

# Order of Service

## for Home Worship

### *The Third Sunday of Advent*



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 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.
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 times didst give the law  
in cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel

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 into life. **Lord, have mercy.**

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

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;  
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;  
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;  
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

**Collect:** O Lord Jesus Christ, who at your first coming sent your messenger to prepare your way before you: grant that the ministers and stewards of your mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready your way by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, that at your second coming to judge the world we may be found an acceptable people in your sight; for you are alive and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**A reading from the book of Zephaniah**

**3. 14-20**

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster

from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD. This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 146. 5-10**

**Response: I will praise the Lord, I will praise the Lord as long as I live.**

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,  
whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
who made heaven and earth, the sea,  
and all that is in them;  
who keeps faith for ever;  
who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry. **(R)**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.  
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;  
the Lord loves the righteous. **(R)**

The Lord watches over the strangers;  
he upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. **(R)**

The Lord will reign for ever,  
your God, O Zion, for all generations.  
O, praise the Lord! **(R)**

### **A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians**

**4. 4-7**

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus  
.This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **The Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint Luke  
Glory to you, O Lord.**

**3. 7-18**

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.' And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.' As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Meditation:**

In today's gospel, we hear John declaring that "one more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" John the Baptist is saying it as it is – the Saviour is coming but it appears that the people are not ready for him and yet the need for repentance is definitely urgent. He is warning the people of the need for their lives that have been sinful, to not only be restored but to also be remade. John is warning them as he knew that he was not the person who could bring about the necessary change – John was preparing those who were willing to listen to him for the coming of Christ's baptism

with the Holy Spirit. To Gospel of salvation is a lot more than telling people of their wrongdoings. In these times we have a lot of activities during the season of Advent – there are nativity services with the children dressing up to tell the story of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus and the scenes of mulled wine and mince pies to name just two. Even with these heart warming activities and scenes, a complete picture of Advent must include the call to discipleship, the challenge of the prophets to the salvation of God, the turning we need in order to be restored, renewed and remade in both the love and forgiveness of God. This year, let us not jump too quickly to the festivities of Christmas and the baby Jesus in the manger but let us hear and respond to the challenge of the prophets in Advent. In the times in which we live, the voice of the world in Advent tells us to buy more and more and fall into the world of the commercialising of Christmas while the voice of the Lord, in and through John the Baptist tells us not to multiply or grow what we have but to divide all we have and share with those who are less fortunate. In today's world there is also a tendency for us to over-indulge our hunger when the voice of the Lord tells us to satisfy our neighbours hunger. This Advent, let each of us and our families challenge ourselves and consider ways in which we can give and share with those less fortunate either in our locality or overseas.

#### **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; that the Church may support the victims of war and violence and promote reconciliation between nations and peoples.

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 there be peace where there is conflict and hope where there is despair.

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; may we welcome all who come to live among us who have been displaced through conflict and terror.

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 injured in the service of their country and 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. We pray for those who gave their lives in war in the cause of peace and justice. 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:**

Jesus said, "Peace I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray:

**God of our pilgrimage, you have willed that the gate of mercy should stand open for those who trust in you: look upon us with your favour that we who follow the path of your will may never wander from the way of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Blessing:**

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

The peace of God which is beyond all understanding guard your hearts in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

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

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

**Hymn: Come, Thou long expected Jesus**

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.**
2. **Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth Thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.**
3. **Born Thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us forever,  
now Thy gracious kingdom bring.**
4. **By Thy own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
by Thine all sufficient merit,  
raise us to Thy glorious throne**

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