

Liturgy
The Fourth Sunday of Advent (Peace)



GATHERING

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 lovingkindness come to us,
Your salvation according to Your promise.**

*Show us Your unfailing love, O LORD,
and grant us Your salvation.*

Let us hear what God the LORD says,
for He speaks peace to His faithful people.

*Faithfulness springs up from the ground,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.*

**The LORD will indeed give what is good.
Righteousness will go before Him
and shall make His footsteps our pathway.**

*Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,
that His glory may dwell among us.*

May the LORD make His face to shine upon us.
With preparation and in expectation,
let us worship Him!

– Scripture weaving from Psalms 50, 119, and 85

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

*2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38, 46b-55*

This fourth Sunday of Advent brings us nearly to the end of our journey of preparation, waiting, and watching with eager anticipation the coming of the Lord. During this 4-week season, we focus our hearts and minds on the Advent—the coming of the promised Messiah, the Savior of the world—in three ways. We joyfully look forward to the Christmas celebration of the first coming of the Word made flesh. At the same time, we watch and wait expectantly for His second Advent, when He will come again in all His glory and triumphant power at the end of the age. And we thankfully meditate on what Bernard of Clairvaux called the third Advent, the coming of Christ into our own lives, and pray that He again—continually—will be born in our hearts and create us anew.

On the first three Sundays of Advent, we considered the ways in which Hope, Love, and Joy are promised, manifested, and fulfilled in this three-fold longing for the Coming One. Today, the Sunday of Peace, we turn our attention to the birth of the Prince of Peace, and ponder—with awe—that He has brought us near to Him to share in His peace. And we gladly worship Him, whose birth was in humility and lowly estate but who will come again in glory. For He is King of kings, Lord of lords, and Prince of peace.

The Gathering antiphonal reading is written for two groups, or other individual readers, and the congregation. It weaves together Psalm texts that speak of the covenant blessings and promises of peace the Lord gives to us, His people.

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.

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

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

O King and Desire of the nations,
Cornerstone that binds them into one:
**Come, and deliver us whom You formed
out of the dust of the earth.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

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.

Ellen's arrangement and setting of Hail to the Lord's Anointed is available on request. (You may write us at clerestorynotes@gmail.com) The meter is a dancing 6/8, with a distinct Celtic feel.

In this service, we sing the first three verses here, as our hymn of Gathering, and the final verse at the conclusion of the service.

In this year C, we are using one verse of this ancient hymn each week as a sung prayer of Invocation. Each of the verses is based on one of the eighth-century "O Antiphons," traditionally sung in Vespers service on each of the last seven days of Advent. They 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—today—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

Let us speak together the words of Paul
as he declared the Advent of the Prince of Peace:

**We are set apart for the gospel of God,
which He promised beforehand through His prophets
in the holy scriptures –
The gospel concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who was descended from David according to the flesh,
and was declared to be the Son of God with power
according to the Spirit of holiness,
by the resurrection from the dead.
In Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through Him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of His cross.
For He Himself is our peace.**

To all God's beloved, who are called to be saints:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

– Romans 1:1-7; Colossians 1:19-20; Ephesians 2:14

Good Christians All, Rejoice

Good Christians all, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice.
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Peace! Peace!
Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all
To gain His everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

Hymn tune: IN DULCI JUBILO (14th-century German melody).
Latin carol, transl. John Mason Neale, 1853.
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PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Call to confession:

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
You who lead Joseph like a flock.

**You who are enthroned above the cherubim,
Shine forth!**

*Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us Your salvation.*

[Silence]

The Profession of Faith is taken from three passages in Paul's Epistles that speak specifically to the Person and Work of Christ as the victorious Prince of Peace, and to the peace Christ has given to us, His beloved children.

Ellen's setting of Good Christians All, Rejoice is available in the Sheet Music Catalog (Season of Light section) as a lead sheet. See the Commentary in the Music Room for a discussion of the history of this carol and some creative suggestions for using it during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/good-christians-all-rejoice>

**Come, and restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make Your face shine upon us,
that we may be saved.**

Spoken prayers of confession

**Come, and restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make Your face shine upon us,
that we may be saved.**

– texts from Psalms 80:1-3, 19; 85:7

Send Out Your Light

Send out Your light, Lord,
Send out Your truth;
Send them that they may guide us.
Lord, may they bring us
Into Your courts,
To the heart of Your dwelling places.

Send out Your light, Lord,
Send out Your truth;
Send them that they may guide us.
Come, and restore us,
Lord God of Hosts;
Make Your face shine upon us,
That we may be saved.

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Words based on Psalms 43:4, 84:1-2, and 80:19.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for He has looked favorably on His people,
and redeemed them.

*God has raised up a mighty Savior from the house of David.
He has shown the mercy promised to our fathers,
and remembered His holy covenant.*

In the tender compassion of our God,
the Dayspring from on high has come to us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

– from Luke 1:68-79

In Christ we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God!

Music for Send Out Your Light is available in the Psalm Settings section of the music catalog as a lead sheet, scored for voice and piano accompaniment, and arranged for 2-part and 3-part harmony. This beautiful sung prayer expressing the heart's cry for God's presence can be used throughout the year, but is especially meaningful during the seasons of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany.

You can hear Send Out Your Light in the Audio Media Studio. It is also available for viewing in the Video Library.

Here are links:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/send-out-your-light>

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

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of gratitude and praise

The Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
And my spirit exults in God my Savior.
For He has looked with mercy on my lowliness,
And His name will be forever exalted.
For the mighty God has done great things for me,
And His mercy will reach from age to age.

And holy, holy, holy is His name.

He has mercy in ev'ry generation;
He has revealed His power and His glory.
He has cast down the mighty in their arrogance,
And has lifted up the meek and the lowly.
He has come to help His servant Israel;
He remembers His promise to our fathers.

CCLI Song # 14497 ©1980 Birdwing Music; John Michael Talbot

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE: PEACE

Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

Lighting of the candle

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord.

We light this candle as a symbol of peace.

**May the visitation of your Holy Spirit, O God,
purify us that we may be ready for the coming of Jesus,
our hope, our joy, and our peace.
O come, O come, Emmanuel!**

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

THE WORD

Micah 5:2-5a

Psalm 80:1-7

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-55

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, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heav'n.
Provide each day our daily needs;
Forgive our sins
As we forgive others' wrongs;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom,
Forever and ever;
And Thine is the power,
Forever and ever;
And Thine is the glory,
Now and forever,
Amen, amen, amen.

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Fullness of Grace

Fullness of grace in man's human frailty,
This is the wonder of Jesus.
Laying aside His power and glory,
Humbly He entered our world.
Chose the path of meanest worth;
Scandal of a virgin birth.
Born in a stable, cold and rejected;
Here lies the hope of the world.

Fullness of grace, the love of the Father
Shown in the face of Jesus.
Stooping to bear the weight of humanity,
Walking the Calvary road.
Christ the holy innocent
Took our sin and punishment.
Fullness of God, despised and rejected;
Crushed for the sins of the world.

Fullness of hope in Christ we had longed for,
Promise of God in Jesus.
Through His obedience we are forgiven,
Op'ning the floodgates of heav'n.
All our hopes and dreams we bring
Gladly as an offering.
Fullness of life and joy unspeakable:
God's gift in love to the world.

CCLI Song #4411752 ©2004 Thankyou Music.
Keith Getty, Kristyn Getty, Stuart Townend.

Music for The Lord's Prayer is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet and scored for voice and piano. It is also available in the music collection, Singing the Liturgy, Volume 1.

Here's the link to the Music Room:
<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/lords-prayer>

You can hear The Lord's Prayer in the Audio Media Studio.

https://clerestorynotes.com/live/content/music_library/lords-prayer-clip

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.

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Benediction:

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

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.

Amen.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely,
and preserve you complete and blameless
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

– based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Thanks be to God!

Come quickly Lord Jesus. Maranatha!

A thought about worship... – “Advent is a time to review once again where our faith is placed and how our lives are lived. Trust in Jesus is not merely a onetime act but a continuous state of being, a moment-by-moment existence in Christ. It is a daily turning from a life lived for self to a life lived in tune with the power of the Spirit who continually calls us to be like Jesus.” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 52).

Lectionary for next week: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalms 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

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*We reprise the final verse of our
Gathering hymn here, as a strong and
confident reminder and declaration
that we live in the blessings of eternal
covenant relationship with the victori-
ous Prince of Peace.*