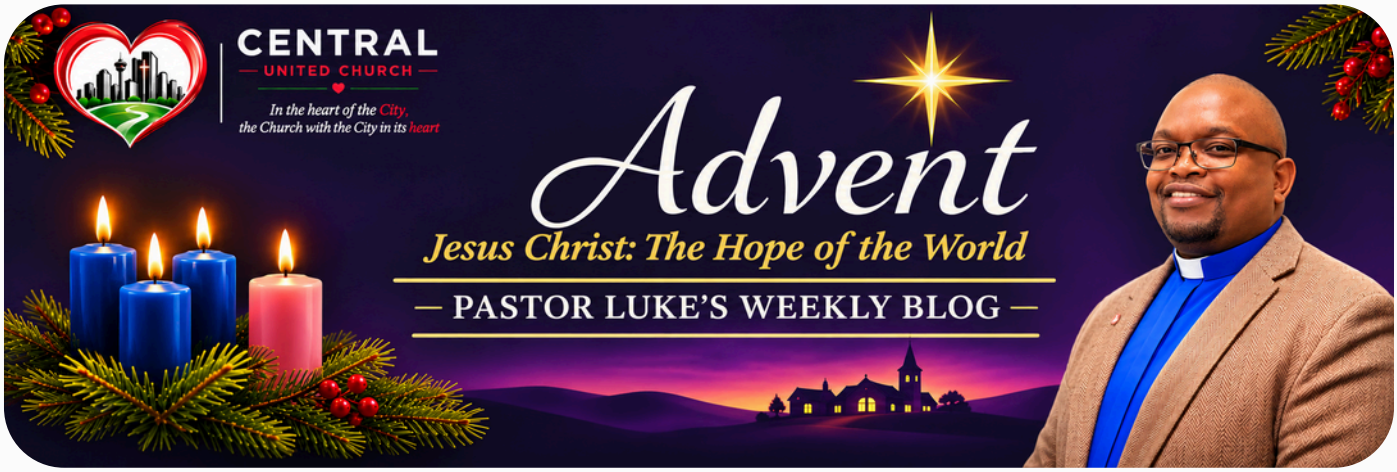


November 5, 2026

THE SIGN OF IMMANUEL

ISAIAH 7:14; 9-6

Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son and shall call His name Immanuel.

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The apostle Paul tells us that Jesus came when the fullness of the time had come (Galatians 4:4).

Isaiah 7 opens in a moment of national crisis. The armies of Syria and the northern kingdom of Israel had allied against Judah, intending to overthrow King Ahaz and install a puppet ruler on David's throne. The king's ***heart and the heart of his people were moved as the trees of the woods are moved with the wind*** (Isaiah 7:2).

Into that fear God sent Isaiah with a word of assurance and a challenge: ***If you will not believe, surely you shall not be established*** (Isaiah 7:9). God even invited Ahaz to ask for a sign, ***either in the depth or in the height above*** (Isaiah 7:11). Ahaz refused, hiding his unbelief behind false piety. He had already decided to trust in Assyria's might rather than in the Lord's faithfulness.

Even in the face of human faithlessness, God gives a sign. The Lord Himself will give you a sign. The initiative is entirely God's. Salvation does not wait for perfect faith; it comes as grace. The house of David was failing, yet God would not abandon His covenant promise to David that his throne would be established forever (2 Samuel 7:16).

The sign centers on a young woman who will conceive and bear a son. In its immediate setting, the sign pointed to God's deliverance of Judah within a short span of time (Isaiah 7:15-16). Yet the Holy Spirit wove into Isaiah's words a meaning far greater than Ahaz could have grasped.

So, all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.' (Matthew 1:22-23)

The virgin birth affirms that this Child comes from above. As the angel told Mary, ***The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God*** (Luke 1:35). The Child is truly human, born of a woman, and truly divine, conceived by the Spirit. In Him, heaven and earth meet.

Throughout Scripture, God's presence is the greatest gift His people can receive. God walked with Adam in the garden (Genesis 3:8). He dwelt among Israel in the tabernacle and filled the temple with His glory (Exodus 40:34; 1 Kings 8:10-11). Moses pleaded, ***If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here*** (Exodus 33:15).

Sin had created a distance that no tabernacle or temple could overcome. Isaiah confessed, ***Your iniquities have separated you from your God*** (Isaiah 59:2). The promise of Immanuel is God's answer to that separation. God would come Himself. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). The word dwelt literally means **PITCHED HIS TENT,** echoing the tabernacle in the wilderness. In Jesus, God set up His dwelling in the middle of our camp.

A Child is born, speaking of His true humanity; a Son is given, speaking of His eternal origin as the Father's gift.

The four names describe who this Child is:

WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR: He is a counsellor beyond human wisdom, a source of guidance that is itself a wonder. In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3).

MIGHTY GOD: Isaiah uses the same title of the Lord Himself in Isaiah 10:21. This Child is not just a godly king; He is God in person.

EVERLASTING FATHER: Not a confusion of the Son with the Father, but a description of His character: He cares for His people with eternal, fatherly tenderness, like a shepherd who will gather the lambs with His arm (Isaiah 40:11).

PRINCE OF PEACE: His reign brings shalom, the wholeness God intended for creation, reconciling us to God and to one another (Ephesians 2:14).

Isaiah adds that the increase of His government and peace will have no end (Isaiah 9:7). Where Ahaz and other kings of Judah failed, this Son of David would reign with justice forever. ***He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end*** (Luke 1:33).

God's promises do not depend on our strength but on His faithfulness: ***The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this*** (Isaiah 9:7). Many of us know seasons when our hearts shake like trees in the wind: illness, grief, financial strain, broken relationships, or the struggle of addiction and recovery. Isaiah calls us to look to the God who comes near.

Christmas begins with God's promise to come to us. God had already decided to be with us. And the risen Christ closes Matthew's Gospel with the same assurance that opened it: ***Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age*** (Matthew 28:20).

Soli Deo Gloria – to God alone be the glory!
Rev. Luke Haisa