

An Ancient-Future Faith Community
Liturgy
December 6, 2020



GATHERING

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!

Text: Latin hymn, 12th century; transl. John M. Neale, 1851.
Hymn tune: VENI EMMANUEL, 15th century plainsong.

The Mighty One, God, the LORD, speaks
and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth!

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,

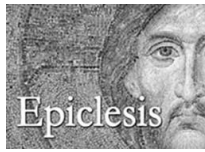
Your salvation according to Your promise.

**May the LORD make His face to shine upon us,
and show us His unfailing love.**

With preparation and in expectation, then,
let us worship the Coming One!

— from Psalms 50, 85, 119





Long Ago, Prophets Knew

Long ago, prophets knew Christ would come, born a Jew,
Come to make all things new,
Bear his people's burden, freely love and pardon.
Ring bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing choirs sing, sing, sing!
When He comes, when He comes, who will make him welcome?

God in time, God in man, this is God's timeless plan;
He will come, as a man,
Born himself of woman, God divinely human.
Ring bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing choirs sing, sing, sing!
When He comes, when He comes, who will make him welcome?

Mary, hail! Though afraid, she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb, God is laid
Till the time expected, nurtured and protected.
Ring bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing choirs sing, sing, sing!
When He comes, when He comes, who will make him welcome?

Journey ends! Where afar Bethl'hem shines, like a star,
Stable door stands ajar,
Unborn Son of Mary, Savior, do not tarry!
Ring bells, ring, ring, ring! Sing choirs sing, sing, sing!
Jesus comes, Jesus comes, we will make him welcome!

Tune: PERSONENT HODIE, 1582, arr. Gustav Holst. Public domain.

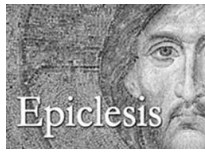
Words: Fred Pratt Green. ©1971 Hope Publishing. CCLI Song #4944078 (lyrics)

PRAYERS OF ADORATION, INVOCATION AND THANKS

Calling on our Father God, in the Name of Jesus, inspired by the Spirit

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*ed!
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*. A*men.

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

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.*

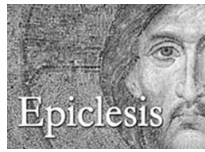
And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.

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.**

Nicene Creed



PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Show us Your steadfast love, O God, our Savior,
and grant us Your salvation.

Listen to what the LORD our God says:

*He promises peace to his people, His faithful servants,
to those who turn their hearts to Him.*

— Psalm 85:7-8

Merciful God, You pardon all who truly repent and turn to You.

We humbly confess our sins and ask Your mercy.

[Silence]

We do not always love You with a pure heart.

We do not always love our neighbor as ourselves.

We do not always do justice and love kindness.

[Silent confessions]

**We desire to walk humbly with You, in Your ways, for the sake of
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Have mercy on us, O God, in Your
loving-kindness. Cleanse us from our sin, that we may be holy
and blameless before You.**

The Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.
(repeat)

Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison, Lord Jesus, have mercy on me.

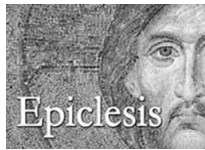
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ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

*Lovingkindness and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.*

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



The LORD will indeed give what is good;
righteousness will go before Him
and shall make His footsteps our pathway.
Thanks be to God!

— from Psalm 85:9-13

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of praise and gratitude

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.

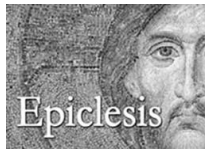
Come Emmanuel, come Emmanuel;
Come Emmanuel, come Emmanuel.

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.

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LIGHTING OF THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE: LOVE

Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

Lighting of the candle

Prepare the way of the Lord.

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

**May the word sent from God
through the prophets
lead us to the way of salvation.
O come, O come, Emmanuel!**

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



THE WORD

Isaiah 40:1-11
2 Peter 3:8-15a

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13
Mark 1:1-8

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

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.

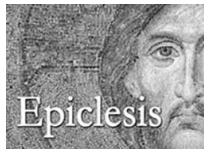
It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again!





The Lord's Prayer (spoken)

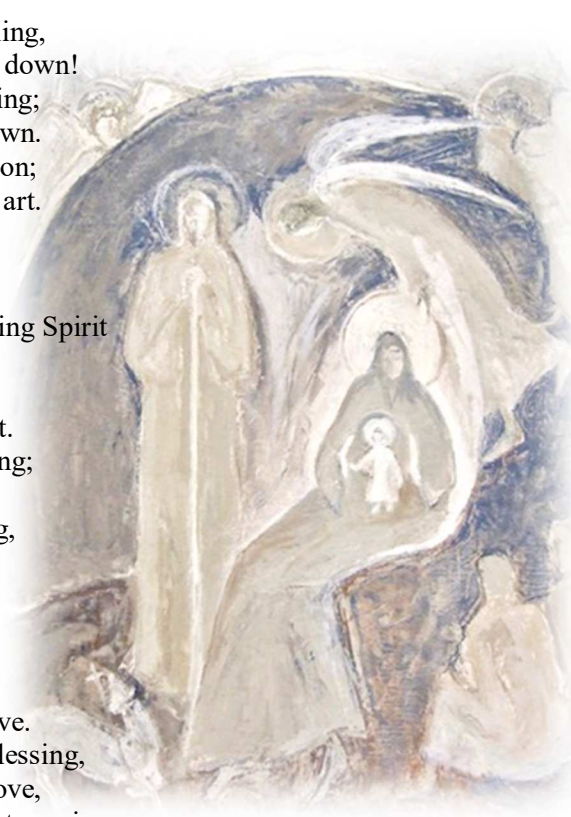
**Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

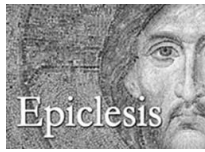
Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heav'n to earth come down!
Fix in us Thy humble dwelling;
All Thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, Thou art all compassion;
Pure, unbounded love Thou art.
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.

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.



Setting: Ellen Koehler. ©2011. Words: Charles Wesley. Hymn tune: John Zundel, BEECHER



SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (reprise verse 4)

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.

Benediction:

Dear friends, stretch out your hands and receive these words of blessing into your hearts, as you go out into your world to love and serve the Lord – watching and waiting with eager anticipation the coming of Christ:

May the love of God, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you and go with you all;
May the Lord strengthen your discipline of preparedness so you will increase and abound in love;
And may He so strengthen your hearts that you may be found spotless, blameless and at peace with our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

– based on 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

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).

Image credits. p. 1: “Straight forward” (unattrib.); p. 7 Macha Chmakoff, “Nativité à l’Agneau,” contemp.

Lectionary for next week: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Luke 1:46b-55;
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community
www.Epiclesis.org | Info line: (916)572-9113
Sunday mornings at The Carmichael Chapel, 4600 Winding Way
(Corner of Winding Way and Pasadena), Sacramento, CA 95841.
Informal gathering: 10:00 AM; Worship at 10:30 AM.

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