

O come, O come, Emmanuel

An Advent Sequence

Veni Emmanuel

Based on an order by the Royal School of Church Music

In the Middle Ages, the Church kept Advent as a season of great solemnity – a time in which to meditate upon the ultimate issues of death, judgement, hell and heaven. Advent was also a time of great rejoicing. For Christ would come, not only as Judge, but also as Saviour, and would usher in the Kingdom of God. Advent, therefore, provided a vivid preparation for Christmas. Processions from west to east, and the use of lights, spoke of the Church's hope in the coming of Christ – the Light of the world – to banish sin and darkness. Antiphons were sung, calling upon God to deliver his people, and readings from the Old Testament were seen as pointing to the fulfilment of God's purposes in Jesus.

Today's service is structured around the great Advent Antiphons, known as the Great 'Os'. These were sung originally as Antiphons to the Magnificat at the Evening Office from 17th to 23rd December, and have provided a rich source of devotional imagery in Advent. The readings and music serve to complement the Antiphons, and help us reflect on the theme of the Christ who comes to judge and save his people. The Antiphons are gathered together in the final hymn, O come, O come, Emmanuel, sung in confident hope in the One who is to come.

This is the tenth year we have used this order at Mark the Evangelist, with variations in the readings, settings and carols each year.



The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist

24 December 2023

Advent 4B

All are invited to stay for refreshments after the worship service.

Gathering

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

TIS 12

(We stand for the procession. Verse 1 – cantor and choir only. Verse 2 and hallelujahs – choir and congregation together)



1. Ye gates, lift up your heads on high; ye doors that last for
 2. Ye gates lift up your heads; ye doors, doors that do last for

ay, be lift-ed up, that so the King of glo-ry en-ter may. (Men:) But
 ay, be lift-ed up that so the King of glo-ry en-ter may. (Men:) But

1. who of glo-ry is the King? (All:) The
 2. who is he that is the migh-ty Lord is this, ev'n
 King, (All:) the King of glo-ry, who is this? The

that same Lord, that great in might and strong in bat-tle
 Lord of hosts, and none but he, the King of glo-ry

is, ev'n that same Lord that great in might and strong in bat-tle is.
 is, the Lord of hosts, and none but he, the King of glo-ry is.

(After v.2)

Hal - le-lu - jah, Hal - le-lu - jah, Hal - le-lu - jah, Ha - le-lu - jah,

Hal - le-lu - jah, A - men, A - men, A - men.

Words: Scottish Psalter 1650

Music: Andrew Mitchell Thompson

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WITH THE CHILDREN An introduction to the service

The fourth Advent Candle is lit

HYMN Creator of the stars of night

Conditor

We remain seated for the hymn.



Creator of the stars of night,
 your people's everlasting light,
 O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
 we pray you hear us when we call.

In sorrow that the ancient curse
 should doom to death a universe,
 you came, O Saviour, to set free
 your own in glorious liberty.

When this old world drew on toward night,
 you came; but not in splendour bright,
 not as a monarch, but the child
 of Mary, blameless mother mild.

At your great Name, O Jesus, now
 all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:
 all things on earth with one accord,
 like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.

Come in your holy might, we pray,
 redeem us for eternal day;
 defend us while we dwell below
 from all assaults of our dread foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,
 And God the Spirit, Three in One,
 praise, honour, might, and glory be
 from age to age eternally.

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The O Antiphons

READING 1 – Ecclesiasticus 24:1–9

O SAPIENTIA

MtE 1A

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High,
reaching from end to end,
ordering all things with strength and gentleness:
Come, and teach us the way of prudence.



READING 2 – Exodus 3:1-6

O ADONAI

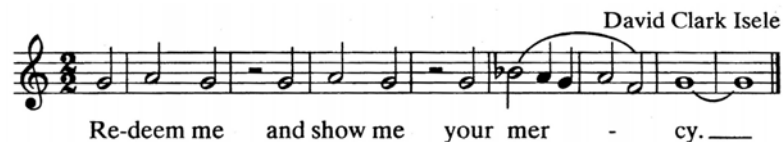
MtE 1B

O Adonai, Leader of the house of Israel
you appeared in the burning bush to Moses,
and gave him the law on Sinai:
Come with outstretched arm to save us.

Psalm 26:1-3, 8-11

PCS 24

REFRAIN: Organ, then cantor, then all together (sung also at the end).



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READING 3 – Isaiah 11:1-4a, 10

O RADIX JESSE

MtE 1C

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign for all peoples,
before you all rulers will keep silent,
and nations lift up their prayers
Come quickly to deliver us.



READING 4 – Jeremiah 23:5-6

O CLAVIS DAVID

MtE 1D

O Key of David, Sceptre over the house of Israel
you open and none can close,
you close and none can open:
Come to set free the prisoners who dwell in darkness
and the shadow of death.



READING 5 – Luke 1:67-79

O ORIENS

MtE 1E

O Morning Star, splendour of eternal light, sun of justice:
Come, and shine on those who live in darkness
and the shadow of death.

HYMN The Magnificat

Hymn 172

We remain seated for the hymn.

1. My soul gives glory to my God.
My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvellous ways.
2. My God has done great things for me:
yes, holy is God's name.
All people will declare me blessed,
and blessings they shall claim.
3. From age to age to all who fear,
such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near,
dismissing selfish hearts.
4. Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied;
the rich seem suddenly poor.
5. Praise God, whose loving covenant
supports those in distress,
remembering past promises
with present faithfulness.

*Words from Luke 1.46ff, paraphrased by Miriam Therese Winter
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READING 6 – Revelation 22:12-13, 16-17, 20

O REX GENTIUM

MtE 1F

O King of nations and their desire, the cornerstone,
which binds together:
Come, and save us whom you formed from the dust of the earth.

Hymn Hark the glad sound! (vv.1, 4-6)

Hymn 269

We remain seated for this hymn

1. Hark, the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.
3. He comes the prisoners to release,
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst,
the iron fetters yield.
4. He comes the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humbled poor.
6. Our glad Hosannas, Prince of Peace,
your welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with your beloved name.

*Philip Doddridge
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READING 7 – Matthew 1:18-25

O EMMANUEL

MtE 1G

O Emmanuel,
our Sovereign and lawgiver, hope and Saviour of nations:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.



HYMN Long ago, prophets knew

Hymn 283

We stand for this hymn.

1. 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.

Refrain:

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes,
When he comes,
Who will make him welcome?

2. 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.

Refrain:

Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes,
When he comes,
Who will make him welcome?

3. Mary, hail! Though afraid,
She believed, she obeyed.
In her womb God is laid;
Till the time expected
Nurtured and protected. *Refrain*

4. Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,
Stable door stands ajar.
Unborn Son of Mary,
Saviour, do not tarry! *Refrain*

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music by Gustav Holst, arrangement John Wilson © OUP.
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The Eucharist

THE CONFESSION, DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS AND INVITATION


...your sins are forgiven!
thanks be to God!

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

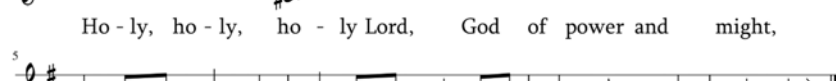
The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(The prayer continues...)

SANCTUS




Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might,

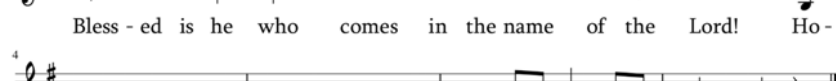


hea-ven and earth are full of your glor-y, ho - san - na in the high-est!

BENEDICTUS



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Ho -




san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!***

(The prayer continues...)

CHRIST HAS DIED




Christ has died, Christ is ris - en, Christ will come a - gain

***Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.***

(The prayer continues...)

BLESSING AND HONOUR



Bless-ing and hon - our, glo-ry and power are yours for e - ver - more

***Blessing and honour, glory and power
are yours forever more.***

(INCLUDING THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE)

...Come, Lord , and in your mercy,
hear our prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

***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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.***

(The people sit)

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

...The gifts of God for the people of God.

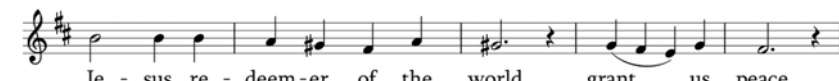
JESUS, LAMB OF GOD



Je - sus, Lamb of God, have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus bear - er of our sin have mer - cy on us.



Je - sus, re - deem-er of the world, grant us peace.

***Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sin, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us peace.***

THE COMMUNION

The Uniting Church recognises this Table as the Lord's and, so, open to all who would normally commune in their home congregations.

GATHERING: *We'll gather in a circle around the table for the distribution of the elements; please wait until all have received and the prayer is said before returning to your seats.*

If you can't stand or walk to the front but would like to receive communion, please raise your hand if the celebrant has not already noticed you.

OFFERING

Many members now make their offering by electronic transfer; the plate will be passed for those who prefer to make cash/envelope offerings. The prayer dedicating the offerings 'captures' the full range of gifts.



Conclusion

HYMN – O come, O come, Emmanuel

TIS 265

We stand for this hymn

- 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, O come thou Lord of Might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe:
- 3 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:

- 4 O come, true Branch of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them victory o'er the grave:
- 5 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:

*Words: from the Latin (13th century)
J M Neale (1818–1866) and others
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BLESSING

ORGAN POSTLUDE

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We'd love to hear your feedback on the service.

Our email address is:

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Our website is:

<http://marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au/>

The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle

Japan

Japan was settled thousands of years ago by people who migrated from China and Korea. The original religion of Japan is Shinto, which has intermingled with Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism. The Christian churches form a small minority. The Protestant churches, through the national Christian council, have been active in promoting reconciliation between Japan and the Asian countries it had occupied, opposing the re-emergence of nationalism, re-militarization, and nuclear armament. There are a number of small but active Evangelical, Pentecostal and Holiness groups. The Japan Evangelical Association is affiliated with the WEA.

Korea (Republic of Korea)

Christian missions entered Korea at the end of the 19th century. The churches have grown enormously, especially after the Korean war. Korea is home to the largest congregation in the world, the Yoido Full Gospel Church (Pentecostal), with 800,000 members. Korean churches have sent thousands of missionaries to all parts of the world. In the 1960-70s, ecumenically committed churches and Christians were in the forefront of the struggle for democracy and human rights. They developed the minjung theology for the church of the poor. Churches in South Korea began in the 1980s a movement of peace and unification and meeting with the Christian Fellowship of North Korea. The Korean Assemblies of God joined the national council of churches in 1997. The Korean Evangelical Fellowship is affiliated with the WEA.

Taiwan

Taiwan is formed by one large and several small islands off the coast of China. From the 16th through the 19th century, it was part of China, and from 1895 through 1945 it was a colony of Japan called Formosa. It reverted to China after World War II. Following the communist victory on mainland China in 1949, some two million Nationalist Party Chinese fled to Taiwan and declared a government for all of China based on the constitution of 1946. Since then, the dominant issue is the relationship between Taiwan and mainland China. There is a political movement in favour of independence. In 2000, Taiwan underwent its first peaceful transfer of power from the Nationalist to the Democratic Progressive Party. Taiwan has become one of the leading economies of Asia, and economic and cultural relationships with the mainland are growing rapidly. Christianity came to the island in the 17th century but only developed significantly in the 19th and 20th centuries. Taiwan has an indigenous population which is heavily Christian. Besides the Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church, other large churches are the Little Flock (Evangelical) and the True Jesus Church (Pentecostal). In recent years, other Pentecostal and Charismatic groups have established themselves. The Catholic Church is a member of the national council of churches.

PEOPLE TO COMMEMORATE

Stephen, martyr



Stephen is regarded as the first Christian martyr. His story is to be found in Acts chapters six and seven. We first come across him when there is a dispute among the disciples between the Hellenist or Greek speaking disciples and the Palestinian or Hebrew speaking disciples. The Hellenists complain that the Hellenist widows are not being looked after. The twelve apostles who are men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, and who all appear to be Hellenistic believers, are set apart to care for these widows. Stephen is the first named of these men.

We are told that he was someone who was filled with grace and power, who did great wonders and signs among the people. It would appear that Stephen was also an evangelist, one who spoke with others about who Jesus was and how he had fulfilled the prophecies in the Scriptures. Stephen and Philip, who is also an evangelist, are able to talk to the Hellenistic Jews in a way the Palestinian believers are not able to, because they share the same background. Some men from the Synagogue of the Freed Slaves, who were also Hellenistic Jews like Stephen, began to question him. They were unable to defeat his arguments, so they arranged for some men to say that they had heard him blaspheme against Moses and God. They then stirred up the people and the religious leaders who brought him before the High Council. It is not clear if all of the council were present or only some.

The accusations were that he spoke against the Temple and the Law. Stephen was accused of saying that Jesus had claimed he would destroy the Temple and would throw out the Laws of Moses.

Stephen rather than giving a defence against the charges gives a defence of Christianity by retelling the story of how the people came into the land God gave them and how they had turned away from God. Stephen starts with Abraham in Mesopotamia thereby impressing on them that God's presence is not confined to the Temple or the land.

He tells them that they have killed the one God sent, the one who was to come. At this point they cannot hold themselves back and they rush him, take him from the city and stone him to death. As this is happening Stephen tells them that he sees Jesus, the Son of Man, standing at the right hand of God. In this he is claiming Jesus, who they had tried and had put to death, had been the Messiah. Stephen dies asking God to forgive them.

Saul (Paul) was there and held the coats. Paul and others then start to persecute the believers who are scattered. Jesus words before he ascended that they were to take the Good News to the ends of the earth, is now to be fulfilled. If there hadn't been a Stephen, the Gospel might have been lost or have stayed as a Jewish sect. Through Stephen's martyrdom the whole world came to hear of the Messiah.

Rev Peter Welsh

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Christmas Day

9:30am service

January Services

Jan 7

Rob Gotch

Jan 14

P Blackwood/Robert Gribben

Jan 21

Peter Blackwood

Quarterly Essay Conversation

Feb 14, 1:30pm at CTM

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Showing Love to the most vulnerable

Sisters Srinidhi* and Mahira* are Sri Lankan refugees who have been living in refugee camps in India for decades and aren't able to access medical care outside the camps. OfERR, a refugee-run organisation supported by Act for Peace, has been providing crucial support in the camps for over 40 years. Through the Christmas Bowl you can help send health workers into the camps and provide medical care to those who need it. **Please give today.**

*Names changed for safety reasons

CALL: 1800 025 101 VISIT: christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au

The Christmas appeal of Act for Peace, the international humanitarian agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia. ABN 86 619 970 188

NOTICES

Auburn Uniting Church, 81 Oxley Rd, Hawthorn
auburnuc.org.au



**SERVICE OF
CAROLS AND READINGS**
With choir and organ
Sunday 24th December
5pm – 6pm

Followed by Mince Pies and Tea/Coffee
 All welcome

People to commemorate this week

Stephen, martyr

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Japan, North Korea, South Korea

LECTIONARY READINGS 31 DECEMBER 2023

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

Congregation of Mark the Evangelist, North Melbourne

Website: marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

Minister: Rev Dr Craig Thompson

Ph: 9329 0018 Mob: 0408 389 751

or **email:** minister@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

As a Parish Mission of the Uniting Church in Australia,

The Congregation of Mark the Evangelist is responsible for Hotham Mission.

Office ph.: (03) 9326 8245

Please advise all notices and roster changes to **email:**

enquiries@marktheevangelist.unitingchurch.org.au

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