

# What Child IS This?

**Second Sunday of Advent**  
**December 7, 2025**  
**9:00am**

*"The Silent Word"*

## **GATHERING**

*Like the iconic figures gathered around the Christ Child in our nativity scenes, we gather together because we want to know Jesus more as we seek to bring his Reign of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love on earth.*

### **We Gather at the Scene**

**Why lies he in such mean estate  
where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here  
the Silent Word is pleading**

*candle lighting*

**This, this is Christ the King  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing!  
Haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

## **\*Prayer of Invocation**

**Here, at the nativity of your birth,  
give us the courage to face this moment  
with new air in our lungs.**

**Open us to new understandings of  
the unfolding story of your presence among us.  
Show us the true meaning of peace on earth,  
good will for all.**

**We pray in the name of the Child,  
the Prince of Peace in our hearts and lives.  
Amen.**

**\*Bring Him Laud**      **Blest Be the God of Israel**      **UMH #209**  
Hymn by Michael Perry; Tune: MERLE'S TUNE

Blest be the God of Israel who comes to set us free,  
Who visits and redeems us and grants us liberty.  
The prophets spoke of mercy, of freedom and release;  
God shall fulfill the promise to bring our people peace.

Now from the house of David a child of grace is given;  
A Savior comes among us to raise us up to heaven.  
Before him goes the herald, forerunner in the way,  
The prophet of salvation, the harbinger of day.

On prisoners of darkness the sun begins to rise;  
The dawning of forgiveness upon the sinner's eyes,  
To guide the feet of pilgrims along the path of peace;  
O bless our God and Savior with songs that never cease.

## **Sharing Signs of Hope**

# PROCLAIMING

*We open ourselves to the full story of Christ's birth, knowing that his story is the ground of our faith and the light for our path*

## **Haste Haste!**

*The children gather for Small Talk & Noisy Offering. Noisy Offerings will purchase chickens and rabbits for families through Heifer International.*

**Be near us, Lord Jesus; we ask Thee to stay  
close by us forever, and love us, we pray.  
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,  
and make earth a heaven, where all have a share.**

**Anthems Sweet**

**Winter Snow**

**Chancel Choir**

## **\*We Hear the Story**

**Luke 1:5-25; 57-80**

In the days of the ruler Herod, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the priestly class of Abijah. His wife Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron. Both were worthy in the sight of God and scrupulously observed all the commandments and observances of our God. They were childless—unable to conceive—and they were both advanced in years. Now it was the turn of Zechariah's priestly class to serve. And as he was fulfilling his priestly office before God, it fell to him by lot, according to priestly usage, to enter the sanctuary of our God and offer incense. While the full assembly of people was praying outside at the time of day when the incense was offered, an angel of our God appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. Zechariah was deeply disturbed upon seeing the angel, and was overcome with fear.

The angel said to him, "Don't be frightened, Zechariah. Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear a son, whom you'll name John. He will be your joy and delight and

many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of our God. He must never drink wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. And he will bring many of the children of Israel back to their God Most High. He will go before God as a forerunner, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the rebellious to the wisdom of the just—to make ready a people prepared for our God."

Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife too is advanced in age." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel, who stands before God. I was sent to speak to you and bring you this good news. But because you have not trusted my words, you'll be mute—unable to speak—until the day these things take place. They'll all come true in due season." Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondered about his delay in the sanctuary. When he finally came out he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision inside. But he could only make signs to them and remained mute. Then, when his time of priestly service was over, he went home.

---

Some time later, Elizabeth conceived. She went into seclusion for five months, saying, "Our God has done this for me. In these days, God has shown favor to us and taken away the disgrace of our having no children."

When the time came for Elizabeth to deliver, she gave birth to a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard that God had been merciful to her, they shared her joy. When all had assembled for the circumcision on the eighth day, they intended to name the baby after his father Zechariah. But his mother

spoke up, “No, he is to be called John.”

They pointed out to her, “But no one in your family has this name.” Then they made signs to the father to find out what he wanted the child to be named. The father asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” They were all astonished.

Immediately Zechariah’s mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. Their neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea, people were talking about these events. All who heard the news stored it in their hearts and said, “What will this child turn out to be?” For God’s hand was with him. Zechariah, John’s father, was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

*“Blessed are you, the Most High God of Israel—  
for you have visited and redeemed your people.  
You have raised up a mighty savior for us  
of the house of David,*

*as you promised through the mouths of your holy ones,  
the prophets of ancient times: salvation from our  
enemies*

*and from the hands of all our foes.*

*You have shown mercy to our ancestors  
by remembering the holy Covenant  
you made with them,*

*the oath you swore to Sarah and Abraham, granting  
that we,*

*delivered from the hands of our enemies,  
might serve you without fear, in holiness and justice,  
in your presence all our days.*

*And you, my child, will be called the prophet of the Most  
High,*

*for you'll go before our God  
to prepare the way for the Promised One,  
giving the people the knowledge of salvation  
through forgiveness of their sins.*

*Such is the tender mercy of our God, who from on high  
will bring the Rising Sun to visit us,  
to give light to those who live  
in darkness and the shadow of death  
and to guide our feet  
into the way of peace."*

In the meantime, the child grew up and became strong in spirit.  
He lived out in the desert until the day he appeared openly in  
Israel.

The Word of God for the people of God: **Thanks be to God**

**Sermon**

The Silent Word

Rev. Jon Snape

## ***RESPONDING***

*Our faithful response is to praise God for this story of Emmanuel, God with us, even  
and especially in the midst of difficulty. For God is indeed with us even still.*

**\*Hymn**

O Come O Come Emmanuel

UMH #211

Latin Hymn; Tune: VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

**REFRAIN: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.**



O come, thou Root of Jesse's tree,  
an ensign of thy people be.  
Before thee rulers silent fall  
All peoples on thy mercy call (Refrain)

O come, thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heavenly home  
The captives from their prison free,  
and conquer death's deep misery (Refrain)

## **We Keep Watch**

*a time of prayer as we prepare to meet Christ at the Lord's table.*

## **Offering & Offertory**

## **\*Advent Doxology**

**Praise God for gifts of hope and peace  
Praise God for gifts of joy and love  
Praise God for sending Christ to dwell  
On earth for us – Emmanuel. Amen.**

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

see screen

## **Receiving Bread and Cup**

## **Prayer After Receiving**

## **\*The Lord's Prayer**

# ***SENDING FORTH***

*Just as our theme carol asks, “what child is this?” we too have come with our questions this day. We go into the world with answers of Good News, being the body of Christ through our words and deeds.*

**\*Closing Hymn**      **Let There Be Peace on Earth**      **UMH #431**  
by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

**Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me  
Let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be  
With God our Creator, children all are we  
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony  
Let peace begin with me, let this be the moment now  
With every breath I take, let this be my solemn vow:  
To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally  
Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me**

## **\*We Ask, We Answer**

As we prepare to go into the world,  
let us ask and answer the question we came with.

**What child IS this?**

This is the one born into a time when too many were silenced.

**What child IS this?**

This is the one whose voice would remind us that peace does  
not come through violence

**What child IS this?**

This, this is the “Prince of Peace” who shows us the kin-dom, in  
which all have a voic, and no one is afraid.

## **\*Benediction**

**This, this is Christ the King  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing!  
Haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the Babe, the Son of Mary!**