

## GOD GATHERS US

Prelude

SONG: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus.*

*Call to Worship*

Brothers and Sisters, we meet together tonight at the end of Advent to prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and to hear in scripture and song the message of salvation. Therefore let us ask the Lord for Grace that we might read, learn, and inwardly digest the story of the loving purposes of God; **who came in a manger;** so that our faith might be built up; **who is coming again in Glory;** and so we might see him now; **even now the Lord is with us.**

Please pray with me:

*Be near us, Lord Jesus, we ask you to stay close by us forever and love us, we pray.  
Immanuel, we invite you to draw near and dwell with us. Surround us with your tender presence,  
That what we say and do in worship might prepare us to live forever with you in heaven. In your powerful name we pray. Amen.*

### Lighting the First Candle of Advent

SONG: *O Come, O Come, Immanuel (hymnal 328 vs. 1-3 no refrain)*

#### **I – O Wisdom; Word of the Father, now in Flesh appearing**

O Wisdom, you come forth from the mouth of the Most High. You create the universe and hold all things together with strength and sweetness.

**O Come and teach us the Way of Truth. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Isaiah 55: 1-3, 8-11 & Luke 1: 26-38

SONG: *O Come, All Ye Faithful (hymnal 340 - vs. 1,2,4)*

#### **II – O Adonai; Whose Mighty Arm stretches out in Good News**

O Adonai and leader of the house of Israel, you appeared to Moses in a burning bush and you gave him the law on Mount Sinai.

**O come and stretch out your mighty hand to redeem us. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Isaiah 52: 1a, 3, 6-10 & Luke 1: 5-17, 23-25



SONG: *Go Tell It On the Mountain (hymnal 356)*

### Lighting the Second Candle of Advent

SONG: *O Come, O Come, Immanuel (hymnal 328 vs. 4-5 no refrain)*

#### **III – O Root of Jesse; Shoot who is born to Save**

O Root of Jesse, you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples; kings fall silent before you; nations bow down and worship you.

**O Come to Deliver us and do not delay. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Isaiah 11: 1-4a, 6-10 & Luke 1: 46-55

SONG: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice (hymnal 355)*

#### **IV – O Key of David; who unlocks and leads us in redeeming love**

O Key of David and scepter of Israel, what you open no one else can close again; what you close no one can open.

**O Come to lead the captives from prison; free those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Isaiah 42: 6-9 & Luke 1: 57-58, 67-75

SONG: *Once in Royal David's City (hymnal 346 - vs. 1,2,4)*

### Lighting the Third Candle of Advent

SONG: *O Come, O Come, Immanuel (hymnal 328 vs. 6 no refrain)*

#### **V – O Morning Star; who shines in streets dark with hopes and fears**

O Morning Star, you are the splendor of light eternal and the sun of righteousness.

**Come and shine on those that dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death. Come, Lord Jesus.**

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7 & Luke 1: 67-68, 76-79

SONG: *O Little Town of Bethlehem (see insert vs. 1-3)*

#### **VI – O King of Nations; who bids divisions & binds hearts**

O King of the nations, and their desire, you are the cornerstone which makes all one.

**O Come and save the human race whom you fashioned from clay. Come, Lord Jesus.**



Isaiah 60: 1-6, 10-11 & Luke 2: 1-14

### Lighting the Fourth Candle of Advent

SONG: *O Come, O Come, Immanuel* (hymnal 328 vs. 7 refrain 2x)

#### **VII – O Emmanuel; Who is God with us & Joy for the World**

O Emmanuel, our King and our judge, the hope of nations and their savior.  
**O come and save us, O Lord Our God. Come, Lord Jesus.**



Isaiah 7: 1-2, 13-15 & Matthew 1: 18-23

### Lighting the Christ Candle

SONG: *Joy to the World* (hymnal 337)

Friends, this is the Gospel of Jesus the Messiah. **Thanks be to God.**

The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you!**

#### Prayer

God and Father of Jesus, you proclaim to us that the night is far spent and the day is at hand.

O Immanuel,  
O Wisdom from on high  
O Lord of might,  
O Branch of Jesse's stem,  
O Key of David,  
O Morning Star,  
O King of nations,

We rejoice and are glad for you have come this Christmas night; come with grace and truth.  
Even now, send us out tonight alive in hope and alert for the advent of Christ. **Amen.**

#### Benediction

Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Jesus came among us in humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen!**

And may Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness, whose second coming in power and glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen!**

And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!**

SONG: *Silent Night* (hymnal 344)

# Christmas Eve 2023



## *Waiting for O, Emmanuel*

### *A service of Lessons, Carols and Prayers*

Tonight's Christmas Eve service is based upon ancient Advent prayers called the **"O Antiphons"**.

The words may date back to a community of fifth-century Jewish Christians and perhaps was part of their Hanukkah festival. The seven "O Antiphons" we have today were developed by Benedictine monks in the Middle Ages. Based on Isaiah's prophecies about Jesus, each one begins with the beseeching "O" and then addresses Christ using a particular title (Wisdom, Lord, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Dayspring, King, Emmanuel). We often pray these prayers ourselves when we sing the ancient hymn "O Come, O Come Emmanuel. The order of the prayers is significant. Starting with the last title in reverse order, the first letter of each (Emmanuel, Rex, Oriens, Clavis, Radix, Adonai, Sapientia) forms an acrostic: the Latin words *Ero cras*, which speak Jesus' response and promise to us. **"Tomorrow, I will come."**