

ANNOUNCEMENTS
WEEK OF DECEMBER 19, 2021

IN OUR PRAYERS: Jim Cleveland; Carolyn Wilkins; Jack & Lureen Vaught; Tony Sikora; Cindy; Mason Salomon; Michelle Zeller; Peter Lange

ALTAR FLOWERS are given today by Brian & Sue Salomon in thanksgiving to God as they celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary. Happy Anniversary!

STOCKING STUFFING for the Socks for Vets project is TODAY between services, with donuts and fellowship to follow. Join us!

CONFIRMATION REVIEW SESSION is TODAY at 11:30. Parents, please join us as we review and plan for the rest of the year. (Short session!)

ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES: the last Advent midweek is this Wednesday, Dec. 22. Join us for a potluck supper at 6pm and the service at 7pm!

CALENDAR

Sun. Dec. 19 (Advent 4 – Rorate Coeli)	8:00 & 10:00am Holy Communion 9:00am Stocking Stuffing & Fellowship 11:30am Confirmation (Parents please attend)
Wed. Dec. 22	6:00pm Potluck Supper 7:00pm Holy Communion
Thu. Dec. 23	<i>No Bible Study</i>
Fri. Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve)	4:00pm Lessons & Carols (Candlelight) 7:00pm Lessons & Carols (Candlelight) 9:00pm Holy Communion
Sat. Dec. 25	9:00am Holy Communion
Sun. Dec. 26 (St. Stephen)	8:00 & 10:00am Holy Communion <i>No Bible Study / Sunday School</i> <i>No Confirmation</i>
Wed. Dec. 29	<i>No service</i>
Thu. Dec. 30	<i>No Bible Study</i>
Fri. Dec. 31	7:00pm Holy Communion (New Year's Eve)
Sat. Jan. 1	9:00am Holy Communion
Sun. Jan. 2 (Christmas 2)	8:00 & 10:00am Holy Communion 9:00am Sunday School / Bible Study <i>No Confirmation</i>

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Just before the sermon, we will sing the Hymn of the Day which is “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (*LSB* 357). If you look at the bottom of the page, underneath the sixth and seventh stanzas, you find a list of the Great “O” Antiphons. An *antiphon* is a refrain of a Bible verse or historic liturgical text that is sung before, after, or during a Psalm or other song. Throughout this season of Advent, you may have noticed that each Sunday is named according to its assigned antiphon. For example, this Sunday is known as *Rorate Coeli* (“rain down, you heavens”) Sunday because of the antiphon which comes from Isaiah 45:8.

The origin of the “O” Antiphons comes from around the eighth century, when it became a regular practice to sing the assigned O Antiphon before and after the *Magnificat* at the evening Vespers service each day during the seven days before Christmas Eve (December 17-23). In the twelfth or thirteenth century, these antiphons were paraphrased into metrical, poetic verses which became the hymn, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” As you compare each O Antiphon with its respective stanza, you may notice that the final antiphon (O Emmanuel) became the first stanza of the hymn instead of the seventh.

Each of the seven antiphons addresses the Messiah by one of his titles and implore him to “come” by using images drawn from Isaiah and other Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament. The Antiphons are as follows: O **E**mmanuel, O **R**ex, O **O**riens, O **C**lavis, O **R**adix, O **A**donai, O **S**apientia (i.e., O God With Us, O King, O Dawn, O Key, O Root, O Lord, O Wisdom). These antiphons form an “acrostic,” which means that the first, last, or other letters in a line spell out a particular word or phrase. The first letters form the Latin words **ERO CRAS**, which means: “*Tomorrow, I will be [present].*”

In our waiting for the Messiah’s Second Advent, it is good for us to be reminded of the themes that each antiphon emphasizes and how Christ is the embodiment of those ancient promises. The basic progression of themes can be understood this way: The framer of the Universe (**Wisdom**) who gave the Law (**Adonai**) promised through David’s throne (**Radix Jesse**) to set free the captives of sin (**Clavis David**) and bring the Light of salvation to dawn (**Oriens**) not only on His chosen people but all nations (**Rex Gentium**) and dwell with us as one of us eternally (**Emmanuel**).