Today’s scripture lessons focus on the anticipation and surprise of the Advent season. The reading from Micah reveals that the small town of Bethlehem will be the birthplace of a faithful and righteous ruler. Luke tells the story of Mary and Elizabeth, each of whom comes to know the surprising ways of God. Elizabeth, long barren, conceives John the Baptist, as foretold by the angel Gabriel. Mary visits Elizabeth after her own encounter with Gabriel and the news of her own unexpected pregnancy, and the women rejoice and marvel at the mysterious work of God.
Gathering
Carillon
Opening Voluntary

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645  
Johann Sebastian Bach  
(1685-1750)

Greeting and Call to Worship

*Processional Hymn 213

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates  
TRURO

*Prayers of Confession and Words of Assurance | The minister offers words of confession to which the congregation responds as follows:

Minister:  Come thou long expected Jesus
People:    Set thy people free.
Minister:  We turn to you, O God of infinite mercy;
People:    We renounce our evil; We claim your love;  
Make us whole.
Minister:  Come thou long expected Jesus
People:    Set thy people free.

The minister speaks words of assurance.

*Peace | All exchange signs and words of God's peace.

Proclamation

Prayer for Illumination | In unison:

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait to hear your word; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson | OT page 815 in the pew Bibles

Micah 5:2-5a

Lector:     This is the word of the Lord.
People:    Thanks be to God.

* All who are able may stand
Anthem

Laudate Dominum

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes;
laudate eum, omnes populi.
Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus,
et veritas Domini manet in aeternum.

O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.
For his merciful kindness is great toward us:
and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever.

Text: Psalm 116

New Testament Lesson | NT page 210 in the pew Bibles

Hebrews 10:5-10

Lector: This is the word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

*Gradual Hymn | Face the Gospel Procession

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Em-man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive Is - ra - el,
O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, who or-derest all things might - i-ly;

that mourns in lone ly ex - ile here un - til the Son of God ap pear.
to us the path of know - ledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Gospel Lesson | NT pages 53-54 in the pew Bibles


Lector: This is the word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

*Organ Improvisation | Face the Gospel Procession

Sermon

The Sound of His Mother's Voice
Response

*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, dead, and buried: he descended into hell; the third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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.

Call to Prayer

Minister: The Lord be with you.
People: And also with you.
Minister: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People | The congregation responds to each petition:
People: Hear our prayer.

Offertory Anthem

O Little Town of Bethlehem

H. Walford Davies (1869-1941)

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be a sign to you;
Ye shall find the Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger.

O little town of Bethlehem how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray,
Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today,
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.


*Doxology

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Christ, with thee to God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn and chant and high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be;
honour, glory and dominion, and eternal victory, evermore and evermore!

Sending Forth

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Lord's Prayer | All are encouraged to pray the Lord's Prayer in the language of their choosing. The English version is number 895 in the hymnal.

*Benediction

*Closing Processional Hymn 202

People, Look East

Closing Voluntary

Ave Maris Stella, Op. 18

Marcel Dupré (1886-1971)

Carillon

Memorial Chapel Communion | Immediately following today's worship service, a brief communion service will be held in Memorial Chapel. Following communion, the pastor will be available to anoint and pray.
TODAY’S FLOWERS | The Advent Wreath is made possible by the Elizabeth Lucina Gotham Memorial Endowment, established by Dr. and Mrs. James H. Semans in loving memory of Elizabeth Gotham. The interior decorations and the wreaths on either side of the front entrance of the Chapel are given to the glory of God in celebration of the Christmas season by Dr. and Mrs. James G. Ferguson, Jr.

TODAY’S OFFERING | All of today’s cash offerings and checks written to Duke University Chapel will be given to the Chapel’s Development Fund for Mission and Ministry.

TODAY’S GUEST PREACHER | We welcome Rev. Sally Bates to the Chapel this weekend, and it is made possible by the Robert T. Young preaching endowment. Rev. Bates is a retired elder in the United Methodist Church. She holds a master of divinity degree from Duke Divinity School, and served parish appointments in Hemel Hempstead, England, and Raleigh, North Carolina, before accepting a position as chaplain to Duke Divinity School. She retired from Duke in 2015 after thirteen years of service.

INVOKING THE NAME OF JESUS: ANTIPHONS OF ADVENT | There are seven great Advent prayers (antiphons) that have been prayed during the last week before Christmas Eve since the seventh century. Each Antiphon begins with “O” and addresses Jesus with a unique name, which comes from the prophecies of Isaiah in the Old Testament. Today the Antiphons
ENGAGE

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES | On Monday, December 24, the Chapel offers four worship services to celebrate the birth of Jesus as follows:
2:00 pm Children's Christmas Eve Service, a 40-minute family-friendly service.
4:00 pm Christmas Eve Service, with Dean Powery preaching and the Durham Children's Choir singing.
6:00 pm Christmas Eve Communion Service, with Dean Powery preaching.
11:00 pm Service of Lessons and Carols.
All of the services are well-attended, so please plan accordingly. Typically, the 6:00 pm service has greater availability in seating and parking.

HOLIDAY HOURS | The Chapel will keep these hours over winter break: December 30 open 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.; December 31 and January 1 open 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.; January 2–4 open 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.; January 5 resume regularly daily schedule of being open 8:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m.

HABITAT SERVICE DAY | Volunteers are needed on Saturday, January 5 from 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. to assist in building a home at 117 Hillside Ave. in Durham with Habitat for Humanity. This house is sponsored by Duke Chapel, the Congregation at Duke Chapel, Duke students, and other Duke departments. To sign-up, please contact Carol Gregg at carol.gregg@duke.edu or 919-684-3917.

EPIPHANY SNACKLUCK | All are invited to stay after worship on Sunday, January 6 for a time of fellowship in the Chapel lounge. An Epiphany cake will be served. Participants are asked to bring snacks to share such as vegetables, fruit, or other snacks.

EPIPHANY LESSONS AND CAROLS | The Duke Evensong Singers lead the music in a service of Epiphany Lessons and Carols on Sunday, January 6, at 4:00 p.m. Choral Evensong is a centuries-old tradition that continues to be prayed every day all over the world. Drawn from the 17th century, worshipers are invited to enter into a sacred space of reflection through music, scripture, and prayers that have shaped Christian lives for hundreds of years.
SHELTER DINNER VOLUNTEERS NEEDED | Helpers are needed for lasagna dinners at the Urban Ministries Shelter on Sunday, January 13 (5:15 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and Wednesday, February 27 (6:15 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.) Please contact Cricket Scovil (scovilj@aol.com) to volunteer to cook two party size lasagnas (12-servings) and help serve, or just provide two cooked lasagnas. Each dinner required 22 lasagnas and about ten volunteers. The shelter is located at 410 Liberty Street, Durham.

HELP FOR THOSE WHO MOURN | The holidays can be a difficult time for those who grieve. Growing thru Grief is a free, open, confidential program sponsored by a coalition of area religious and civic organizations to provide support and comfort to those who mourn. Meetings are held year-round on Tuesdays at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, 1200 W. Cornwallis in Durham. Participants gather at 4:00 p.m. for coffee and cookies; the meeting runs from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. New participants are welcome at any time. For more information, email growingthurgrief@gmail.com.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CLASSES | Classes for all ages will resume on Sunday, January 6 at 9:45 a.m. in the lowest level of the Westbrook building, Duke Divinity School. New participants are welcome at any time.

For a complete listing of events, please visit chapel.duke.edu/events or sign up to receive weekly emails at chapel.duke.edu/email