for reflection.)

P: Long-expected God,

C: **We confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: **Amen.**

Prayer of the Day

P: 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.

C: **Amen.**

please be seated

Lesson

Isaiah 7:10-16

Gospel

Matthew 1:18-25

Gospel Response

P: Word of God, word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Children's Message

Pastor Erik

Sermon

"Emmanuel - God With Us"

Pastor Erik

The Apostles' Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

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

please be seated

The Offering

The Offering Response

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“Rejoice, Rejoice Believers”

ELW

(vs 4)

Offertory Prayer

P: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

C: Amen.

Prayers of the Church *(the congregation joins in speaking the first names of those for whom we pray.)*

Members: Judy, Marion, Kelly, Jeff, Lee, Marj, Vickie

Family & Friends: Faizah, Darin, Tom, Chuck, Chris, Sylvia, Bill, Ken, Dana,
Marie, Mary, Carol, Susan, Bob

Communion

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer

C: 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. 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!

P: At this table God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

please be seated

Distribution

All baptized Christians who seek the blessings of Christ's true body and blood in the bread and wine of Holy Communion are welcome. Those who do not wish to receive may come forward for a blessing. Please let your server know if you desire a gluten-free wafer.

Benediction

P: May God who comes among us, Father, ✠ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

C: Amen!

Song

All Things are Possible

Sending

P: Go in peace. Keep awake!

C: Thanks be to God!

Postlude

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"

Donald Rotermund

Announcements

Thank You

What a most generous gift staff received this past week as a Christmas Gift. It's a delight to serve with you and your encouragement and love in Christ throughout the year are cherished. Thank you and may you and your loved ones have a most beautiful Christmas.

Poinsettias

There are still some poinsettias available. If you'd like to purchase one in honor or in memory of a loved one, please email me with details leslie.french@kogcarmel.org. Plants are \$12 each. Checks can be dropped in the offering or in the office.

Year End Giving

For those wanting contributions to be included for your 2025 taxes, please make sure checks are received in the office by 11:00 am Wednesday, December 31 (the office closes at noon). There are members planning year end giving to include an early start for 2026. Questions? Contact Neisha, neisha.johnson@kogcarmel.org or 317-846-1555 ext 3.



Christmas Eve at King of Glory

4:00

Children & Family Service

7:00

*Contemporary Candlelight
with Communion*

*All Are Welcome
(nursery available at 4:00 pm)*

*Please invite friends and neighbors to join us
in our Christmas Celebration*

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

Theme of the Week: The Cost of Discipleship

Having celebrated the Nativity of our Lord, the church now turns toward the hard and honest call of discipleship. Following Christ is not sentimental or easy, for the spirit of Herod is still alive and active in the world, resisting the reign of God wherever it appears. When we examine our own hearts, we must admit that we are not naturally prepared to bear the crosses that come with faithfulness. Like Peter during Holy Week, our confidence often falters when the cost becomes clear. Yet discipleship is not sustained by our courage or resolve. We live by faith in the promises of God, who meets us precisely in our weakness. God strengthens us in times of need and supplies grace sufficient for each day. The cost of following Jesus is real, but it is never greater than the mercy of the One who calls us. We pray not that the road be easy, but that we would not grow weary, trusting that Christ walks it with us.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE: John 21:20–24 The Crosses of Others

After the resurrection, Peter turns his attention away from his own calling and toward the future of another disciple. Jesus responds firmly: “What is that to you? Follow me.” With these words, Christ redirects Peter from comparison to faithfulness. Each disciple is given a particular path, shaped by different joys, sufferings, and responsibilities. This perspective remains necessary for the church. We are tempted to measure our burdens against those of others or to worry excessively about paths that are not ours to walk. Yet Christ promises to be present in every cross, working through suffering for good, even when we cannot see how. Our story, whatever its particular shape, is grounded in the same promise: we are redeemed by Christ, called to follow, and held securely in hope. In Christ, the ending is life. *Lord, help us to follow you faithfully and entrust others to your care. Amen.*

MONDAY SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:13–18 Evil’s Perverved Kingdom

Herod’s violent response to the birth of Jesus reveals how deeply threatened earthly power becomes when confronted with God’s reign. The newborn Christ exposes the fragility of human kingdoms built on fear and control. Rather than repent, Herod lashes out, bringing suffering and grief to Bethlehem. This story confronts us with an uncomfortable truth: the same impulse lives within us. We resist Christ whenever we fear losing control, comfort, or autonomy. Yet the Gospel speaks a different word. Christ does not come to steal life from us, but to give us a better and lasting kingdom. Where there is fear, Christ brings peace. Where there is shame, Christ brings forgiveness. By grace alone, the true King delivers us from lesser kingdoms that never satisfy and invites us into life that endures. *Jesus, you are our true and gracious King. Amen.*

TUESDAY SCRIPTURE: Galatians 4:1–7 Children of God

Paul proclaims the astonishing good news that God sends the Son to redeem all who live under the burden of the Law. Redemption is costly for its through Christ’s death that we are freed from fear. The salvation we receive is not an abstract idea, but a concrete act of divine mercy. Through Christ, we are not merely forgiven; we are adopted. The Holy Spirit bears witness within us, crying out “Abba, Father,” assuring us that we belong to God. We are no longer enslaved by fear, but live as children and heirs of grace. This identity does not rest on our obedience, but on God’s promise.

Even when faith feels fragile, God's claim on us remains firm. *Gracious God, by your mercy we are your children. All praise to you. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 11:1–5 Jesse's Stump

Isaiah speaks to a people who know loss and judgment. The royal line of David appears cut off, reduced to a stump. Yet God's promise does not end in ruin. From what looks dead and lifeless, God brings forth new life—a living shoot from Jesse's line. This promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ, whose reign is marked not by violence but by righteousness and peace. In him, even creation itself is healed. Those who abide in Christ are grafted into this living vine, sharing in his resurrection life. Death does not have the final word, because Christ lives forever. In baptism and faith, we are joined to this life that cannot be undone. *Lord Jesus, graft us into yourself by your Word, that we may live in you forever. Amen.*

THURSDAY SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:22–32 He Comes and Is Coming

Simeon stands as a witness for all who wait in hope. Having trusted God's promise across a lifetime, Simeon now holds the Christ child and sees salvation made flesh. In this moment, waiting turns into peace, and longing gives way to fulfillment. We, too, live between promise and fulfillment. Christ has come, and all that is necessary for salvation has been accomplished. Yet we still wait for the fullness of God's reign. Like Simeon, we are strengthened by the Spirit to live in hope, confident that God's promises do not fail. Christ comes to us now in Word and Sacrament, and Christ will come again to bring all things to completion. *Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.*

FRIDAY SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 2:9–16 Suffering Glory

The letter to the Hebrews reshapes our understanding of glory. Glory is not found in power or acclaim, but in the suffering of Christ for the sake of the world. Jesus is crowned with glory precisely because he endured the cross and reconciled us to God. This truth reframes our own suffering. Faithfulness may lead to hardship, but suffering borne in Christ is not wasted. Because Christ has entered fully into human pain and death, our crosses are held within God's promise. Even death itself becomes a passage, not an ending. Hidden within suffering is the hope of resurrection and the glory of the life to come. *Jesus, strengthen us to confess your name faithfully. Amen.*

SATURDAY SCRIPTURE: Psalm 111 Worship Is Remembering

Psalm 111 reminds us that worship begins not with our feelings, but with remembering God's mighty works. The gathered community recalls what God has done and who God has been revealed to be: gracious, merciful, and faithful. Without this remembering, worship easily turns inward, focused on personal piety rather than God's saving action. In Word and Sacrament, especially in Holy Communion, the church remembers Christ as commanded, trusting that God continues to act through these means. God's faithfulness does not fade with time. It endures from generation to generation, anchoring our hope until God brings us home. *Faithful God, keep us rooted in your saving acts. Amen.*