

Liturgy

The First Sunday of Advent (Hope)



GATHERING

Behold, the eye of the LORD
is on those who fear Him,
On those who hope for His lovingkindness.

**Our soul waits for the LORD;
He is our help and our shield.**

Hope in the LORD,
for with the LORD is lovingkindness,
and with Him is abundant redemption.

**I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in His word I put my hope.
My soul waits for the LORD,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.**

And it will be said in that day,
“Behold, this is our God
for whom we have waited
that He might save us.
This is the LORD for whom we have waited!
Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

– from Psalms 33 and 130; Isaiah 25:9

God of steadfast love, ever faithful to Your promises:

**The earth rejoices in hope of the Savior’s coming,
and looks forward with longing
to His return at the end of time.**

**Prepare our hearts to receive Him, now and always,
for He is Lord forever and forever.
Amen.**

Everlasting God

Strength will rise
As we wait upon the Lord;
We will wait upon the Lord,
We will wait upon the Lord.
(Repeat)

Our God, You reign forever;
Our hope, Our Strong Deliverer.

You are the everlasting God,
The everlasting God;
You do not faint,
You won’t grow weary.

You’re the defender of the weak,
You comfort those in need,
You lift us up on wings like eagles.

CCLI Song # 4556538 ©2005 Thankyou Music; Brenton Brown and Ken Riley

*LECTIONARY for the first Sunday of
Advent, Year C:*

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Psalm 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

Today is the first Sunday of the liturgical year. The theme for this first week of Advent is the hopeful watching and waiting for the coming of Christ, the Lord. As did the ancient church, in this Advent season we joyfully remember the first coming of Jesus to His earth, and at the same time look forward with joyful expectation to His coming again in glory. As we worship, we ponder with great thanksgiving our life now, “in the meantime,” and celebrate that He has called us into His story.

To read more about Advent as a season of watchful waiting, expectation, and anticipation, see Ellen’s blog, “Advent—Happy New (liturgical) Year” in the Reflections section of the Clerestory Notes website:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/blog/2018/11/29/advent-happy-new-liturgical-year>

The gathering responsorial reading, weaves together Scriptures that speak to our waiting in confident hope because of God’s covenant love and echoes the theme of today’s Psalm..

INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

O Emmanuel,
our King and Lawgiver,
the Expectation and Savior of the nations:
**Come and save us,
O Lord our God.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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!

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2012 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.
Text: Latin hymn, 12th century; transl. John M. Neale, 1851.
Hymn tune: VENI EMMANUEL, 15th century plainsong.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us together profess the faith of the church of all ages in the words of this hymn of the ancient church:

You are God; we praise You.
You are the Lord; we acclaim You.
You are the Eternal Father; All creation worships You.
To You all angels, all the powers of heaven, sing in endless praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

The glorious company of apostles praises you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praises you.

The white-robed army of martyrs praises you.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim You;
Father of majesty unbounded,

Your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the King of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.

*When You became man to set us free
You did not shun the Virgin's womb.*

You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

You are seated at God's right hand in glory.

We believe that you will come and be our judge.

Leader:

Come then, Lord, and help Your people,
bought with the price of Your own blood,
and bring us with Your saints to glory everlasting.

– from *Te Deum laudamus* (“Thee, O God, we praise”).
A hymn of the early church, fourth century.
Attributed to church fathers Ambrose and Augustine.

Ellen's setting of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet. The harmonic arrangement varies from verse to verse. This is especially moving when all four verses are sung at one point in a service. But it also adds interest to the movement of the weeks of Advent season to sing successive verses each week as the Sundays build toward the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25. We sing the first verse here to close our prayers of Invocation on this Hope Sunday.

Here is the link to the commentary, with historical background and worship use suggestions, in the Music Room (Season of Light):

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/o-come-o-come-emmanuel>

I have crafted this antiphonal Profession of Faith from the ancient hymn Te Deum laudamus, attributed to the fourth-century church fathers Ambrose and Augustine. From its acclamation of praise from all creation to the triune God of the universe, to its declaration of the victory and exaltation of Christ, this ancient text leads powerfully and lovingly into a time of confession, repentance and forgiveness. During Advent, the classic hymn Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus is a fitting and beautiful sung response to the concluding words of Te Deum laudamus, “Come then, Lord, and help Your people....”

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

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.
Israel's Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a Child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit,
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2004 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.
Words: Charles Wesley, 1745. Hymn tune: HYFRYDOL; Rowland H. Prichard, 1830.

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Pastoral call to Confession

Psalm 25

Refrain (sung):

To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in You I put my trust.

(Spoken)

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.*

**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.**

Refrain (sung):

To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in You I put my trust.

(Spoken)

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;
According to Your steadfast love remember me,
For Your goodness' sake, O LORD!**

[Silent confessions]

Refrain (sung):

To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in You I put my trust.

Setting and Refrain: Ellen Koehler
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Music for this setting of Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus is available in the sheet music catalog as a lead sheet and arranged for 3-part vocal harmony. (See the Sheet Music Catalog in the Music Room, "Season of Light.")

Here's a link to the commentary in the Music Room:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/come-thou-long-expected-jesus>

You may hear this beloved Christmas hymn in the Audio Media Studio section of the Music Room. (This live recording, from 2017, is from our annual Advent Lessons and Carols service.

Here's a link to the Listening Index:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/content/audio-media-studio-clips-index>

The psalm for today is used as a call to confession. The last three verses are spoken (below) as assurance of pardon.

Music for this responsorial setting of Psalm 25 is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet (refrain), a 4-part notated chant section (which may be used instead of the spoken verses), and scored piano accompaniment with vocal line (refrain).

Here's a link to the Music Room:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/psalm-25>

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore He instructs sinners in the way.
*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.

– Psalm 25:8-10

How blessed are all those who wait for Him!

– Isaiah 30:18

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of praise and gratitude

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Lo, He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favored sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of His train.
Alleluia! 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, deeply wailing, shall the true Messiah see.

Now the Savior, long-expected,
See in solemn pomp appear.
All His saints, by man rejected,
Now shall meet Him in the air.
Alleluia! Alleluia! See the day of God appear.

Yes, amen! Let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal throne.
Savior, take the pow'r and glory;
Claim the kingdom for Thine own.
O, come quickly! O, come quickly! Everlasting God, come down!
O, come quickly! O, come quickly! Everlasting God, come down!

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2011 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.
Words: Charles Wesley and Martin Madan; based on John Cennick, 1752.
Hymn tune: REGENT SQUARE Henry T. Smart, 1867. .

LIGHTING OF THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE: HOPE

Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

Lighting of the candle

Prepare the way of the Lord.

*We light this candle as a symbol of expectation
and hope of the coming of our Savior, Jesus.*

**May the light sent from God shine in the darkness
to show us the way to salvation.**

O come, O come, Emmanuel!

Leader: Prepare, then, the way of the Lord.

This hymn is not often thought of as an Advent hymn, but it should be. It powerfully highlights our understanding of Advent as one of those points in God's story where He "folds time," bringing together the transcendent reality and redemptive work of the past and future. We sing the first three verses here, and close the service with the fourth verse.

Music for Ellen's setting of *Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending* is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet. (It is available as piano accompaniment on request.)

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/lo-he-comes-clouds-descending>

THE WORD

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Psalms 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

Passing of the Peace

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again!

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your Name.

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done,

On earth as in heav'n.

Give us today our daily bread;

Forgive us our sins

As we forgive those who sin against us;

Save us from the time of trial,

And deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

And the glory are Yours.

Now and forever, Amen.

Setting by Eric Wyse; ©2000 Wildgrove Music (BMI)

Prepare a Place

Prepare a place while you're waiting.

Prepare a place for the coming One.

Prepare a place and be patient

While you wait for the coming One.

Wait for the coming One;

While you wait for the coming One.

Prepare your heart while you're waiting.

Prepare your heart for the coming One.

Set time aside and be quiet

While you wait for the coming One.

Wait for the coming One;

While you wait for the coming One.

CCLI Song #4431127 ©2004 Mighty Grey Music/Lil' Yella House/Dayspring.
Christine Dente and Michael W. Smith

Eric Wyse's setting of the Lord's Prayer, Our Father in Heaven, is available at Score Exchange (<http://www.scoreexchange.com/scores/19379.html>)

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending (verse 4)

Yes, amen! Let all adore Thee,
High on Thine eternal throne.
Savior, take the pow'r and glory;
Claim the kingdom for Thine own.
O come quickly! O come quickly! Everlasting God, come down!
O come quickly! O come quickly! Everlasting God, come down!

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2011 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.
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Hymn tune: REGENT SQUARE Henry T. Smart, 1867. .

Benediction:

Beloved, hear and take these words of blessing into your hearts,
as you go forth into the world to love and serve the Lord –
watching and waiting with eager anticipation the coming of Christ:
May the Lord make you increase and abound
in love for one another and for all,
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.

– from 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

**Thanks be to God!
Come quickly Lord Jesus. Maranatha!**

A thought about worship...—“The spirituality of Advent calls us to start our journey in expectation of the second coming of Christ. . . . The hope of a world restored under God proclaims that evil is not the final word. . . . The second coming says that the ultimate word in history is the triumph of God, the reign of God’s kingdom, the eternal and lasting rule of the good. Here is where our Advent meditation rests.” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 50).

Lectionary for next week: Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

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We reprise the song sung at Offering as we prepare to go out into the world to live as God’s people and share His light during this season of watching and waiting. “O come quickly! Everlasting God, come down!”