

**New Castle United Methodist Church
510 Delaware Street
New Castle, DE 19720**

**The Message for November 29, 2020
“The Prophecy”
Pastor Ray Eck**

Millions of Christians around the world celebrate the birth of Jesus during this time of year—some on December 24 or 25 and others around January 6. Whenever each denomination chooses to celebrate his birth, we can all rejoice in the fact that, by putting on humanity, the Son of God became one of us to deal with our sin. He died in our place before conquering death by his own bodily resurrection on that first blessed Easter morning.

Both Luke and Matthew reflect back to the prophases found in the Old Testament era. The events associated with the birth of Jesus fulfilled numerous Old Testament prophecies given centuries before the events actually occurred. Matthew 1:22 introduces a common statement in his gospel; he wrote, “All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet.” Since he used this phrasing in at least a dozen passages, Matthew knew it was important to point out to his readers, including each of us, that many of the events he described fulfilled specific prophecies. The first use of the fulfillment phrase mentioned above introduces one of the best-known prophecies in the Bible, and found in Matthew 1:23:

**“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son,
and they shall call His name Immanuel,”
which is translated, “God with us.”**

In reference to the birth of Jesus, Matthew cited a specific prophecy from Isaiah made more than 700 years earlier. Isaiah 7:14 tells us this...

**“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign:
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
and shall call him Immanuel.”**

Just as foretold, the virgin (Mary) did conceive and had a Son who is called Immanuel. This amazing event demonstrates God’s infinite knowledge and power. He is capable for foretelling the future with perfect precision, and He has the power to bring His prophecies to pass, even if that means a virgin would need to conceive and bear a son.

Matthew 2:3 goes on to tell us this... After Christ's birth, the magi arrived in Jerusalem looking for the child. Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes and asked them where the Messiah was to be born? They responded by citing an Old Testament prophecy from the prophet Micah, pinpointing Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Christ:

**"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
Are not the least among the rulers of Judah;
For out of you shall come a Ruler
Who will shepherd My people Israel."
(Matthew 2:6)**

Herod's murderous response of slaughtering the young boys of Bethlehem led to the fulfillment of three more prophecies. First, this tragic massacre fulfilled the words of yet another great prophet, Jeremiah.

**"A voice was heard in Ramah, (a town close to Bethlehem)
Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
Refusing to be comforted, because they are, no more."**

After being warned by the wisemen about Herod's plan to kill Jesus, the second fulfilled prophecy resulting from Herod's extreme rage took place after Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Upon their return, God's words to Hosea in Hosea 11:1 were fulfilled.

"Out of Egypt I called My Son."

This prophecy was originally made as a statement of history — God had called, and brought Israel out of Egypt. Guided by the Holy Spirit, Matthew used these words to refer to the Messiah.

The final prophecy discussed by Matthew pertaining to events in the early years of Jesus has to do with his boyhood home. God warned Joseph in a dream not to go back to Judea, so instead, he took Mary and Jesus to Nazareth in Galilee,

**"that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets,
He shall be called a Nazarene."**

This statement has confused Christians because the Old Testament does not seem to make this specific prediction. You see, Nazareth was looked upon with scorn. Even Nathanael, one of Jesus' disciples said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Several prophets revealed that the Messiah would be despised and rejected. Perhaps Matthew may have recorded an oral tradition, handed down from the prophets, that was not written in the Old Testament.

When thinking about the circumstances surrounding the birth of Christ, Christians can rejoice that the Messiah has come to earth to deal with our sin. We can praise God for fulfilling His promises; and we can have complete confidence that he will always be faithful to do what he has declared.

Despite what many believe today, the religions and religious leaders of the world are not the same. Many people in our culture promote the ridiculous claim that Jesus was just another religious leader — a good person who tried to make life better for others, but Jesus is unique in so many respects. He alone was indeed, “a good person” since He lived a sinless life. Every other religious leader has been sinful and needed a Savior. But Jesus did not need a savior; He is the Savior.

There are no prophecies foretelling details about the birth of other religious leaders. No prophecies alerted the world to the coming of Muhammad (Islam), Joseph Smith (Mormonism), Charles Russell (founder of the Jehovah’s Witnesses), Siddhartha Gautama, (founder of Buddhism), or any other founders of the world’s religions. Yet the Old Testament pinpointed numerous details about the life of the Son of God and Savior of the world, this God man named Jesus.

So, what do these prophecies tell us about Jesus? In just the first two chapters of Matthew, we see that God foretold the virginal conception of the Messiah, who would be born in Bethlehem, yet in some way would come out of Egypt and be called a Nazarene. We also see that bitter agony would grip the mothers in that area as their young sons were slaughtered in an attempt to kill the child. Jesus. In the genealogy recorded in Matthew’s first chapter, we discover the fulfillment of several other Old Testament prophecies. Jesus was from the line of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Jesse, and David. But that’s not all. A search through the rest of Scripture would reveal dozens of other details prophesied about the Messiah, including the following facts:

- He would enter Jerusalem on a donkey’s colt.
 - *Matthew 21:4-10 and Zechariah 9:9*
- He would be betrayed by a friend.
 - *John 13:18 and Psalm 41:9*
- The betrayal would be for 30 pieces of silver.
 - *Matthew 26:14-16 and Zechariah 11:12*
- The money would be used to purchase the potter’s field in Jerusalem.
 - *Matthew 27:3-10 and Zechariah 11:13*

- The Messiah would die a sacrificial death for us.
 - *Matthew 27:50, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Daniel 9:26 and Isaiah 53:8*
- He would die with criminals, but His burial would be with the wealthy.
 - *Matthew 27:57-60*
- He would rise from the dead
 - *Matthew 28:6, Psalm 16:8-11, and Isaiah 53:10*
- He would say certain words on the Cross. He would be mocked, and people would gamble for His clothes
 - *Psalm 22:1, 7-8, 18*

Many other prophecies could be listed that were perfectly fulfilled in the life of Jesus Christ. These were not lucky guesses made by fraudulent prognosticators; they were precise predictions, made by the all-knowing God of the Bible who repeatedly demonstrated that He has perfect knowledge of all past, present, and future events. So, we can be completely confident that He will always make good on His promises and that those future events He has foretold, will certainly come to pass.

So, we can be certain of this....

About two thousand years ago, Jesus came to earth in a humble manner. The Savior of the world and God of all creation put on human form and became a man to die for our sins and conquer death, giving the hope of salvation to all who turn from their sin and believe on Him. One day, HE WILL return in judgment, as the risen, glorified, sovereign Lord and Judge.

What will it be like for you when He returns? Will you be safe and secure because you have been saved by His amazing grace? Or will you tremble in fear before the holy and righteous God as you are condemned for rejecting His gracious offer of salvation? If you are currently an unbeliever, or you're just not sure what you believe, I urge you to turn from your sin and cry out to Jesus to save you from the eternal torment we all deserve for our rebellion against the infinitely Holy Creator.

I pray that in spite of this pandemic we are all going through, that you find the same joy, shared by the shepherds who visited Jesus on the night he was born.

The Prophecy was fulfilled on that Holy Night. Let our journey to Bethlehem continue, as we remember the birth of our Savior.

O Come, Let Us Adore Him...

So be it, Amen.



Music for November 29

-- Bill Mathews, Director of Music Ministries

On this First Sunday in Advent, we offer two musical selections with words from the prophets. Pastor Ray refers to one in today's message – from the prophet Isaiah and echoed in Matthew 1, verses 22-23:

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us.")

Our first song, *Immanuel*, was written by Michael Card, a Christian songwriter and author from Tennessee. He based his first verse on the scripture, writing:

"A sign shall be given: a virgin will conceive a human baby bearing undiminished Deity."

And linking us with today's Candle of Hope, the song continues:

"The glory of the nations, a light for all to see;
and hope for all who will embrace His warm reality."

The refrain returns to our scripture from Matthew: "Immanuel, Our God is with us," and then a paraphrase from Romans 8, verse 31: "If God is with us, who could stand against us?"

Following the refrain, a reference to Isaiah 60, verse 1-2:

from Isaiah, KJV:

Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the
glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
For, behold, the darkness shall cover the
earth, and gross darkness the people: but
the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his
glory shall be seen upon thee.

from the song:

"For all those who live in the shadow of death,
a glorious light has dawned;
For all those who stumble in the darkness,
Behold! Your light has come!"

And in verse 2, he asks a question of us all:

"So, what shall be your answer,
oh, will you hear the call of Him who did not spare His Son, but gave Him for us all."

Immanuel,

as sung by school choirs from Cheshire and the Wirral Peninsula at Chester Cathedral, England

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=JSuLNMMxqTs>

music continues on the next page

Our second selection dates back to 1599 with an original 23 verses! In telling the story of the birth of Christ, *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* refers to the prophecy from Isaiah:

"Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind..."

from the hymn:

"Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung."

from Isaiah 11, verse 1 (KJV):

And there shall come forth a rod out of the
stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out
of his roots...

And furthermore, from the 35th chapter of Isaiah (KJV):

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them;
and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

The beautiful chorale composed by Michael Praetorius dates from a collection published in 1609 with the original German lyrics. It is a simple and lyric melody, with the 1st, 2nd, and 4th phrases being identical, and harmonies that weave in and around each other in a most gentle manner.

***Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*, UMC Hymnal no. 216
sung by the Atlanta Master Chorale**

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ZB1eagIUxx4>

I've also included a hauntingly beautiful setting of the hymn by a duo, Robinson & Rohe. In this version, the 2 voices are supported by guitar and accordion.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=IVP6fCU3uAo>

Verse 1

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

Verse 2

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.



“ZOOM” Worship every Sunday @ 11am

**Order of Worship
and sign-in information
are on pages 10-12.**

Click on this link (or copy it into your browser):

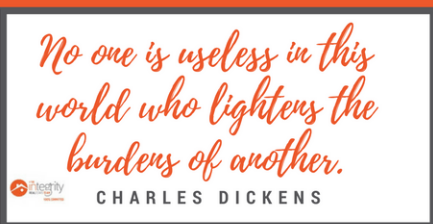
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76997795253?pwd=VFR2eThNbOVlanVtVTdRalfPWxEvUT09>



✓ **Food Closet Needs**

- ✓ Instant Oatmeal packets
- ✓ Rice a Roni or 1 lb. bags of rice
- ✓ Canned fruit
- ✓ Peanut Butter and Jelly
- ✓ Pasta and Spaghetti Sauce

And remember, store brands are always acceptable.



Winter Items Needed

During the cold winter months, warm clothing for men, women, and children, including socks, hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, earmuffs, warm sleep pants, sweat pants, fleece jackets, sweatshirts, and blankets may be donated and dropped off during church hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday from 10am to noon.

These items will not only be donated to anyone stopping by our church, but also please reach out with a warm heart should you know of anyone in need of these items that could make such a positive difference in someone's life.

Thank you ~
The Outreach Committee



NCUMC supports Angel Tree, a program of prison fellowship, by reaching out to the children of inmates and their families with the love of Christ. Each year, at Christmas, we sponsor an Angel Tree, providing gifts for the children of inmates at the Women's Correctional Facility of New Castle, so they receive a gift "from" the parent. We usually have the Angel Tree in Fellowship Hall, but this year... **OUR ANGEL TREE HAS GONE VIRTUAL!**

For the gifts, we're going with a toy and SOCKS! Simply choose the angel you wish to buy for, and then either call Patsy Schiller @ 302-367-8710 or email her @ patsy.schiller@gmail.com to let her know which angel or angels you've chosen. Gifts can be dropped off at the church office from 10am – 12 noon, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. Patsy is also happy to go to anyone's house to pick up the gifts. Any questions, give her a call or send her an email.

Last day to drop a gift off at the church is Wednesday, December 16.



Tristan Beeson, Pam Whary's nephew, and the Fire Company he's associated with, affected by COVID

Paul Coffin, Michelle Jordan's godfather

Hoover & Anita Counterman

James Costenbader, Hoover & Anita's son-in-law

Joanne Davis

The family of Wilbert "Bill" Esler, Sharon Kimmel's father; Bill passed away on November 20.

Richard Hastings

Jerry and Sally Knotts

Tammy McAleese

Carol & Ron Pochvatilla

Joan Skilton's daughter, Sue, and her family

David Warner

Margaret Weyl

Greyson, a 3-year-old boy diagnosed with neuroblastoma.

Those diagnosed with the coronavirus and the families of those who have lost loved ones

The staff and the patients of our nursing homes

The homeless

Those who struggle with addiction

If you have someone that you'd like included on our Prayer List,

please let us know

by contacting either

Doris Poultney,

Prayer Chain Coordinator,

@ 302-378-1184,

or Pastor Ray

@ 302-740-3932 or

snowman3girls@gmail.com



Dave & Barbara Gordon have welcomed a new granddaughter into their lives. Ella Grace, daughter of Dustin and Natasha, was born on October 27th, weighing in at 9 lbs. 2 oz. and 21 inches. Barbara says, "A big little bundle of joy! We are so blessed: 7 grandchildren = 5 girls and 2 boys!" They were even able to see her in person, since they took care of her older brother and sister during her birth, and were there when she arrived home.

New Castle United Methodist Church

“Zoom” Worship Service

November 29, 2020, at 11am

The First Sunday in Advent

If you have a computer, smartphone, or tablet...

Click on this link (or copy it into your browser):

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/76997795253?pwd=VFR2eThNb0VlanVtVTdRalfPWxEvUT09>

For those using a regular phone... the number for our Zoom Communion is (301) 715-8592.

Remember... the phone number is long-distance and you should be sure your phone plan covers it.

Meeting ID: 769 9779 5253

Passcode: 12345. On a computer, then hit “Enter.” On a phone, then hit “#”.

Order of Worship

The Greeting

Pastor Ray Eck

Introit: *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

Bill Mathews

Verse 1

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming,
as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

Verse 2

Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind;
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.
...UMC Hymnal, no. 216

Call to Worship

Pastor Ray and Denise Lingenfelter, Liturgist

Pastor: This is the promise of God.

Liturgist: For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son, so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

Pastor: For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.

Liturgist: Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe in Him stands condemned already, because they do not believe in the name of God's one and only Son.

...Call to Worship continues on the next page

Pastor: This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

Liturgist: Everyone who does evil hates the light and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly, that what he has done, has been done by God.

Lighting of the First Advent Candle: "Hope"

Denise and Frank Lingenfelter

Opening Prayer

Denise Lingenfelter

Merciful God, you spoke through your messengers, the prophets, to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may celebrate and remember the nativity, and may await with joy the coming in glory of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, Amen.

Please "unmute" your device as we enter our time of prayer.

Our Joys and Concerns

Pastor Ray

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Please place your device back on "mute after the Lord's Prayer."

Scripture Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Denise Lingenfelter

The Message: "The Prophecy"

Pastor Ray

Benediction

Pastor Ray

Be people of hope.

Let hope live in your heart and share the hope of Christ with all you meet.

Share hope by noticing someone else's humanity.

Share hope by listening to someone's story.

Share hope by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share hope.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share hope with those you meet.

Amen.

...our service continues on the next page

Closing Hymn: *Immanuel*

Bill Mathews

Verse 1

A sign shall be given, a virgin will conceive
 a human baby bearing undiminished Deity;
 The glory of the nations, a light for all to see
 and hope for all who will embrace His
 warm reality.

Immanuel, our God is with us,
 and if God is with us,
 Who could stand against us?
 Our God is with us – Immanuel.

For all those who live in the shadow of
 death, a glorious light has dawned;
 For all those who stumble in the darkness,
 Behold! Your light has come!

Verse 2

So, what shall be your answer,
 oh, will you hear the call of Him who did not
 spare His Son, but gave Him for us all?
 On earth there is no power, there is no
 depth or height could ever separate us
 from the love of God in Christ.

Immanuel, our God is with us,
 and if God is with us,
 Who could stand against us?
 Our God is with us – Immanuel.

...words and music by
 Michael Card and Tom Fettke
 CCLI Song # 71014 / CCLI License # 11400870