

Liturgy

The Second Sunday of Advent (Love)



GATHERING

Leader:

Behold, our God comes; He does not keep silence.
In love, He gathers His covenant people to Him.

The earth is full of Your steadfast love, O LORD;

**May Your lovingkindnesses come to us,
Your salvation according to Your promise.**

Give the king Your judgments, O God,
and Your righteousness to the king's Son.
*He will judge Your people with righteousness,
and Your poor with justice.*

He will defend the afflicted,
give deliverance to the children of the needy,
and break in pieces the oppressor.

*He shall be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth!*

In His days the righteous shall flourish,
and abundance of peace,
until the moon is no more!

*Blessed be the LORD GOD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.*

**Blessed be His glorious name forever;
May the whole earth be filled with His glory!
Amen and Amen!**

– Scripture weaving from Psalms 50:3-5; 119: 41, 64; 72:1-7, 18-19

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
To take away transgression and rule in equity.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.
Before Him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall fall down before Him, and gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him, His praise all people sing;
For He shall have dominion o'er river, sea and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion or dove's light wing can soar.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2011 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.

Hymn tune: ST. THEODULPH, Melchior Teschner, 1615.

Words: James Montgomery; based on Psalm 72; first sung on Christmas Day, 1821

*LECTIONARY for the second Sunday
of Advent, Year A:*

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

The theme for the second week of Advent is Love. The word "Advent" comes from the Latin word for "coming," and so during this season we often refer to Christ as the Coming One. On this Sunday we consider the immense and amazing love of God shown in the coming of Christ—in His first coming in human flesh as the Word incarnate; in His promised second coming in power and glory at the end of the age; and in His coming to our hearts daily in a continually renewal of our relationship with Him.

This second Advent Sunday is also the time the Church traditionally focuses on John the Baptist. What does the message of John the Baptist have to do with this threefold-focused love of God? How might John's message influence our understanding of God's continual presence in our lives? And how might the hopeful expectation of His love assist us in preparing our hearts for His coming now, as we wait, "in the meantime"?

Ellen's joyful setting of Hail to the Lord's Anointed is available by request as a lead sheet. (Email us at: clerestorynotes@gmail.com) It is a wonderful choice for this second Sunday of Advent, in part because the psalm on which the hymn text is based is included in today's lectionary, but also because the final line of the fourth verse, which we sing at the closing of this service, reads "His name to us is Love." But this hymn fits well in any of the following Advent weeks as well, as you read in the second verse, "Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth."

INVOCATION

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

Lord God Almighty,

King eternal and Giver of life everlasting:
You are most worthy at all times to receive glory,
and honor, and praise, and blessing.

**We thank you now for sending your Son,
our Savior, Jesus Christ,
for whom our hearts wait in hope,
and to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,
be honor and dominion, now and forever. Amen.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high.
And order all things, far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And cause us in her ways to go.

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

**We believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.**

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages,
*God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made;
of the same essence as the Father.*

Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven;
He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,
and was made human.

*He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered and was buried.*

The third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures.

He ascended to heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
*He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.*

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.

He proceeds from the Father,
and with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified.
He spoke through the prophets.
*We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.*

**We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.**

This prayer of invocation and thanksgiving is based in part on the text of the Phos Hilaron contained in the Book of Common Prayer (evening prayer, Rite Two), and on the doxologies of Revelation 4:11 and 5:12.

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 as the Sundays build toward the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25. You'll notice that each of the verses of the hymn corresponds to and reflects the journey we follow as we go through the four weeks of Advent. We sing the second verse here to close our prayers of Invocation on this Love Sunday.

Here's a link to the Music Room:

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

This antiphonal rendering of the Nicene Creed is written for two readers or groups within the congregation, designated by the lines printed in regular and italic fonts, and the whole congregation (designated by bold font).

The Nicene Creed was originally drafted and adopted by the First Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. to affirm the essential, eternal divinity of Christ. Theologians use the term homoousios to describe and explain the "consubstantial" nature of the Father and the Son: the Greek word means of the same being or essence. The creed was amended by the First Council of Constantinople in 381 to include, mainly, additions and clarifications about the divinity and work of the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. This is the statement of faith we now know as the Nicene Creed, and which declares the essential tenets of the doctrine of the Trinity.

Of the Father's Love Begotten

Of the Father's love begot*ten,
Ere the worlds began* to be,
He is Alpha and Ome*ga,
He the Source, the End*ing, He
Of the things that are, that have* been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore*.

O that birth forever bless*èd!
When the Virgin, full* of grace,
By the Holy Ghost conceiv*ing,
Bare the Savior of* our race;
And the Babe, the world's Redeem*er,
First revealed His sacred face,
Evermore and evermore*.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2015 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.
Words: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 5th century;
transl. by John M. Neale and Henry W. Baker.
Hymn tune: DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, Plainsong, 11th century

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

This is the exhortation of the God of love:

Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another;
for those who love others have fulfilled the law.
*For all of the commandments are summed up in this word,
"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
Love does no wrong to a neighbor;
therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.*
As those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved,
put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

– from Romans 13:8-10, Colossians 3:12, 14

Lord Jesus Christ,

**We confess our willingness to be loved,
but also our reluctance to love others as You have loved us.**

[Silence]

**We confess our readiness to accept Your forgiving love,
but also our reluctance to forgive as we have been forgiven.**

[Silence]

**We confess our eagerness to receive Your redeeming love,
but also our resistance to follow You without question.**

[Silence]

**In this Advent season of expectation,
forgive us our failures to respond as we should.
Come to us anew, and by Your grace grant that we may walk in love,
just as Christ has loved us, to the glory of Your name.**

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
Have mercy on me, a sinner.
Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me.

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Music for this setting of the ancient hymn, Of the Father's Love Begotten, is available in the sheet music catalog (Hymn Settings) as a lead sheet and as a sung response or doxology with melody line, chord chart and scored keyboard or organ part.

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/fathers-love-begotten>

For the ease of congregational singing, asterisks indicate syllables that are sung with more than one melodic note.

You may also hear a live recording of Of the Father's Love Begotten in the Audio Media Studio.

https://clerestorynotes.com/live/content/music_library/fathers-love-begotten-clip

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The proof of God's amazing love is this:
while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
*There is therefore now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus.*
**And we know that nothing shall ever separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

– Romans 5:8, 8:1,39

Thanks be to God!

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of praise, gratitude, and hope

In the psalms of David and the words of the prophets,
Your promise is spoken, Almighty and all-loving God,
and takes flesh in the fullness of time in the virgin's womb.

**May Emmanuel find welcome anew in our hearts
and become incarnate in our lives.**

**In gratitude and in worship,
we now bring Your tithes and our offerings.**

Come Emmanuel

Come and speak to us, come and renew us;
Come and live through us, Emmanuel.
Grace to implore us, ever before us;
Come and restore us, Emmanuel.

Come Emmanuel, come Emmanuel;
Come Emmanuel, come Emmanuel.

Once mercy found us, still You astound us;
Hold and surround us, Emmanuel.
Living inside us, faithful to guide us;
Cover and hide us, Emmanuel.

Come Emmanuel, come Emmanuel;
Come Emmanuel, come –

Love that begins us, pardons and wins us;
Come and reign in us, Emmanuel.
Come and speak to us, fill and renew us;
Come and live through us, Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel.

CCLI Song #3999938 (lyrics). ©2003 Ariose Music. Twila Paris.

LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Lighting of the candle

*We light this candle as a symbol of proclamation
and in the love that Jesus, our Savior, has for us.*

Response:

**O Root of Jesse, who stands for an ensign of the people,
before whom kings shall keep silence
and to whom all nations shall pray:
Come and deliver us, do not delay.**

*Lighting of the Advent Candles can be
done by individuals or small groups of
people. The readings from week to
week are taken from the texts of the
lectionary.*

*The congregational responses are
drawn from the traditional O Anti-
phons.*

THE WORD

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

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 (spoken)

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation,

But deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

Forever. Amen

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heav'n to earth come down!

Fix in us Thy humble dwelling; all Thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesus, Thou art all compassion; pure, unbounded love Thou art.

Visit us with Thy salvation; enter every trembling heart.

Breathe, O breathe, Thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast!

Let us all in Thee inherit; let us find the promised rest.

Take away our bent to sinning; Alpha and Omega be.

End of faith, as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.

Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all Thy life receive.

Suddenly return, and never, nevermore Thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing, serve Thee as Thy hosts above,

Pray and praise thee without ceasing, glory in Thy perfect love.

Finish then Thy new creation; pure and spotless let us be.

Let us see Thy great salvation perfectly restored in Thee:

Changed from glory into glory, till in heav'n we take our place,

Till we cast our crowns before Thee, lost in wonder, love and praise.

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Words: Charles Wesley, 1747. Hymn tune: BEECHER, John Zundel, 1870.

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

Hail to the Lord's Anointed (verse 4)

O'er every foe victorious,
He on His throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious,
All blessing and all blest.
The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever,
His name to us is Love.
His name to us is Love.

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Hymn tune: ST. THEODULPH, Melchior Teschner, 1615.
Words: James Montgomery; based on Psalm 72; first sung on Christmas Day, 1821

Benediction:

Beloved, hear and receive these words of blessing into your hearts,
as you go forth into the world to love and serve the Lord –

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony,
that together you may glorify
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
And may the God of hope
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope and expectation,
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

– from Romans 15:5-6. 13

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

A thought about worship...– “In Advent we celebrate the beginning and ending of Christ’s victory over the powers of evil, and we call upon God to accomplish that victory in our own lives, to break in on us, to be born in our hearts, and to create us anew. This is the message of Isaiah to us: a Savior is coming not only to Israel but to the whole world.” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 44).

Lectionary for next week: Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
Luke 1:46b-55
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

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