

The Hymn of the Day for the fourth Sunday in Advent is “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (LSB # 357)

“Are we there yet?” That is a question that has been asked thousands of times by the passengers as they were on a trip.

Some families do the countdown to Christmas by marking the days off of calendars. Others make an Advent chain removing a link each day. Today we have arrived at the end of this year’s Advent trip. Tonight is Christmas Eve and we begin our Christmas celebration. Like the destination of any trip, our journey to Christmas is almost here.

The word Emmanuel/Immanuel (God with us) takes us back to the OT. The setting is Isaiah 7. Some kings from the north had banded together to go to war with Judah. Ahaz was the king of Judah at that time. God sent Isaiah to tell Ahaz that God would help him and Judah in any war. All he had to do was to ask. But Ahaz was not interested and willing to depend on anything else rather than God. It is at this point that we have the well-known quote from Isaiah which is also stated in Matthew 1:23: “*Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* God was willing to strengthen the faith of Ahaz through a sign.

God is also with us and stands ready to strengthen our faith life. He doesn’t want us go it alone but wants to be beside us thought out our lives. He takes out the depths of our many miseries and gives us his peace. Our Emmanuel has come and will come again in majesty and glory. The fact that we celebrate his first coming at Christmas time gives us great comfort that he will keep us in the one true faith until he comes again.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for coming to earth to take our place under the Law and redeeming us from all sins. Bring joy into the hearts of your children. Amen