

AN ADVENT SERVICE



This short service can be celebrated in church, home or classroom. Moments of silence should be kept throughout. A candle or the Advent candles may be lit at the beginning. The suggested Advent music may be replaced by other well-known seasonal pieces.



Advent Hymn: O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come Emmanuel,
to free your captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice, rejoice, O Israel,
to you shall come Emmanuel.

O royal branch of Jesse's tree,
redeem us all from tyranny;
from pain of hell your people free,
and over death win victory.
Rejoice, rejoice, O Israel,
to you shall come Emmanuel.

O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who once appeared on Sinai's height,
and gave your faithful people law,
in all the splendor we adore.
Rejoice, rejoice, O Israel,
to you shall come Emmanuel.

The 'O' Antiphons – J.M. Neale

Greeting:

Leader: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

All: And with your spirit.

Introduction:

Leader

As we celebrate/begin/end the season of Advent, we rejoice, as always, in the first coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ, we await his second coming in glory, and we praise God for the coming of Jesus, Emmanuel, into our lives. Moved by the Holy Spirit we pray: Come Jesus Christ, Come.

Leader:

Let us pray.

Creator and redeemer of the human race, it was your will that your Word should take flesh in the womb of the ever-virgin Mary. Grant that your only Son, who came to share our human nature, may lead us to share in his divine life. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.



The scripture readings of the day may also be used.

Scripture Readings from the Prophet Isaiah:

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

61:1-2. 10-11

I exult for joy in the Lord.

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me,
for the Lord has anointed me.
He has sent me to bring good news to the poor,
to bind up hearts that are broken;

To proclaim liberty to captives,
freedom to those in prison;
to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.

‘I exult for joy in the Lord,
my soul rejoices in my God,
for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation,
he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity,
like a bridegroom wearing his wreath,
like a bride adorned in her jewels.

‘For as the earth makes fresh things grow,
as a garden makes seeds spring up,
so will the Lord make both integrity and praise
spring up in the sight of the nations.’

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

OR

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

7:10-14

The maiden is with child.

The Lord spoke to Ahaz and said, ‘Ask the Lord your God for a sign for yourself coming either from the depths of Sheol or from the heights above’. ‘No,’ Ahaz answered ‘I will not put the Lord to the test.’

Then Isaiah said:

‘Listen now, House of David:

are you not satisfied with trying the patience of humankind
without trying the patience of my God, too?

The Lord himself, therefore,
will give you a sign.

It is this: the maiden is with child
and will soon give birth to a son
whom she will call Emmanuel,

a name which means “God-is-with-us”.’

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

O Antiphons

The O antiphons are read slowly. The response may be repeated.

O Wisdom of the Most High, ordering all things with strength and gentleness,
R/ **come and teach us the way of truth.**

Pause

O Ruler of the House of Israel, who gave the law to Moses on Sinai,
R/ **come and save us with outstretched arm.**

Pause

O Root of Jesse, set up as a sign to the peoples,
R/ **come to save us, and delay no more.**

Pause

O Key of David, who open the gates of the eternal kingdom,
R/ **come to liberate from prison the captive who lives in darkness.**

Pause

O King of the peoples and corner-stone of the Church,
R/ **come and save us whom you made from the dust of the earth.**

Pause

O Morning Star, radiance of eternal light, sun of justice,
R/ **come and enlighten those who live in darkness and the shadow of death.**

Pause

O Emmanuel, our king and lawgiver,
R/ **come and save us, Lord, our God.**

Pause

The Gospel readings given here focus on John the Baptist and Mary, our Advent companions.

Gospel Readings from Matthew:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

11:11-15

A greater than John the Baptist has never been seen.

Jesus spoke to the crowds: 'I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is. Since John the Baptist came, up to this present time, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence and the violent are taking it by storm. Because it was towards John that all the prophecies of the prophets and of the Law were leading; and he, if you will believe me, is the Elijah who was to return. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen!'

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

OR

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

1:18-24

Jesus is born of Mary who was betrothed to Joseph, son of David.

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph; but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
and they will call him Emmanuel,
a name which means 'God-is-with-us'. When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection:



I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now, because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to have a long life. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And he's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land. And I'm happy. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing anyone. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

Dr Martin Luther King Jr.



Advent Hymn: Come, O Long-Expected Jesus

Come, O long-expected Jesus,
born to set your people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
Christ in whom our rest shall be.

Israel's strength and consolation,
born salvation to impart;
dear desire of ev'ry nation,
joy of ev'ry longing hear.

Born your people to deliver,
born a child and yet a king;
Born to reign in us for ever,
now your gracious kingdom bring.

By your own eternal Spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone;
by our all sufficient merit,
raise us to your glorious throne.

Intercessions:

Leader:

The Son of God is coming with great power: all peoples shall see his face and be reborn.

R/

Moira Bergin RSM 2020



Ma - ra - na - tha, come, O Christ the Lord.

You bring us wisdom, fresh understanding and new vision.



Ma - ra - na - tha, come, O Christ the Lord.

You bring us good news, and power which will transform our lives.




Ma - ra - na - tha, come, O Christ the Lord.

You bring us truth, showing us the way to the Father.



Ma - ra - na - tha, come, O Christ the Lord.

Born of a woman, you will open in our flesh the way to eternal life and joy.



Ma - ra - na - tha, come, O Christ the Lord.

The Lord's Prayer:

Leader:

Let us now pray/sing in the words our Saviour gave us:

Our Father.....

Concluding Prayer:

Leader:

Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay! We entrust ourselves to your love: strengthen us by your advent and raise us up, for you live and reign with the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God

