



**A Service of Music
And Readings
For Advent**



O COME,
O COME,
EMMANUEL

Newport Minster

Choir – Advent Message

Among the Poor – Advent Litany

First Reading Genesis 1.1-5

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness he called “night.” And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

Carol

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.*

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.*

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.

O come, thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, O come, thou Lord of Might,
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height,
In ancient times did give the law
In cloud and majesty and awe:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

Bidding Prayer

It is time for us to wake out of sleep, for deliverance is nearer to us now than it was when first we believed. It is far on in the night; day is near. Let us therefore cast off the deeds of darkness and put on our armour as soldiers of the light.

The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ be with you

All **and also with you.**

My brothers and sisters, we enter today the season of Advent in which we prepare to celebrate the coming of Christ; a coming that we recall in the Child of Bethlehem; a coming that we experience in the gift of his Spirit, in the bread of the Eucharist, in the joy of human lives that are shared; a coming we wait for when God gathers up all things in Christ.

Let us in this holy season reflect on the coming of Christ who brings light to the world. Let us leave behind the darkness of sin, walk in the light that shines on our path, and renew within ourselves the hope of glory to which he beckons us. And as we turn towards the light, let us have on our hearts all those who see no light, for whom all is darkness and despair. Let us pray that they too may be illumined by Christ who is our light.

A Short time of silence is kept

Almighty God,
give us grace to cast away the works of darkness
and to put on the armour of light,
now in the time of this mortal life,
in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great
humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again
in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead,
we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is

alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

All **Amen**

Carol

O day of God, draw nigh
In beauty and in power,
Come with thy timeless judgment now
To match our present hour.

Bring to our troubled minds,
Uncertain and afraid,
The quiet of a steadfast faith,
Calm of a call obeyed.

Bring justice to our land,
That all may dwell secure,
And finely build for days to come
Foundations that endure.

Bring to our world of strife
Thy sovereign word of peace,
That war may haunt the earth no more
And desolation cease.

O Day of God, draw nigh;
As at creation's birth
Let there be light again, and set
Thy judgments in the earth.

Second Reading Isaiah 45.2-8

I will go before you
and level the mountains,
I will break in pieces the doors of bronze
and cut through the bars of iron,
I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the Lord,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.
For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.
I am the Lord, and there is no other;
besides me there is no god.
I arm you, though you do not know me,
so that they may know, from the rising of the sun
and from the west, that there is no one besides me;
I am the Lord, and there is no other.
I form light and create darkness,
I make weal and create woe;
I the Lord do all these things.
Shower, O heavens, from above,
and let the skies rain down righteousness;
let the earth open, that salvation may spring up,^[b]
and let it cause righteousness to sprout up also;
I the Lord have created it

Choir – Gabriel's Message

Third Reading Isaiah 9.2,3,6,7

The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Prayers – Open Our Eyes Lord

Open our eyes, Lord
especially if they are half-shut
because we are tired of looking,
or half open

because we fear to see too much,
or bleared with tears
because yesterday and today and tomorrow
are filled with the same pain,
or contracted,
because we only look at what we want to see.

Open our eyes , Lord
to gently scan the life we lead,
the home we have,
the world we inhabit,
and so to find,
among the gremlins and the greyness,
signs of hope we can fasten on and encourage.

Give us, whose eyes are dimmed by familiarity,
a bigger vision of what you can do
even with hopeless cases and lost causes
and people of limited ability.

(Silence)

Show us the world as in your sight,
riddled by debt, deceit and disbelief,
yet also
shot through with possibility
for recovery, renewal, redemption.

(Silence)

And lest we fail to distinguish vision from fantasy,
today, tomorrow, this week,

open our eyes to one person
or one place,
where we – being even for a moment prophetic –
might identify and wean a potential in the waiting.
(Silence)

And with all this,
open our eyes, in yearning, for Jesus.
(Silence)

On the mountains,
in the cities,
through the corridors of power
and streets of despair,
to help, to heal,
to confront, to convert,
O come, O come, Immanuel.

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Carol

The Saviour will come, resplendent in joy;
The lame and the sick new strength will enjoy.
The desert, rejoicing, will burst into flower,
The deaf and the speechless will sing in that hour!

The Saviour will come, like rain on the earth,
To harvest at last his crop of great worth.

In patience await him, with firmness of mind;
Both mercy and judgment his people will find.

The Saviour will come, his truth he shall see:
Where lepers are cleansed and captives set free.
No finely clad princeling in palace of gold,
But Christ with his people,
O wonder untold!

Fourth Reading 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11,23-24

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore

encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Carol

Behold, the Saviour of the nations
shall spring from David's royal line,
to rule with mercy all the peoples,
and judge with righteousness divine!

He shall delight in truth and wisdom,
with justice for the meek and poor,
and reconcile his whole creation,
where beasts of prey shall hunt no more.

Here may his word, with hope abounding,
unite us all in peace and love,
to live as one with all creation,
redeemed by mercy from above.

Prepare the way with awe and wonder;
salvation comes on judgement's wing,
for God will purify his people,
and 'Glory!' all the earth shall sing.

Gospel Reading John 3.16-21

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

All **Glory to you, O Lord**

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.’

At the end the reader says

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Choir - In the Bleak Midwinter

For the Darkness and the Light

For the darkness of waiting
of not knowing what is to come
of staying ready and quiet and attentive,
we praise you, O God:

All **For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.**

For the darkness of staying silent
for the terror of having nothing to say
and for the greater terror
of needed to say nothing,
we praise you, O God:

All **For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.**

For the darkness of loving
in which it is safe to surrender
to let go of our self-protection
and to stop holding back our desire,
we praise you, O God:

All **For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.**

For the darkness of choosing
when you give us the moment
to speak, and act, and change,
and we cannot know what we have set in motion
but we still have to take the risk,
we praise you, O God:

All **For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.**

For the darkness of hoping
in a world which longs for you,
for the wrestling and the labouring of all creation
we praise you, O God:

All **For the darkness and the light
are both alike to you.**

Janet Morley

Carol

Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia!
Christ 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,
Shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers:
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, Amen, let all adore thee,
High on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia!
Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in
glory;

and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**



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