



The Parish of Ewhurst
with Okewood & Forest Green

Advent Service

Veni Emmanuel

AN INTRODUCTION

In the Middle Ages, the Church kept Advent as a season of great solemnity - a time in which to meditate upon the ultimate issues of death, judgement, hell and heaven.

Today's Advent Service, THE ADVENT CAROL SEQUENCE, © The Royal Schools of Church Music, is adapted to fit our resources - a time of preparation and great rejoicing. For Christ will come, not only as Judge, but also as Saviour, and will usher in the Kingdom of God. This service, on Advent Sunday, therefore provides a vivid backdrop for our Christmas spiritual preparations.

The procession of the choir from the west door into a dark, quiet church and the use of light, play out the drama of the Church's hope in the coming of Christ - the Light of the World - to banish sin and darkness. This Service aims to recapture something of that Advent longing and hope. The exhortation of the Advent Responsory, in which Christ's coming is announced 'from afar' and The Blessing of Light launch the service. Structured around the great Advent Antiphons, known as the Great 'Os,' which were sung originally as Antiphons to the Magnificat at the Evening Office during the week before Christmas, provide a rich source of devotional imagery.

Today's readings and music serve to complement the Antiphons, and help us reflect on the theme of the Christ who comes to judge and save his people. All is gathered together in the Offertory Hymn, O come, O come, Emmanuel.

The service ends with great expectation.

THE GATHERING

Advent Responsory

Narrator:

I look from afar: and lo, I see the power of God coming, and a cloud covering the whole earth.
Go ye out to meet him and say:
Tell us! Tell us! Tell us art thou he that shall come to reign over thy people Israel?

THE BLESSING OF THE LIGHT

Cantor: You, O Lord, are my lamp:
Choir: You turn our darkness into light.

Cantor: With you, O Lord, is the well of life:
Choir: In your light shall we see light.

Cantor: Your word is a lantern to my feet:
Choir: and a light upon our path.

The Advent Candle is lit

Cantor: Jesus Christ is the Light of the world:
Choir: a light no darkness can quench.

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe, eternal creator of day and night. Now, as darkness is falling, hear the prayer of your faithful people. Wash away our transgressions, cleanse us by your refining fire, and make us temples of your Holy Spirit. May we live in watchfulness as we wait for the coming of your Son Jesus Christ, who shall judge the world and all its works. Rouse us from the sleep of sin and make us ready to enter your kingdom where songs of praise for ever sound. For you are the true light, who lightens everyone, and the new heavens and the new earth join to sing your praise now and for evermore.

All : Amen.

O SAPIENTIA

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,
reaching from one end to the other mightily,
and sweetly ordering all things:
Come and teach us the way of prudence.

Ecclesiastes 24: 1-9

Reading 1

Hymn

*Chorus: King of the ages, Almighty God,
Perfect love, ever just and true.
Who will not fear You and bring You praise?
All the nations will come to you.*

Your ways of love have won my heart,
and brought me joy unending.
Your saving pow'r at work in me,
bringing peace and the hope of glory.

Your arms of love are reaching out
to every soul that seeks You;
Your light will shine in all the earth
bringing grace and a great salvation.

The day will come when You appear,
And every eye shall see You.
Then we shall rise with hearts ablaze,
with a song we will sing forever.

Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

O ADONAI

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel,
who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning
bush and gave him the law on Sinai,
come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

Reading 2

Exodus 3: 1-6

Hymn

My God, how wonderful thou art,
thy majesty how bright,
how beautiful thy mercy-seat,
in depths of burning light!

How dread are thine eternal years,
everlasting Lord,
by angel spirits day and night
incessantly adored!

How wonderful, how beautiful,
the sight of thee must be,
thine endless wisdom, boundless power,
and awful purity!

No earthly Father loves like thee,
no mother, e'er so mild,
bears and forbears as thou has done
with me thy sinful child.

Father of Jesus, love's reward,
what rapture will it be,
prostrate before thy throne to lie,
and gaze and gaze on thee!

Frederick William Faber (1814-1863)

O RADIX JESSE

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the
peoples;
before you kings will shut their mouths,
to you the nations will make their prayer:
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

Reading 3

Isaiah 11: 1-4a, 10

O CLAVIS DAVID

O Key of David and sceptre of the House of Israel,
you open and no one can shut,
you shut and no one can open:
Come and lead the prisoners from the prison
house, those who dwell in darkness and the
shadow of death.

Reading 4

Jeremiah 23: 5-6

Worship Song

*Chorus: And He shall reign for ever,
His throne and crown shall ever endure.
And He shall reign for ever,
and we shall reign with Him.*

What a vision filled my eyes,
one like a Son of man.
Coming with the clouds of heav'n
he approached an awesome throne.

He was given sov'reign power,
glory and authority.
Every nation, tribe and tongue
worshipped Him on bended knee.

On the throne for ever,
See the Lamb who once was slain;
Wounds of sacrificial love
For ever shall remain.

Words and Music: Graham Kendrick

O ORIENS

O Morning Star,
splendour of light eternal and sun of
righteousness:
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.

Reading 5

John 1: 19-28

O REX GENTIUM

O King of the nations, and their desire,
the cornerstone making both one:
Come and save the human race,
which you fashioned from clay.

Reading 6

Matthew 2: 1-12

Talk by Rev Shepherd

Psalm 27 | Hymn

*Chorus: The LORD is my light,
My light and salvation.
Whom shall I fear?
Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is my light,
My light and salvation.
Why should I be afraid?*

When the powers of evil move towards me,
when my very flesh is under threat,
when my enemies smell the scent of vict'ry
they will stumble and fall.

Should a mighty army camp around me,
Still my heart would register no fear.
Though a war were raged,
Thought it raged against me
I'd trust God and stand firm.

One thing through it is my soul is seeking:
To live all my life within God's house;
There to spend my days
Gazing at God's beauty
While at one with my Lord.

God protects me in the time of trouble,
Shelters me yet sets me on a rock.
Safe from every harm,
Safe from all that threatens
I will sing and rejoice.

Music: John Bell

O EMMANUEL

O Emmanuel, our King and our law-giver, the
hope of the nations and their Saviour:
Come and save us. O Lord our God.

Worship Song

Great is the darkness
That covers the earth
Oppression, injustice and pain
Nations are slipping in hopeless despair
Though many have come in Your name
Watching while sanity dies
Touched by the madness and lies

*Chorus: Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out Your spirit we pray
Come Lord Jesus, come Lord Jesus
Pour out Your spirit on us today*

May now Your church rise with power and love
This glorious gospel proclaim
In every nation Salvation will come
To those who believe in Your name
Help us bring light to this world

That we might speed Your return
Great celebrations on that final day
When out of the heavens You come
Darkness will vanish all sorrow will end
And rulers will bow at Your throne
Our great commission complete
Then face to face we shall meet

Noel Richards/Gerald Coates

Reading 7

Matthew 1: 18-23

THE CONCLUSION

Final Reading

Revelation 22: 12-13, 16-17, 20

Hymn

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
once for favoured sinners slain;
thousand thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train: alleluia!
God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at naught and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the tree, deeply wailing,
shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears;
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers: with what rapture
gaze we on those glorious scars.

Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own: alleluia!,
thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

C Wesley 1707-1788

Prayers

Priest: Let us pray.

Silence is kept

*Priest: In joyful expectation of his coming to our
aid, we pray to Jesus.*

Come to your Church as Lord and Judge.
We pray for ...

Help us to live in the light of your coming
and give us a longing for your Kingdom.

Maranatha:

All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

*Priest: Come to your world as King of the nations.
We pray for ...*

Before you rulers will stand in silence.
Maranatha:

All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Priest: Come to the suffering as Saviour and Comforter. We pray for ...
Break in to our lives where we struggle with sickness and distress,
and set us free to serve you for ever.
Maranatha:

All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Priest: Come to us as shepherd and guardian of our souls.
We remember...
Give us with all the faithful departed a share in your victory over evil and death.
Maranatha:

All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Priest: Come from heaven Lord Jesus with power and great glory.
Lift us up to meet you,
that with (N and) all your saints and angels we may live and reign with you in your new creation.
Maranatha:

All: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Remain kneeling

Priest: Let us pray for the coming of the Kingdom in the words our Saviour gave us.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.**

Priest: Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay give new courage to your people who trust in your love. By your coming, raise us to share in the joy of your kingdom on earth as in heaven, where you live and reign with the Father and the Spirit, one God for ever and ever.
Amen.

Offertory Hymn

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear:
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, true Branch of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave:
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight:
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery:
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come thou Lord of Might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe:
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

*Words: from the Latin (13th century) J M Neale
(1818-1866) and others
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BLESSING

Priest: May God the Father,
who loved the world so much that he sent his only
Son, give you grace to prepare for life eternal.
Amen.

Priest: May God the Son, who comes to us as
Redeemer and Judge, reveal to you the path from
darkness to light.
Amen.

Priest: May God the Holy Spirit, by whose
working the Virgin Mary conceived the Christ,
help you bear the fruits of holiness.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Priest: O Lord Jesus Christ, come at evening time
with light, and in the morning with your glory
to guide our feet into the way of peace. He who
receives our prayers says: Surely I come quickly. I
am the root and offspring of David, I am the
bright and morning star.

All: Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

Common Worship: Times and Seasons