

Dear Friends,

This past week, I visited a church pastored by a wonderful friend and outstanding leader. His passion to reach his community for Christ is invigorating. As we walked through the church campus, he shared about the outreach events they are doing throughout December. Over 40,000 people will walk through the church doors in the coming weeks, and they will hear a message of hope. Erwin McManus says, "Hope lifts us out of the rubble of our failures, our pain, and our fear to rise above what at one point seemed insurmountable. Our ability to endure, to persevere, to overcome is fueled by this one seemingly innocuous ingredient called hope." People need hope, and the hope of the world is Jesus. This season provides believers with an unequalled opportunity to share that hope.

This past Sunday was the beginning of the Advent season. The Advent season is commonly understood as the four Sundays leading up to the celebration of Christ's birth on Christmas Day. This is mostly right. However, the Advent season extends far beyond the celebration of Jesus coming to earth as a baby. Christians in the 6<sup>th</sup> century celebrated not just his birth, but also made space to look forward to his second coming as our Lord and King. Anticipation of Jesus' second coming gives us the hope, strength, and reason we need to live out the Christian life. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" perfectly conveys the sincere desire and longing for Jesus to come that fills our hearts during the Advent season:

"O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appears.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel."

Yes, our Emmanuel did come, and, he will come again to establish a kingdom of righteousness for his people. What an eternal hope we have to look forward to!  
*Jesus, Thank you for bringing hope to the world, and for giving us a hope that is eternal. This Christmas season, we celebrate your birth, but we also look forward to you return with anticipation and joy. Amen.*

### **COMING UP THIS WEEK**

**Mon, Dec 3** | Chapel: Cheryl Foos | Butterfield Chapel Balcony, 10 & 11:20am

**Mon, Dec 3** | Christmas Pursuit | Butterfield Chapel, 8:30pm

**Wed, Dec 5** | Chapel: Student Speakers | Butterfield Chapel, 10 & 11:20am

**Fri, Dec 7** | Graduation Chapel\* | Butterfield Chapel, 10:40am **\*One-chapel schedule!**

**Fri, Dec 7** | Choralons Concert | Eastside Foursquare, 7:30pm

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