

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT



Hymn 1: Lo, he comes with clouds descending

1. Lo, he comes with clouds descending,
Once for mortal sinners slain;
Thousand thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Christ appears on earth to reign.
2. Ev'ry eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
We who set at naught and sold him,
Pierced and nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing, deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.
3. Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers:
With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!
4. Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
High on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
Claim the Kingdom for thine own.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into your kingdom of peace.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Collect:

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 and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of Isaiah

64. 1-9

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence - as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil - to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence! When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of

you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever. Now consider, we are all your people.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 80. 1-7

Response: Let your face shine, O God, that we might be saved.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock!

You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. (R)

Stir up your might and come to save us!

Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

O Lord God of hosts how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

You have fed them with the bread of tears

and given them tears to drink in full measure. (R)

You make us the scorn of our neighbours;
our enemies laugh among themselves.

Restore us, O God of hosts;

let your face shine, that we may be saved. (R)

A reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians

1. 3-9

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind - just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you - so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

"Keep Alert," says the Lord. "for you do not know when the time will come."

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Mark

13. 24-37

Glorify to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, 'But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in clouds" with great power and glory. Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven. From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake - for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

***Meditation:** Today we celebrate Advent Sunday at the beginning of a new Church's year. In our lectionary we enter year B the year of Mark and most of our Gospel readings each week will come from the second Gospel. During Advent we reflect upon the relationship between God and his people from the very beginning. Today we think of the patriarchs, the first to hear the call of God and the first to respond to his call. We think of Abraham, Jacob and Moses. These people heard the call of God and it completely changed their lives. Abraham left his tribal homelands and journeyed to an unknown land trusting only in God's promises to bring him to a new land where his family would grow and prosper. Moses, raised as a Prince in the court of Pharaoh, left his life of privilege to lead his people into the unknown of the wilderness again trusting only in God's promises that he would lead them to the Promised Land. It was to these Old Testament patriarchs that God first revealed his presence and the presence of his Kingdom to those he called to be his people. The Kingdom of God, first revealed to the Patriarchs, was revealed most fully to the world in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus Christ the Messiah. Throughout Advent we celebrate the Kingdom of Christ, as we do every Sunday, and we give thanks that he has called us to live as citizens of his Kingdom, that he has brought us into fellowship with him and*

with one another into one great family, the family of God, the Communion of Saints. As we look back today to the time of the Patriarchs we give thanks for the continued presence of Christ in the world and in our own lives today and we look forward to the coming of the Kingdom in all its fullness, on the day he returns in glory. We take to heart the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom Come," which is the call, the prayer, of Advent. In our Gospel reading today Jesus warns us that the coming of the Kingdom will not be easy. The world will be filled with suffering and covered in darkness. Jesus calls us to be on our guard, to trust in him, to follow him being faithful to his teaching to love as he loves us. As we face an uncertain future we can learn much from the Patriarchs we celebrate today. Like them we are called to travel forward into the unknown trusting only in God's promise to us that he will lead us to the promised land of heaven, an eternal home which will not disappoint. Like those who have gone before us, the journey will not always be easy and so we make St. Paul's prayer for the Corinthians our prayer this advent, may he so strengthen our hearts in holiness that we may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints. Amen.

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own Churches; Open our eyes for signs of your will and the presence of his kingdom. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May all nations be governed with justice that all may live in peace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; Fill us with love for each other and keep us faithful to the ways of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our books; may they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and consoled with the love of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they share the eternal glory of heaven in the company of all the saints.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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 trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom,
The power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from heaven will break upon us, to shine on those who live in darkness, under the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace. The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love. **And also with you.**

Let us pray:

God, our deliverer, awaken our hearts to prepare the way for the advent of your Son; that, with minds purified by the grace of his coming, we may serve you faithfully all our days; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Christ the sun of righteousness shine on you and scatter the darkness from before you and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Hymn 2: O come, O Come Emmanuel.

- 1. 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.**
- 2. 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.**
- 3. O come, thou day spring, 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.**
- 4. O come, thou key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**
- 5. O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient time didst give the Law,
In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**