

# RIVER ROAD CHURCH, BAPTIST

## THE WORSHIP OF GOD

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

*Today we worship via the internet. As you gather around your phone, computer, or tablet, we encourage you to pause for a moment to become aware of God's presence. Quiet your mind, listen to the voluntary, and prepare to worship God.*

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Voluntaries

*Praeludium in E minor ("The Great")  
God, Through Your Goodness, BWV 600  
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

Nicolaus Bruhns  
J. S. Bach  
Gerald Near

Welcome, Invocation, and Our Lord's Prayer

Rev. Marnie Fisher-Ingram

**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. Amen.**

Hymn

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

VENI EMMANUEL

1. 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.
2. O come, thou Dayspring, 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.
3. O come, Desire of nations, bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;  
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel.

Old Testament Lesson

Psalm 126

The Gray Family

When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced. Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb. May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

The Word of the Lord;  
**Thanks be to God.**

Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Gray Family

The Advent wreath is a circle of evergreen, a sign of everlasting life and a symbol of God’s never-ending love. Its four candles, encircling the Christ Candle, represent Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. We light this candle as a sign of joy.

**As a people of joy, may our lives radiate the joy that Christ gives to us. O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Antiphon for Advent

*Light Three Candles to Watch for Messiah*

TIF IN VELDELE  
Text: Wayne Wold

Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.

5  
Lift\_ your heads and lift high the gate - way, for the King\_ of glo - ry.

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New Testament Lesson

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The Gray Family

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord;  
**Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

*O Very God*

Robert Edward Smith  
Text: John Mason Neale

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| <p>1. O very God of very God,<br/>and very Light of Light,<br/>whose feet this earth’s dark valley trod<br/>that so it might be bright:<br/>Our hopes are weak, our fears are strong,<br/>thick darkness blinds our eyes;<br/>cold is the night; thy people long<br/>that thou, their Sun, wouldst rise.</p> | <p>2. And even now, though dull and gray,<br/>the east is brightening fast,<br/>and kindling to the perfect day<br/>that never shall be past.<br/>O guide us till our path is done,<br/>and we have reached the shore<br/>where thou, our everlasting Sun,<br/>art shining evermore!</p> |
| <p>3. O very God of very God,<br/>and very Light of Light,<br/>whose feet this earth’s dark valley trod<br/>that so it might be bright:<br/>We wait in faith, and turn our face<br/>to where the daylight springs,<br/>till thou shalt come our gloom to chase,<br/>with healing in thy wings.</p>           |  |

Members of the Chancel Choir

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Marnie Fisher-Ingram

Offertory Sentences and Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host:  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Solo

*But Who May Abide (from Messiah)*

George Frederick Handel

But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner's fire.  
—Malachi 3:2

Zachary Short, bass

Sermon

*In Times Like These...Joy*

Rev. Dr. Daniel Glaze

Hymn

*O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?*

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

1. O Lord, how shall I meet you,  
how welcome you aright?  
Your people long to greet you,  
my hope, my heart's delight!  
O kindle, Lord most holy,  
a lamp within my breast,  
to do in spirit lowly  
all that may please you best.
2. Love caused your incarnation;  
love brought you down to me;  
your thirst for my salvation  
procured my liberty.  
O love beyond all telling,  
that led you to embrace  
in love, all loves excelling,  
our lost and fallen race.
3. You come, O Lord, with gladness,  
in mercy and goodwill,  
to bring an end to sadness  
and bid our fears be still.  
In patient expectation  
we live for that great day  
when your renewed creation  
your glory shall display.

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Daniel Glaze

Voluntary

*Fantasia on "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?" BWV 735*

J.S. Bach

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During the season of Advent, members of our church will read the Scripture lessons and light the candles of the Advent wreath. We give thanks to Deb and Bill Gray, and Tatum, Addy, Lucy and Millie Gray, for leading us in worship today through Scripture readings and Advent candle lighting.

The Christmas wreaths are given to the glory of God and in honor of the incredible staff at River Road Church, Baptist for their tireless work during the pandemic, by Margaret and Hilton Almond.

**Hearty gratitude to those who helped decorate the church for Christmas in this most unusual year.** We did not have one glorious, hectic day with many folks in the church together doing these happy tasks. Rather, individual tasks were done by one or two or a married couple working at different times in our empty building. Nevertheless, our sanctuary is beautiful and the window candles and fresh wreaths on many doors say to all "Christ is born!" A heartfelt thank you goes to Harper and Carol Alford, Hilton and Margaret Almond, Mike Christian, Paul Honaker, Daniel Ingram, Steve and Betsy Lowery, Ed and Peggy Pruden, and Julia Tyler.

We are grateful for your continued generosity to God through our church ministry. You may give securely online at [www.rrcb.org/give-online](http://www.rrcb.org/give-online) or by mailing a check. Thank you for your faithfulness. This QR code will take you to our giving page.



**Online Worship Through Advent**—Through the end of the year, worship will be online only in an effort to contribute to the safety of our congregation. Because of our desire to love and care for our congregation, coupled with rising COVID numbers in our area, we feel this is the most prudent approach. As a church family, we will continue to worship on Sunday mornings at 11:00 a.m. at [rrcb.org/live](http://rrcb.org/live). As we approach January, the Ad Hoc Re-Entry Task Force will monitor the situation and make a recommendation based on their findings.

- Sun, Dec 13      **Children’s Virtual Christmas Story & Games**, 3:00 p.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**Youth Christmas Games**, 5:00 p.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)
- Tues, Dec 15      **WMU Connectors**, 7:00 p.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)
- Wed, Dec 16      **Men’s Group: The Huddle**, 8:00 a.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**Caroling and Christmas Music**, CANCELLED  
**In-person Choir Rehearsal**, 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary
- Thurs, Dec 17      **Chancel Choir Zoom Rehearsal**, 7:30 p.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)
- Sun, Dec 20      **Breakfast Chat with Mrs. Sandy**, 9:00 a.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**Faith Walk Sunday School Class**, 9:45 a.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**Life Sunday School Class**, 9:45 a.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**New Horizons Sunday School Class**, 10:00 a.m., Zoom Meeting (Online)  
**Worship**, 11:00 a.m., Online Broadcast

### **Advent and Christmas at River Road Church**

River Road Church, Baptist anticipates and prepares for the birth of the Christ child and the season of Christmas by observing the church season of Advent. For four weeks leading up to Christmas, we reflect on Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love as we light a candle to represent each theme during worship, and on Christmas Eve, just before Christmas Day begins, we light the Christ candle and remember the holy moment God came into humanity as a baby in a manger. While worshipping and gathering look different this year, join us as we prepare for Christmas and honor the holiness of this season together! Our listing of services and events, including any sign ups or reservations, is available at [rrcb.org/advent](http://rrcb.org/advent). Please note, this page will continue to be updated as more plans are finalized.

### **CANCELLED—Caroling and Christmas Music on the Plaza**

In light of the rising COVID-19 cases in the Richmond metropolitan area, we have decided out of an abundance of caution to cancel Wednesday’s Caroling and Christmas Music on the Plaza. While we had a number of safety precautions in place, we felt it was in the best interest of our congregation’s health to cancel this event. We will miss seeing everyone and hearing your voices this season.

### **Christmas Eve Thursday, December 24**

Christmas Eve... what a special night in the life of our church. We are used to dressing up in special Christmas clothes, bringing canned goods to worship, seeing the nativity story acted out as it is read, and lighting our candles as we sing *Silent Night*. This year, we hope to keep some of these pieces in place because it is still such a spectacular night in our lives. Nothing is more important than Hope and Love and Peace being born into our world.

There will be two special pieces to our Christmas Eve worship and celebration. Make plans now to be a part of both.

## **Virtual Christmas Eve Service**

At 9:00 a.m. on December 24, our traditional Christmas Eve service will become available at [rrcb.org/live](http://rrcb.org/live) so that your family can participate in it when it suits you best.

## **Christmas Eve Drive-Thru Nativity & Food Collection**

*4:30-5:30PM in the North Parking Lot*

At 4:30 p.m. there will be a drive-thru nativity at church. When you arrive, you will have the opportunity to contribute canned goods for those in need, after which you can proceed through scenes from the Christmas story.

If your children want to dress for Christmas for the drive thru experience, they can do that. If they want to dress like a shepherd or an angel, that is wonderful, too. Most of all, we want to share in a meaningful experience, celebrating God's arrival in the world.

Sign-ups are not mandatory, but are helpful when planning: [rrcb.org/nativity](http://rrcb.org/nativity).

## ***The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* Audio Story**

How about something fun and sweet that will add to your Christmas season?

A group of RRCB readers will be preparing a special presentation for you, reading the great and funny story by Barbara Robinson, *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. If you have read or heard this story, you know how great it is. If you have not, this is your chance.

Maybe you would like to listen to it while you travel in your car for the holidays. Or, maybe your family would like to get in your PJ's, make some cookies to eat, and then snuggle in to listen on a night or two. However you choose to listen to the audio recording, we hope you will enjoy the creative efforts of our good folks. It'll be a pageant like no other.

The audio story will be available the week of Christmas at [rrcb.org/pageant](http://rrcb.org/pageant). You are encouraged to share the link with your family and friends.

## **2021 Altar Flower Calendar**

Anyone interested in reserving a Sunday on the 2021 Altar Flower Calendar, please call Betsy Lowery (804-338-4604) or visit [rrcb.org/flowers](http://rrcb.org/flowers). The cost is \$90.