

Keep awake

Long ago, during my first experience on our denominational board, a young and agile member detected a bit of drowsiness and lethargy within the ranks. She proceeded to interrupt the meeting with a rousing and ageless camp chorus: "I'm alive, alert, awake, enthusiastic," complete with ever-changing stand-up commands. Some of us have never missed a chance to impose the tune upon successive campers and congregations. As prelude to the six verses of "O come Immanuel," it might not be a bad way to launch Advent in 2025.

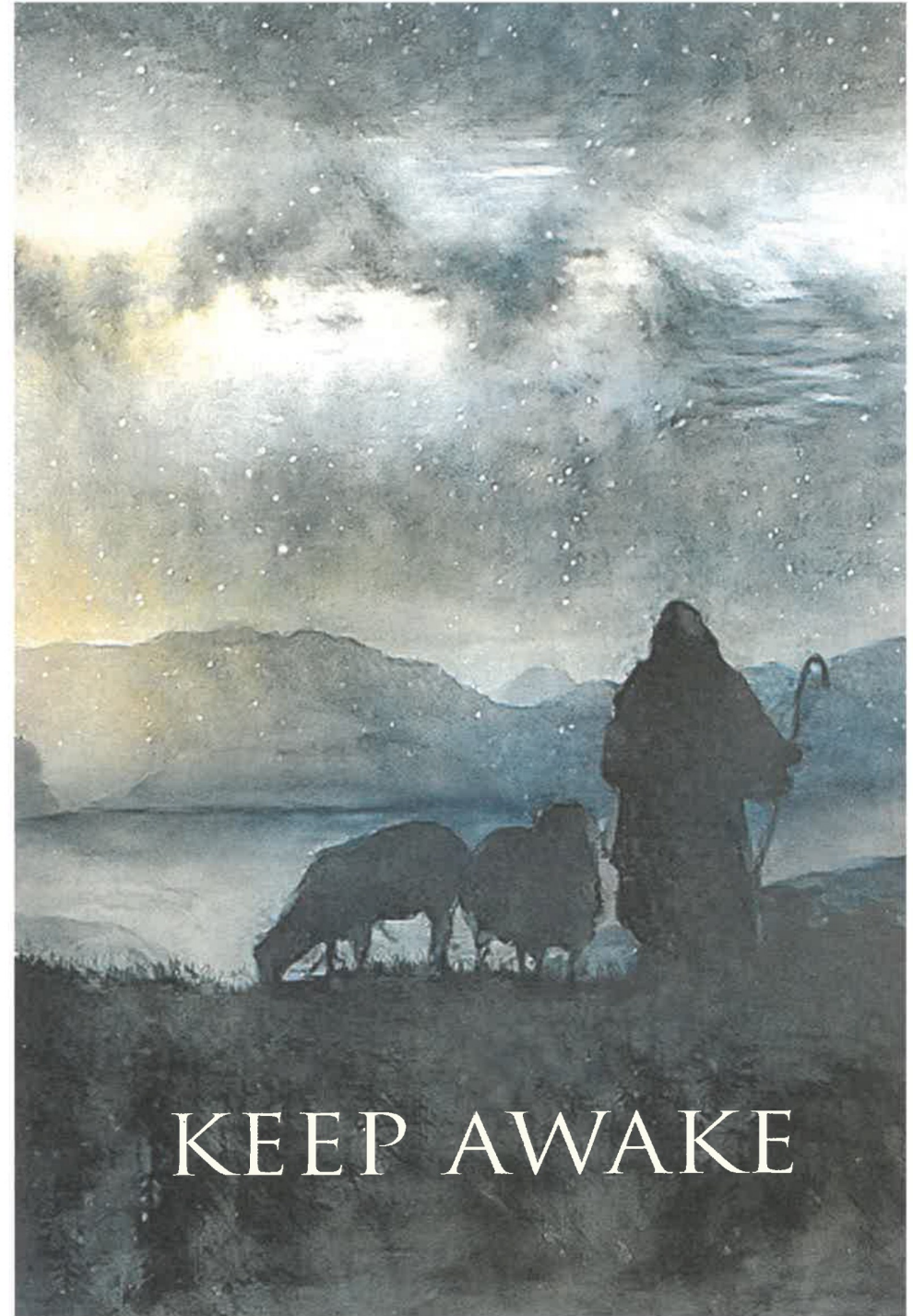
Contemplating the portrayal of "Keep awake" on our first Advent worship folder, one can almost sink into the misty-eyed aura of Christmases long ago. The wake-up call comes as we pair it with Matthew chapter 24. The account of Jesus' own foretelling reminds us the course of human events have marched along predictably since the burst of light that jolted shepherds from rest to new realizations. Along with "good tidings of great joy," persecution, desolation, and unfruitful fig trees yet abound, potentially making for many a fitful and sleepless night. But, thanks be to God, this is the same Jesus of Nativity and Nazareth who narrowly escaped death in infancy—the one who repeatedly taught trust over fear and who regularly snuck off to rest prayerfully in the presence of the one he called Father.

That's likely the point. Keeping awake is not a call to panic attack or parroted confession, but to aliveness rather than prolonged napping in the lap of disconnected lethargy. To keen alertness over slothful and careless ignoring. To awakening that follows reenergizing rest in the shelter of the Almighty. To enthusiasm that spurs us to continue the work of Jesus, peacefully, simply, together, right through the greatest of tribulations.

—Sandy Bosserman
Peace Valley, Missouri

"Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming" (Matthew 24:42, NRSVue). **Today's Bible readings from the lectionary:** Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44.

November 30, 2025, First Sunday of Advent. Cover design by Paul Stocksdale © Brethren Press. Living Word Bulletin Series © 2025 Brethren Press. Printed in the USA.



KEEP AWAKE

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN
Hagerstown, Maryland

MORNING WORSHIP

10:45 AM

November 30, 2025
First Sunday of Advent

GATHERING MUSIC "The Holly and the Ivy" (McChesney)
Brethren Bells

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Rebecca Jackson, Worship Leader

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN GOD?

PRELUDE "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Smith)

CALL TO WORSHIP

***HYMN #178** "Come thou long-expected Jesus"
[Verse 1]

*Come, thou long-expected Jesus! born to set thy people free, from our fears and sins
release us, let us find our rest in thee. Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all
the earth thou art, dear desire of ev'ry nation, joy of ev'ry longing heart.*

[Verse 2]

*Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king, born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts
alone. By thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.*

OPENING PRAYER

You have wakened us from sleep and led us to this place, wondrous God. Now let us feel your presence with us as we encounter your Word. Surely you have blessed us. You have drawn us together and bound us firmly to one another. We give you thanks for giving us an identity as relatives and friends through Jesus Christ. In this season we remember your unexpected appearance among us in the birth of a child. You make yourself known to us again and again. May we know you now! Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

One: We wait for light, and lo! there is darkness; we long for brightness,
but we walk in gloom.

All: As we prepare to greet the Light, let our blinded eyes be opened,
for Christ is the light to them that sit in darkness.

One: Let us pray: O God of light, we wander in the darkness of despair
and long for a better way. Increase our desire for Christ's coming;
strengthen our waiting with purpose. Let your light shine before us
and lead us in this time of expectation. Amen.

CHORAL RESPONSE

Christ be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light!
Shine in your Church gathered today.
Christ be our light!

SERVICE OF GIVING

Call to Giving

God has blessed us with both spiritual and material gifts. As God has
been generous with us, let us be generous and joyful givers.

As we pass the offering plate here in the sanctuary, we also pass a
virtual offering plate to those worshiping with us on YouTube Live. We
invite you to give by mailing your offering to the church or dropping it
off at the church during the week, or by going to the Hagerstowncob
website.

Offertory "A Christmas Mosaic" (Chesterton)

***Doxology #119** "Praise God from whom"

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of all creation, we present these monetary gifts, as well as our very
selves, to you. It is our prayer that all our gifts would be used to your glory.
Amen.

A MOMENT TO BECOME LIKE A CHILD

MORNING ANTHEM "Christmas is Coming" (Raney)
Temple Choir

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

*Please remember our worship is also on YouTube and our website.
Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.
An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

BELL CHOIR “Advent Majesty” (Buckwalter)

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 24:36-44 NT 27

“But about that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

MESSAGE “Staying Awake” Pastor Twyla Rowe

HYMN #172 “O come, O come Immanuel”

[Verse 1]

O come, O come, Immanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[Verse 2]

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan’s tyranny. From depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict’ry o’er the grave.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[Verse 3]

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here. Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death’s dark shadow put to flight.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[Verse 4]

O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heav’nly home. Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[Verse 5]

O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh. To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in thy ways to go.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

[Verse 6]

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind. Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease. Fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.

[Chorus]

Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

BENEDICTION

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

POSTLUDE “Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying” (Walther)

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\*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship

Thank you for joining us in worship today.

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First Sunday of Advent



Hagerstown
Church of the Brethren
15 S. Mulberry Street,
Hagerstown, Maryland
21740
301-733-3565

Office: Tuesday—Friday
Flexible hours
(appointments welcome/
call ahead)

Morning Praise Worship
at 8:30 AM
Sunday School at 9:30 AM
Worship and YouTube Live at
10:45 AM

www.hagerstowncob.org

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[www.youtube.com/
@hagerstowncob](http://www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

Twyla Rowe
Pastor

Allyson McPeak
Administrative Assistant

Burton Young
Director of
Music Ministries

Don Rowe
Interior Esthetics
Technician

*We welcome you to our church and
Rejoice in your participation with us in
worship. It is our prayer that you will
experience the presence of God's Spirit and
that it will equip you for service and ministry
in the week ahead. Our Pastor, Deacons, and
Cluster Leaders are available after worship
and during the week to listen and assist you in
your Christian pilgrimage.*

THE ANNOUNCER November 30, 2025

If you placed someone on the prayer list and they are now celebrating a recovery and would like their name taken off the list, please contact the church office.

If you or a loved one has surgery scheduled, is hospitalized, or would like a visit from the pastor, please notify the church.

“Take A Moment” Let this be our daily Take a Moment prayer beginning on Sunday, November 30 - Heavenly Father, once again, the season of advent is upon me. I hear you calling to my spirit...saying, "Awaken my beloved child, and remember once again the gift I sent to the world... the gift of my Son and the salvation he brings." Oh most gracious God, I do want to be awake. Call to me often and help me to escape the traps of commercialism and busyness that can distract me. I want to celebrate. I want the Good News to grab hold of me and renew my spirit with the joy, hope, peace and love that comes only from you. My heart I give to you, O God, as a home for your Son. Amen.

Attendance. Please sign the attendance rosters found at the end of your pew, or possibly in the hymnal rack, and pass it down the row so everyone can sign.

Our thanks to Rebecca Jackson for being our worship leader today and to the Temple Choir & Brethren Bells for our morning music.

The flower arrangement on the altar this morning is given to the Glory of God.

Today is the First Sunday of Advent. Thanks to everyone who helped decorate the church for the season. Following the late service today, we will meet in the Fellowship Hall for our Advent Dinner.

The Advent devotional, “Word Among Us”, by John Fillmore is available this morning. Copies are on the credenza in the wing of the sanctuary and in the fellowship hall.

Friends in Faith (Widows & Widowers) —Tuesday, December 2nd at 12pm we will be meeting for a pot luck lunch in the Fellowship Hall. Join us for a fun time in fellowship with friends. A sign-up sheet will be in the west entrance and fellowship hall. Any questions, please contact Robin Davies, Suzie Wolfe, Ann Platou, or Mary Means.

A “Happy Birthday Jesus” Party will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 10AM—2PM in the Fellowship Hall. All children are invited and encouraged to bring a friend! There will be lots of fun and food. We will be decorating and baking cookies starting at 10AM. If you have any questions, please contact Tina Mills or any member of the Christian Education Ministry Team.

The Sunday School Orchestra will be performing on Sunday, December 7th at 9AM in the Fellowship Hall. There will be no Morning Praise Worship. Sunday School and Late Service Worship will be held at regular time.

Next Sunday is our regular Food Pantry collection. Bring in your gift(s) of non-perishable food items and place them on the cart as you enter the west entrance, and a volunteer delivers the food. We thank everyone for their continued support of this ministry to our community! **All items collected will be going to the guests at our community breakfasts.** Just a reminder - all items should be either dry, boxed, or in cans. Please do not bring in anything in a glass jar that could break and injure a recipient or our volunteers. Thank you!

The Mary Martha Circle Christmas craft is now for sale in the west entrance. The price is \$20.00. All proceeds will go to Sleep in Heavenly Peace.

The Service & Outreach’s Christmas project this year is called “Holiday Care Package”. If you would like to fill a one-gallon zip plastic bag with care items, we will distribute them to our December breakfast guests. You can fill a bag for an adult or child. Suggested items are hats, gloves, socks, thin scarfs, hand cream, chap stick, toiletry items, children’s books, coloring books, small toys, adult puzzle books and cards, granola bars, packaged cookies, snacks, and candy. We would be happy to receive small throw blankets which will not fit into the bags but will be distributed with the bags. Any items you wish to make our guests feel special would be great. Sample bags are on the table in the west entrance. A box is available in the west entrance to place your bags in and should be placed there by the end of November. We thank you in advance for your support.

The Breakfast Team is asking for donations of winter coats and clothes for men, women, and children. Gently used Christmas Trees, ornaments and holiday items, as well as gently used kids toys for the Christmas Community Brunch on December 13th. Large Christmas items can be placed on the stage off the fellowship hall, please label the large items "for community". A box will be in the west entrance for smaller items. If you would like to donate cookies for the December 13th Breakfast they need to be bagged 4-6 cookies to a bag and then labeled what kind of cookie is in each bag. We would need them before the December 13th Breakfast. All cookies can be left in the west entrance in the designated box closer to December 13th.

Volunteer Needed—The Flower and Altar committee is looking for a volunteer for the month of January. If you're interested, please contact Cinnamon Shay.

SAVE THE DATE! HCOB's week to volunteer at the REACH Cold Weather Shelter is March 8-15. For those of you who plan to volunteer, please make a note of these dates. More info to come in the new year. Thanks!

Cash for Causes/Martin's Gift Card Program. Purchase Martin's gift cards to take to the store to pay for your groceries or gas, and 5% of the face value of the gift card is a donation to the church and goes toward your yearly charitable contribution. To purchase a card, please contact Donnie Maas (240-866-1077). We can make arrangements to leave cards in your church mailbox or mail them to you.

Please remember to keep the administrative assistant updated on when and where meetings/events are being held. Please email or call the Administrative Assistant with information that needs added to the church calendar. **301-733-3565 or secretaryhcob@gmail.com.** Thank you!

We're entering the season for high heating costs. We remind everyone to please keep doors closed to the sanctuary, fellowship hall, church entrances, hallways, and church office. All classroom doors (2nd and 3rd floor) should stay open. Thank you for your awareness and cooperation.

Church mailboxes. Everyone is welcome to use the mailboxes. If you would like to be added or taken off the list, please contact Mary Means. If you have a mailbox, we ask that you be willing to monitor it. Any mail that is left in the mailboxes after a three-month period will be disposed of. The mailboxes are located in the hallway of the church office.

Offering envelopes are located in the pew racks and at other convenient locations around the church. To assist our financial secretary, we ask that you use an envelope and please put your name and envelope number on the outside. Here's a tip - take a few envelopes home and stick one of those return address labels we all get on the outside. Then all you need to add is your number. Having your name and number on the outside of the envelope is a huge help to our offering counters. Thank you!

When you leave items at the mailboxes for someone else to retrieve, please call or email them to alert them the item is there. Remember you may need to follow up with them to make sure they've gotten the item. Thank you!

CALENDAR

Sunday, November 30

First Sunday of Advent

8:30 am Morning Praise Worship/Fellowship Hall

9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms

10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube Live (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

12:00 pm Advent Christmas Dinner/Fellowship Hall

Monday, December 1

Church office closed

Tuesday, December 2

12:00 pm Friends in Faith (Widow/Widower) Luncheon/Fellowship Hall

7:00 pm Worship Meeting/Mullendore Room

Wednesday, December 3

Administrative Assistant/Work from home

12:00 pm Deadline for bulletin announcement submissions

6:30 pm GriefShare/Mullendore Room

Thursday, December 4

5:30 pm Praise Band Rehearsal/Fellowship Hall

6:30 pm Brethren Bells/Choir Room

7:30 pm Temple Choir/Fellowship Hall

Friday, December 5

8:00 am Bulletin prep/church office

1:00 pm Islamic Center/Use of Parking Lot (1-3pm)

Saturday, December 6

Pastor Twyla's day off

10:00 am Happy Birthday Jesus Party/Fellowship Hall

Sunday, December 7

Food Pantry Sunday

9:00 am Sunday School Orchestra/Fellowship Hall

9:30 am Sunday School, individual classrooms

10:20 am Fellowship Time/Mullendore Room

10:45 am Worship, Sanctuary & YouTube Live (www.youtube.com/@hagerstowncob)

Remember our weekday schedule is subject to rapid change.

You may mail your offering to
15 S. Mulberry Street,
Hagerstown MD 21740
OR
you can make a secure offering
donation on our website using
Breeze www.hagerstowncob.org

The church calendar is online at
www.hagerstowncob.org.
Click the calendar tab.

A Holiday Message...
(GriefShare)



Dear world,
please be gentle with grieving hearts as the
holidays near.

They walk among us, often quietly and unseen.
They wear smiles that seem bright. They laugh
in ways that sound real. They show up for
others while silently carrying the weight
of someone missing.

There will be real moments of joy—
followed by the sharp sting of knowing new
memories being made don't include the one
they wish was still here. It's the strange beauty of
being human: joy and grief, forever intertwined.

So when you see a grieving heart, don't look
away. Lean in. Cry with them. And let your love
be louder than their silence.

It's true, love can't fix grief.
But it reminds us we're not alone in it.
And that's what matters most.

—*Her View From Home*