

## Joyful seasons at Emmanuel

*“The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.”*

Through the years we have experienced some magical Christmas Eve services at Emmanuel. The pews were often full, the church decked out in festive finery, the shining faces of worshippers lighted up the sanctuary like so many candles.

*“O Come All Ye Faithful, Joyful and Triumphant”*

Remember the Christmas plays, the carols before and during service, the spirit of peace and good will filling the building.

*“It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old.”*

We sang the kneeling hymn “Silent Night,” holding our candles in the dark and holy space, thinking of Bethlehem and the babe born in humble circumstances to homeless parents.

*“Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o’er the plain.”*

Suddenly the lights shine bright again, the organ sounds a chorus, the candles are blown out and all rise to sing the good news that angels brought to shepherds in a starry sky years ago. Happy voices sing out the carol with gusto as the choir and servers file past.

*“Good Christian friends, rejoice in heart and soul and voice.”*

As worshippers filed out into the snow, “Merry Christmas” was on every lip, in every handshake and in every heart.

*“Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near.”*

Every Christmas Eve service makes good memories and this year will be no exception. For now, we experience the holy season of Advent, preparing our hearts to receive the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Emmanuel welcomes you to come worship with us during this holy and festive time of year. Father Jerry Wichelns will be leading services each Sunday in Advent as well as Christmas Eve. The schedule is as follows:

Dec. 9 Advent 2

Dec. 16 Advent 3

Dec. 23 Advent 4

Dec. 24 (Monday) Christmas Eve 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 30 Lessons and Carols

*“I’ll be home for Christmas, you can count on me.”*

Join us for joyful and meaningful worship during Advent and Christmas. If you have been away, come home to your church, enjoy the fellowship, and like the Wise Men of old, follow the star that leads to the Savior. God bless you!