

Liturgy
The Third Sunday of Advent (Joy)



GATHERING

Leader: We are gathered in joyful expectation
to praise and worship the LORD,
Emmanuel, the Coming One.

Sing praises to the LORD, for He has done glorious things;
Let this be known in all the earth.

*Shout aloud, and sing for joy, O people of Zion,
for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.*

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous;
And shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous!

For praise from the upright is beautiful.

We have trusted in Your lovingkindness;
Our hearts shall rejoice in Your salvation.

We will sing to the LORD,

Because He has dealt bountifully with us.

Leader: Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You;
And let those who love Your salvation say continually:
“**The LORD be magnified!**”

– Isaiah 12:5-6; Psalms 32:11, 33:1, 13:5-6, 40:16

Let It Rise

Let the glory of the Lord
Rise among us;
Let the glory of the Lord
Rise among us;
Let the praises of the King
Rise among us;
Let it rise.

Let the songs of the Lord
Rise among us;
Let the songs of the Lord
Rise among us;
Let the joy of the King
Rise among us;
Let it rise.

Oh, let it rise. Oh, let it rise

CCLI Song #2240585 © 1997, 1999 Maranatha Praise, Inc.; Holland Davis

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

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Isaiah 12:2-6

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

On this third Sunday of Advent, we light the candle of Joy. Traditionally, during Advent the Church has observed a season of watchful preparation and fasting. On this third Sunday, also known as Gaudete Sunday (gaudete is Latin for “rejoice”), fasting gives way to feasting as we rejoice in the hopeful expectation of the promised blessings the Coming One brings with His Advent.

In some churches, you may notice the joyful tone of Gaudete Sunday reflected in the colors used to curate the worship space. The dominant color throughout the season of Advent is purple, which calls to mind the royalty of Christ. Traditionally the liturgical color for today, however, is rose, seen most especially in the color of the candle.

The gathering antiphonal reading is written for a leader and two other readers or groups within the congregation, with the entire congregation reading the text in bold. Based on today’s poetic reading in Isaiah, it weaves in complementary psalm passages that speak of the many reasons for, and expressions of, our joy in the LORD.

Behold the Lord

Great and marvelous are Your works,
Oh Lord Almighty.
True and righteous are all Your ways,
King of the ages.
Who will not fear You, oh Lord,
And glorify Your Name?

Chorus

Behold the Lord,
God is my salvation;
In Him I trust,
And will not be afraid.
And I will give thanks,
And sing among the nations forever;
Behold the Lord; behold the Lord;
Behold the Lord.

So rejoice and be glad in this:
Our God is with us;
Messiah, Emmanuel,
Lion of Judah.
Lift up your voice and declare
The glory of our King.

Bridge

Join the song of Moses
And the song of the Lamb,
The thunderous praises of one new man;
The Kingdom of the Messiah is at hand.

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Paintbrush Music | Lynn DeShazo Music.
Paul Wilbur, Lynn DeShazo, Gary Sadler.

INVOCATION

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

O Dayspring, Splendor of Eternal Light and Sun of Righteousness:
**Come and enlighten those who sit in darkness
and in the shadow of death.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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!

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.

This is a wonderful contemporary song to use on the Gaudete Sunday. It is based on today's lection in Isaiah 12, and turns our attention in song to the reason for our rejoicing in this Advent season: our God, Messiah, Emmanuel, is with us. Therefore, let us lift up our voices and declare His glory!

As last week, we have drawn the closing words of our corporate prayers of invocation from one of the O Anti-iphons. Harkening back at least to the eighth century, if not earlier, that ancient hymn traditionally was sung in Vespers service on each of the last seven days of Advent. The O Anti-iphons are filled with beautiful biblical imagery and wonderful theology of the hope of Christ's coming. The verses we sing at Invocation each week correspond to and reflect the journey of these Advent weeks: Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace.

Ellen's setting of O Come, O Come, Emmanuel is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet. As we've noted in the past two weeks' comments, the harmonic arrangement varies from verse to verse, which is especially moving when all four verses are sung at one point in a service. Separated week by week, as we are doing throughout this season, they highlight the movement of our Advent watchfulness as the Sundays build toward the celebration of Christ's birth on December 25.

Here's a link to the Music Room:

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

PROFESSION OF FAITH

God, who at various times and in various ways
spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,
has in these last days spoken to us by His Son,
whom He appointed heir of all things,
through whom also He made the world,
and who is the radiance of His glory
and the exact representation of His nature.

*When the fullness of time had come,
God sent forth His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
born a descendant of David according to the flesh;
born of a woman, born under the Law;
in the likeness of sinful flesh, to be an offering for our sin;
so that He might redeem us,
that we might receive adoption as His children.*

**God also highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him
the name that is above every name,
so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

– from Hebrews 1:1-3; Romans 1:3, 8:3-4; Galatians 4:3-4, Philippians 2:9-11

Gaudete (Rejoice!)

Antiphon:

Gaudete! Gaudete! Christus est natus
Ex Maria virgine, Gaudete!

(Translation: Rejoice, rejoice! Christ is born of the virgin Mary; rejoice!)

Cantor:

Time of Grace has come we've prayed, Time of Grace is on us;
Let us sing our songs of joy, songs of our salvation.

God made man is born today, born while nature wonders;
All is new by Christ the King, King of all the ages.

Darkness that has bound the soul, shattered with this dawning;
Where the light is shining bright salvation is calling.

Therefore let us all rejoice! Purity surrounds us.
Let us bless the Lord, our King, heaven's voice resounding!.

Traditional.

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him,
on those who hope in His steadfast love.

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

For our heart rejoices in Him,
because we trust in His holy name.

*Let Your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us,
Even as we hope in You.*

– Psalm 33:18, 20-22

The Profession of Faith is drawn from several Epistle passages that speak of the promise and coming of Christ, the Word of God, who became incarnate "in the fullness of time." These passages, together with the sung Gaudete, are a powerful proclamation of the joy attendant on our faith.

This traditional carol, thought to have been formally composed in the sixteenth century, is based on a medieval chant tune. We revised the final cantor line to be more fitting for Advent: "Let us bless the Lord, our King, heav'n and earth resounding!" (The original reads, "Jesus Christ is born today, heaven's voice resounding!")

Try having your congregation sing the refrain ("Antiphon") in Latin. It's best to use an acoustic drum on this song. (We like to use an Irish bodhran.)

Most merciful God, always with us, always coming:
You pardon all who truly repent and turn to You.

**We confess with sadness
that we have not always kept watch for You.
We have occupied ourselves with our own concerns.
We have not loved You with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

[Silent confessions]

Have mercy on us, O God, in Your loving-kindness.
In Your great compassion, cleanse us from our sin.

**Create in us a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within us.
Restore to us the joy of our salvation
and sustain us with Your bountiful Spirit,
that we may walk in Your ways always,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

– based on Psalm 51:10-12

O Little Town of Bethlehem (verse 4)

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.

We hear the great glad tidings
The prophets did foretell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

Public domain. Words: Philip Brooks, 1867;
Music: Lewis Redner, 1868.
(Lyric alteration for Advent)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The word of the Lord, His faithful and true promise:

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness,
you who seek the LORD.

For the LORD will comfort His people;
joy and gladness will be found in them,
thanksgiving and the voice of song.

And His justice will be a light to the peoples:
His salvation will be forever,
and His deliverance will never be ended.

– from Isaiah 51:1-6

**Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid.
For the LORD GOD is my strength and my song.**

Therefore with joy we draw water from the wells of salvation.

We sing, and shout aloud for joy;
for great in our midst is the Holy One of Israel!

– from Isaiah 12:2-6

Thanks be to God!

This corporate prayer of confession is adapted for Advent from the Book of Common Prayer, Morning Prayer, rite two, and from David's prayer of confession recorded in Psalm 51.

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of thanksgiving and devotion

Jesus, I am Resting

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the joy of what Thou art.
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.
Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee,
And Thy beauty fills my soul.
For by Thy transforming power,
Thou hast made me whole.

Chorus:

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the joy of what Thou art.
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.

Oh, how great Thy loving kindness,
Vaster, broader than the sea.
Oh, how marvelous Thy goodness
Lavished all on me.
Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved,
Know what wealth of grace is Thine;
Know Thy certainty of promise
And have made it mine.

Chorus

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
I behold Thee as Thou art.
And Thy love so pure, so changeless,
Satisfies my heart;
Satisfies its deepest longings,
Meets, supplies its ev'ry need,
Compasseth me 'round with blessings,
This is love indeed.

Chorus

CCLI Song #2697066; ©1998 New Spring;
Words by Jean Sophia Pigott; Music by David Hampton.

We sing three verses of this updated hymn here, at Offering, and close the service with the fourth verse as a sung prayer of joyful confidence in His promises.

If you'd like something a little quicker in tempo, here's another suggestion that richly echoes the themes of Advent: Rejoice, The Lord Is King.

“Rejoice, the Lord is King; your God and King adore! Rejoice, give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Give thanks and sing, rejoice, rejoice! The Lord is King. ... Rejoice in glorious hope! Our Lord, the Judge, shall come and take His servants up to their eternal home. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice ...”

Music for Ellen's setting of Rejoice, the Lord Is King is available in the music catalog as lead sheet, arranged for voice and piano, and as a choral arrangement that begins for two voices and expands to four parts. This setting is joyful, with a 6/8 meter. The melody is loosely based on the traditional hymn tune.

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/rejoice-lord-king>

LIGHTING OF THE THIRD ADVENT CANDLE: JOY

Reading: Zephaniah 3:14-17

Lighting of the candle

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord.

We light this candle as a symbol of joy.

**May the joyful promise of Your presence, O God,
make us rejoice in our hope of salvation.
O come, O come, Emmanuel!**

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

THE WORD

Zephaniah 3:14-20

Isaiah 12:2-6;

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:7-18

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!

Our Father in Heaven (sung)

Our Father in heaven, Your name is holy,
Your name is holy, our Father.
Your kingdom come,
And Your will be done
Here on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us, we pray, our bread for today,
Our debts forgive and in turn we will live,
Forgiving of what others owe.
Keep us from trials;
Save us from our ancient foe!

As we sing the kingdom,
We sing the power,
We sing the glory be Yours –
Forever. Amen. Amen. Amen!

Chris Alford and Ellen Koehler.
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Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men;
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood,
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee Thou art good,
To them that find Thee all in all.

We taste Thee, O Thou living bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the fountainhead,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

Music for this setting of the Lord's Prayer, Our Father in Heaven, is available in the sheet music catalog as a lead sheet, and as a solo/melody line with piano accompaniment on request.

Here's a link to the Music Room:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/our-father-heaven>

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts is a beautiful song of Communion contemplation for this third week of Advent. This arrangement sets the traditional hymn text with a new tune. It is written as a choral anthem, but is lovely when sung by the congregation. The original hymn tune, or another alternate setting, would also be appropriate and meaningful.

An alternate choice: Jesus, I Am Resting, if you didn't use it at the time of Offering, above.

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad when Thy gracious smile we see,
Blest when our faith can hold Thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay,
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away,
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

CCLI Song #322543 Words: Bernard of Clairveaux; tr. Ray Palmer.
Music: Claude L. Bass ©1960 Broadman Press

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

Jesus, I am Resting (verse 4)

Ever lift Thy face upon me as I work and wait for Thee;
Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus, earth's dark shadows flee.
Brightness of the Father's glory, sunshine of my Father's face,
Keep me ever trusting, resting, fill me with Thy grace.

Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art.
I am finding out the greatness of Thy loving heart.

CCLI Song #2697066; ©1998 New Spring; Words by Jean Sophia Pigott; Music by David Hampton.

Benediction:

Beloved, hear and take these words of blessing and exhortation into your hearts,
as you watch and wait with eager anticipation the coming of Christ:

Rejoice in the Lord always.

Let your gentleness be known to everyone.

The Lord is near.

So may the peace of God,

which surpasses all understanding,

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. – from Philippians 4:4-7

Amen.

Now, may our Lord Jesus Christ, who came once in humility and will come
again in triumph and glory, fill your hearts with joyful expectation at all times,
as you go forth into the world to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God!

Come quickly Lord Jesus. Maranatha!

A thought about worship...—“Advent is the time when God breaks in on us with new surprises and touches us with a renewing and restoring power.... We should use the Advent season as a period to identify the matters from which we need to be redeemed. Identify whatever it is that seems to be holding you in its power.... Commit it to the One who comes to set the prisoners free, turn it over to Christ in prayer, and ask the one who has come into your life to take this problem up into Himself.” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 38, 51).

Lectionary for next week: Micah 5:2-5a
Psalm 80:1-7
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-55

An alternate choice for a song of dismissal and sending is to reprise the fourth verse of Rejoice, the Lord Is King. It, too, is a wonderful way to be sent out into the world to love and serve the Lord with joy!