

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT



Hymn: Lo, he comes with clouds descending

1. Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
Once for mortal sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ appears on earth to reign.
2. Ev'ry eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
We who set at naught and sold him,
Pierced and nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.
3. Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers:
With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!
4. Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
High on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the Kingdom for thine own.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, all hearts are open to you. No secrets are hidden from you. Purify us with the fire of your Holy Spirit that we may love and worship you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace in our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you have given us knowledge of your truth. **Christ, have mercy.**
Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd leading us to life. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect: Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Jeremiah

33. 14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfil the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 25. 1-10

Response: To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God,
in you I trust; do not let me be put to shame;
do not let my enemies exult over me.
Do not let those who wait for you be put to shame;
let them be ashamed who are wantonly treacherous. **(R)**

Make me to know your ways, O LORD; teach me your paths.
Lead me in your truth, and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation;
for you I wait all day long. (R)

Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth
or my transgressions; (R)

according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness' sake, O LORD!
Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way. (R)

He leads the humble in what is right,
and teaches the humble his way.
All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness,
for those who keep his covenant and his decrees. (R)

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians 3. 9-13

How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! "Stand up and raise your heads," says the Lord, "because your redemption is drawing near." **Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke 21. 25-36
Glory to you, O Lord.

'There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise

your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.' Then he told them a parable: 'Look at the fig tree and all the trees; as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. 'Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation: *Today we celebrate Advent Sunday at the beginning of a new Church's year. In our lectionary we enter year C, the year of Luke and most of our Gospel readings each week will come from the third Gospel. During Advent we reflect upon the relationship between God and his people from the very beginning. Today we think of the patriarchs, the first to hear the words of God, words of hope for a better future and the first to respond to his call to follow him. We think of Abraham, Jacob and Moses. These people heard the call of God and it completely changed their lives. Abraham left his tribal homelands and journeyed to an unknown land trusting only in God's promises to bring him to a new land where his family would grow and prosper. Moses, raised as a Prince in the court of Pharaoh, left his life of privilege to lead his people into the unknown of the wilderness again trusting only in God's promises that he would lead them to the Promised Land. It was to these Old Testament patriarchs that God first revealed his presence and the presence of his Kingdom to those he called to be his people. The Kingdom of God, first revealed to the Patriarchs, was revealed most fully to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Christ the Messiah. Throughout Advent we celebrate the Kingdom of Christ, as we do every Sunday, and we give thanks that he has called us to live as citizens of his Kingdom, that he has brought us into fellowship with him and with one another into one great family, the family of God, the Communion of Saints. As we look back today to the time of the Patriarchs and as we celebrate the Kingdom of Christ we look forward to the coming of the Kingdom in all its fullness, all its glory. We take to heart the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come," which is the call, the prayer, of Advent. In our Gospel reading today Jesus warns us that the coming of the Kingdom will not be easy. People will resist, the earth will be beset with storms. Jesus calls us to be on our guard, to trust in him, to follow him being faithful to his teaching to love as he loves*

us. As we face an uncertain future we can learn much from the Patriarchs we celebrate today. Like them we are called to respond to God's words of hope. As Christians we live in hope for a better future as we travel forward into the unknown trusting only in God's promise to us that he will lead us to the promised land of heaven, a land of milk and honey, an eternal home which will not disappoint. Like those who have gone before us, the journey will not always be easy and so we make S. Pauls prayer for the Thessalonians our prayer this advent, may he so strengthen our hearts in holiness that we may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.

Intercessions:

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own parish; Open our eyes for signs of your will and the presence of your kingdom. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May all nations be governed with justice that all may live in peace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; Fill us with love for each other and keep us faithful to the ways of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our parish intercession books; may they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and consoled with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they share the eternal glory of heaven in the company of all the saints.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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.**

The Peace:

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to shine on those who live in darkness, under the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

God, our deliverer, awaken our hearts to prepare the way for the advent of your Son; that, with minds purified by the grace of his coming, we may serve you faithfully all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Christ the sun of righteousness shine on you and scatter the darkness from before you and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: O come, O Come Emmanuel.

- 1. 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.**
- 2. O come, thou rod 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.**
- 3. O come, thou day spring, 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.**
- 4. 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.**
- 5. O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient time didst give the Law,
In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**