

Christmas Service Liturgy

Susan Gilchrist 2021

Preparation: O come; O come, Emmanuel: (listened to or sung)

**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 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**

**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**

Opening Luke 18: 16-20 *(leader)*

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour".

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

**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
Has come to thee, O Israel**

(said by all)

Let us pray

Gathering *(leader)*

*In Your coming, gather us together Lord
In your loving Care
Forgive us for the wrongs we have done in the past
Strengthen us for the future*

*Give us hope in place of fear
Give us Love in place of enmity
As others harm us in the future
Let us embrace them in your Love*

O come; O come, Thou Lord of might (said by all)
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the Law
In cloud, and majesty and awe
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Has come to thee, o Israel

Psalm 27: 1-4 (reader 1)

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me, my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall. Though a host encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident. One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

Reading Isaiah 11:1-10 (reader 2)

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked. Righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The sucking child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse shall stand as an ensign to the peoples; him shall the nations seek, and his dwellings shall be glorious.

Reading Romans 8:31-39 (reader 3)

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all -how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: *"For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."* No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**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
Has come to thee, o Israel**

(said by all)

Reflection

The Peace *(leader)*

May the Peace Love and Joy which Jesus brought to us at Christmas shine in our hearts and minds, all the days of our lives.

Share the peace with each other

Hymn

**Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled"
Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With the angelic host proclaim:
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!**

**Christ by highest heaven adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see**

**Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!**

**Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings
Risen with healing in His wings
Mild He lays His glory by
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth
Born to give them second birth
Hark! The herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!**

Prayers

Father, in your glory look upon us
Gathered together here before you
And grant us a true Christmas.
With loving heart we bless you:
For the gift of your dear Son Jesus Christ,
For the peace He brings to humankind
For the good-will He instils in all people
For His lowly birth a manger among us,
For the pure tenderness of His mother Mary,
For the fatherly love that protected Him,
For king you gave us in this Holy Child

**With our deepest desire we ask you
Help us to keep his birthday truly,
In his name, help us to offer our Christmas prayer.
To save us from the sickness of sin and the darkness of doubt,**

**From selfish pleasures and sullen pains,
From the frost of pride and the fever of envy,
Keep every one of us through the blessing of Jesus.
In the health of purity and the calm of mutual trust,
In the challenges of gender and sex
In the sharing of joy and the bearing of trouble,
In the steady glow of love and the clear light of hope,
In scapegoating and adversity that we may face,
Strengthen us in your love.**

God keep us every one, by the blessing of Jesus.
In praying and praising, in giving and receiving,
In eating and drinking, in singing and making merry,
In parents' gladness and in children's mirth,
In dear memories of those who have departed,
In good comradeship with those who are here,
In kind wishes for those who are far away,
In patient waiting, sweet contentment and generous cheer,

**God bless us every one, with the blessing of Jesus.
By remembering our kinship with all people,
By well-wishing, friendly speaking and kindly doing,
By cheering the downcast and adding sunshine to daylight,
By welcoming strangers (poor shepherds or wise men),
By keeping the music of the angels' song,
By remembering all those for whom we pray**

Time for individual prayers, either silent or aloud

God help us to share the blessing of Jesus:
In whose name we will keep Christmas:
And in whose words we now pray together:

After Henry van Dyke

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory are yours.
Now and for ever. Amen.**

The Grace

As we move towards Christmas and the New Year:

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and for evermore.

Closing Music or: Hymn (suggested): Lord of the Years.

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us in our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land in this our generation,
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:
for young and old, for this whole world and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, of our world where men disown and doubt you,
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain,
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you;
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord, of ourselves, in living power remake us
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us;
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone

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T.Dudley-Smith

In the true Joy of Christmas, let us go and serve the Lord

Amen

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