

# Readings for Advent



*The Census at Bethlehem*, Pieter Bruegel the elder, ~1566

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# First Week of Advent

## ~ Hope ~



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### Sunday:

**Scripture** – (James 5:7-10) Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

**Hymn** – O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**Prayer** – God, as Advent begins, help us to wait patiently for you to come again. Brighten our way, and help us walk boldly in your love. Shower your Holy Spirit upon us like a gentle rain that helps us grow in understanding and love. Strengthen our hearts so that we may live our lives according to your will. Go with us as we share with others the Advent hope. Come Prince of Peace, in whose name we pray.

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### Monday:

**Scripture** – (Isa 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 forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

**Hymn** – O Lord, How Shall I Meet You

**Prayer** – God, we pray for you to come down and we hope we will be prepared to meet you. Set us free from our fears and sins. Reign in us forever. Set us on fire for you. Forgive our sins and mold us into the people that you want us to be. You have done great things for your people in the past; give us the faith to know that you will continue to do great things for us in the future. We are waiting for you still.

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**Tuesday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 11:1-10) A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. 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; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

**Hymn** – Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

**Or** – O Day of Peace

**Prayer** – Jesus, we pray that your love will bloom within our hearts. We pray that our delight, also, might be in the fear of the Lord. Plant and grow within us a spirit of understanding, so that we may come to know you better and clearly discern the ways of righteousness from the ways of wickedness. Give us the vision to see with our own eyes the reality of peace and reconciliation already planted and growing on your holy mountain.

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**Wednesday:**

**Scripture** – (Mal 3:1-4) See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight--indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

**Hymn** – Prepare the Way, O Zion

**Prayer** – Jesus, we pray that we will be prepared for you to come into our lives. Purify us, so that our thoughts, actions, and offerings -- indeed all the works of our hearts and hands -- will be pleasing to you.

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**Thursday:**

**Scripture** – (Psa 24) The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers. Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully. They will receive blessing from the LORD, and vindication from the God of their salvation. Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Lift up your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle. Lift up

your heads, O gates! and be lifted up, O ancient doors! that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.

**Hymn** – Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

**Prayer** – King of glory, number us among the company who seek you. Give us clean hands and pure hearts. Give us the faith to open up the gates of our own hearts to let you in.

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**Friday:**

**Scripture** – (Psa 2:1-8) Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed, saying, "Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us." He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, "I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill." I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my son; today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession.

**Hymn** – Of the Father's Love Begotten

**Prayer** – God, you have given everything to your "Anointed", your only son, Jesus. With the angels, the cherubim, the seraphim, and all the heavenly host, let us:

Praise you  
Adore you  
Bow before you  
Extol you  
Offer you our songs, hymns, and thanksgiving

Evermore and evermore.

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**Saturday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 61:1-4) The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion -- to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

**Hymn** – Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

**Prayer** – Lord Jesus, come to us this Advent season. Release us from our fears so that we can be free to join you in your work: comforting others, bringing good news to those who are captive or oppressed, hastening the coming of your Kingdom. Rule in us now and forever.

# Second Week of Advent

## ~ Peace ~



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### Sunday:

**Scripture** – (Isa 40:1-11) Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

**Hymn** – Comfort, Comfort You my People

**Prayer** – Gracious and loving God, forgive us. We are fearful and inconsistent. We are blown here and there like dry grass. We wander to and fro like lost sheep. Give us ears to hear your words of comfort. Give us eyes to see that you are truly coming. Speak tenderly to us, gather us up and carry us, feed us, lead us, and give us shelter. Renew our strength so that we can prepare your way and lift up our voices to proclaim your good news.

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### Monday:

**Scripture** – (Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13)

LORD, you were favorable to your land; you restored the fortunes of Jacob.  
You forgave the iniquity of your people; you pardoned all their sin.  
Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people,  
to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.  
Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.  
Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.  
Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.  
The LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.  
Righteousness will go before him, and will make a path for his steps.

**Hymn** – Hail to the Lord's Anointed

**Prayer** – God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation. Make us ready for the message that prepares the way, that with uprightness of heart and holy joy we may eagerly await the kingdom of your Son, Jesus Christ, who reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.

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### **Tuesday:**

**Scripture** – (2 Pet 3:8-15a) But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him.

**Hymn** – Our God Our Help in Ages Past

**Prayer** – God, grant that we may be patient with you, as you are patient toward us. Give us strength and determination so that we don't wait passively for the righteousness and justice of your new creation. Instead, we pray that our intentions and actions will be godly and holy, spreading your peace, and hastening the coming of your kingdom.

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### **Wednesday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 52:7-10) How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

**Hymn** – Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

**Prayer** – God, help us to be like the watchmen this Advent season. Let us lift our voices in joy. Help us be the kind of people who bring good news, proclaiming peace and salvation. Lift away the gloom of doubt and fear from us as we celebrate the coming of Jesus, the Prince of Peace like the dawning of a new day.

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### **Thursday:**

**Scripture** – (Hag 2:5-9) 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.' 'This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty. 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the

LORD Almighty. 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. ' And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty."

**Hymn** – Savior of the Nations Come

**Prayer** – Lord, shake us out of our complacency and self satisfaction. Cure us of the delusion that this world belongs to us. Shift our desires away from gold and silver that ultimately turn to rust, and focus our sight on the bright shining glory of your kingdom. For, it is only when we acknowledge your rule that we can have peace in this place.

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**Friday:**

**Scripture** – (Gen 49:9-11) You are a lion's cub, O Judah; you return from the prey, my son. Like a lion he crouches and lies down, like a lioness--who dares to rouse him? The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes.

(Zec 9:9-10) Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; triumphant and victorious is he, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem; and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall command peace to the nations; his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth.

**Hymn** – Hark the Glad Sound

**Prayer** – God, give us peace this advent. Keep us from being stressed out, frantic and caught up in the busy-ness of the season. Help us to be humble, as Jesus was humble, so that we may live peacefully with our neighbors as we wait for you to come again and bring peace to the whole world.

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**Saturday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 2:1-5) The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. In days to come the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

**Hymn** – Dona Nobis Pacem

**Prayer** – God give us peace; Jesus give us peace; Holy Spirit give us peace. Open our ears and open our hearts to your instruction. Teach us the things that make for peace so that we may walk in your paths, and in your light.

# Third Week of Advent

## ~ Joy ~



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### Sunday:

**Scripture** – (Isa 35) The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

**Hymn** – The Desert Shall Rejoice

**Prayer** – Precious Lord, give us joy like a fountain. Strengthen our weak hands and shaky knees; let us leap and dance and shout for joy. Fill the dry, empty places of our lives with the flood of your grace. Open us up to the possibilities that surround us everywhere if only we have the eyes to see it.

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### Monday:

**Scripture** – (Zep 3:14-20) Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

**Hymn** – Rejoice the Lord is King!

**Prayer** – God, sometimes our lives are a disaster. We feel reproached, oppressed, outcast, and ashamed. Make us aware of your presence in our midst, so that needn't be afraid, and can once again sing and rejoice.

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### **Tuesday:**

**Scripture** – (1 Th 5:16-24) Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

**Hymn** – People Look East

**Prayer** – Gracious and loving God, fill us with joy in this Advent season. Give us the discernment to focus on what is good, and hold fast to it. Please, don't let us get so caught up in trimming the hearth and setting the table, that your Spirit within us is quenched amid the flood of activities. Jesus, keep our souls and bodies sound; we know that you are faithful, and will do this.

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### **Wednesday:**

**Scripture** – (Mat 25:1-13) "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.' And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.' Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

**Hymn** – Wake, Awake for Night is Flying

**Prayer** – God, it is so easy for us to behave like those foolish bridesmaids. With careless disregard, we sleepwalk through life, oblivious to your presence and the needs of those around us. With a shout, wake us out of our sleep so that we will be prepared to come out and meet you.

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### **Thursday:**

**Scripture** – (Rev 1:7-8) Look! He is coming with the clouds; every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and on his account all the tribes of the earth will wail. So it is to be. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.

(Luke 21:25-28) There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see "the Son of Man coming in a cloud" with power and great

glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.

**Hymn** – Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending

**Prayer** – Jesus, help us live out our lives according to your will, so that when you come again, we may be among the multitude of saints, rejoicing and singing alleluia. Save us from those self-centered piercing acts of disregard for our neighbors. Free us, so that we can submit everything in our lives to you, from beginning to end.

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**Friday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 42:1-7) Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

**Hymn** – Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

**Prayer** – Loving and gracious God, just as you put your spirit of justice and righteousness on Jesus, breath your spirit also into us. Give us strength that we don't grow faint and become crushed under the weight of care and grieving in this world. Help us heed your teaching and your call for us to be lights in the darkness.

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**Saturday:**

**Scripture** – (Isa 7:10-14) Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

**Hymn** – Creator of the Stars of Night

**Prayer** – God, long ago you surprised people when you came into the world. People were expecting you to come as a mighty king or general but you came as a little child. Help us look for you today in unexpected ways and places.

# Fourth Week of Advent

## ~ Love ~



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### Sunday:

**Scripture** – (1 John 4:7-12) Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

**Hymn** – Love Divine All Loves Excelling

**Prayer** – Gracious and loving God, open our eyes so that we may know you and see your love for us. Open our hearts so that we may love one another. We thank you for sending your one and only Son into the world so that we might live through him. Fix in us your humble dwelling; continue to live within us; finish your new creation; and make your love complete in us.

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### Monday:

**Scripture** – (Luke 1:26-38) In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

**Hymn** – Love Divine All Loves Excelling

**Prayer** – God, just like Mary we are often confused and afraid of the things you tell us. Help us to know that nothing is impossible with you. Help us to say, with confidence, "Here I am, let me be your servant, let me do the things that you want me to do."

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**Tuesday:**

**Scripture** – (Luke 1:39-55) In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

**Hymn** – Mary's Song (Magnificat)

**Prayer** – God, look favorably on us when we are humble. Help us rejoice in the strength of your arm rather than in our prideful thoughts. You have created a world of abundant good gifts. Help us to live full lives in awareness of your abundance. And keep us from fencing ourselves in with constraining fears of want and need.

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**Wednesday:**

**Scripture** – (John 1:6-8, 19-27) There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal."

**Hymn** – On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

**Prayer** – God, help us to avoid the mistakes of the Pharisees. Jesus was standing among them but they had no idea who he was. Help us to be like John the Baptist. Help us recognize who Jesus is. May our words and actions show others that Jesus is the light of the world.

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**Thursday:**

**Scripture** – (Matt 1:18-21) Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.’

**Hymn** – Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine

**Prayer** – Dear God, like Joseph, we are often anxious and worried about what to do. We pray that your healing words would come to us as they did to Joseph. Send us visions of peace and understanding so that we too can welcome Jesus into our lives. Give us the courage not to 'quietly dismiss' Jesus when his claims on our carefully structured lives are more than we can understand. As Christmastide is drawing near, open our eyes to your own light that shines upon us; and let us truly welcome that Jesus who comes to love, and save, and frees us!

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**Friday:**

**Scripture** – (Micah 5:2-5a) But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

**Hymn** – O Little Town of Bethlehem

**Prayer** – O God of wonder, how remarkable it is that the Christ should come to Earth in the little town of Bethlehem from the little clan of Ephrathah. How remarkable that hope and salvation should come from places and people that are insignificant in the eyes of the world. And how remarkable that the great ruler foretold of old, who would stand in the strength of the LORD, and in the majesty of God's name, should come as a shepherd and the one of peace. God give us direction and grant us the grace that we, like the Magi, will pay attention to your word and learn to look in unexpected places for the One who brings your salvation.

# Christmas Eve



**Scripture** – (Isa 9:2-7) The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness -- on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Hymn** – Joy to the World

**Prayer** –

Light of life, you came in flesh,  
born into human pain and joy,  
and gave us power to be your children.  
Grant us faith, O Christ, to see your presence among us,  
so that all of creation may sing new songs of gladness  
and walk in the way of peace.

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# Advent Hymns

## 1. O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**Words:** Latin; trans. John Mason Neale (v 1-2), 1851, Henry Sloane Coffin (v 3), 1916

**Tune:** *VENI EMMANUEL*, adapted by Thomas Helmore, 1854

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 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.

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
All peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease,  
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

## 2. O Lord How Shall I Meet You

**Words:** Paul Gerhardt, 1653; translated by Catherine Winkworth and others, 1863

**Tune:** *VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN* (St. Theodulph), by Melchior Teschner, 1614

O Lord, how shall I meet You, how welcome you aright?  
Your people long to greet You, my Hope, my heart's Delight!  
O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,  
To do in spirit lowly all that may please You best.

Love caused Your incarnation, love brought You down to me;  
Your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.  
O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace  
In love all loves excelling our lost and fallen race.

A glorious crown You gave me, a treasure safe on high,  
That will not fail nor leave me as earthly riches fly.  
My heart shall bloom forever for You with praises new,  
And from Your Name shall never withhold the honor due.

### 3. Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

**Words:** German carol, 15th century; translated by Theodore Baker (1851-1934), alt.

**Tune:** *ES IST EIN' ROS'*, Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesang, Cologne, 1599

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse's lineage coming, by faithful prophets sung.  
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the virgin mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

### 4. O Day of Peace

**Words:** Carl P. Daw Jr., 1982

**Tune:** *JERUSALEM*, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1916

O day of peace that dimly shines through all our hopes and prayers and dreams, guide us to justice, truth, and love, delivered from our selfish schemes. May the swords of hate fall from our hands, our hearts from envy find release, till by God's grace our warring world shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.	Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, nor shall the fierce devour the small; as beasts and cattle calmly graze, a little child shall lead them all. Then enemies shall learn to love, all creatures find their true accord; the hope of peace shall be fulfilled, for all the earth shall know the Lord.
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### 5. Prepare the Way O Zion

**Words:** Frans Mikael Franzen (1771-1847)

**Tune:** *BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN*, from Then Swenska Psalmboken, 1697

Prepare the way, O Zion, Your Christ is drawing near!  
Let every hill and valley A level way appear.  
Greet one who came in glory Fortold in sacred story.

O blessed is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

Christ brings God's rule, O Zion; He comes from heaven above.  
His rule is peace and freedom, And justice, truth, and love.  
Lift high your praise resounding, For grace and joy abounding.

O blessed is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

Fling wide your gates, O Zion, Your Savior's rule embrace.  
And tidings of salvation Proclaim in every place.  
All lands will bow rejoicing, Their adoration voicing.

O blessed is Christ that came In God's most holy name.

## 6. Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

**Words:** by Georg Weissel, 1642; translated by Catherine Winkworth, 1855

**Tune:** *TRURO* by Thomas Williams, 1789; harmony by Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

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|---|--|
| 1. Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates;<br>Behold, the King of glory waits;<br>The King of kings is drawing near;<br>The Savior of the world is here!     | 3. Redeemer, come, with us abide;<br>Our hearts to Thee we open wide;<br>Let us Thy inner presence feel;<br>Thy grace and love in us reveal. |
| 2. Fling wide the portals of your heart;<br>Make it a temple, set apart<br>From earthly use for heaven's employ,<br>Adorned with prayer and love and joy. | 4. Thy Holy Spirit lead us on<br>Until our glorious goal is won;<br>Eternal praise, eternal fame<br>Be offered, Savior, to Thy Name!         |

## 7. Of the Father's Love Begotten

**Words:** Aurelius Prudentius (348-413); trans. John Mason Neale, 1854, Henry Baker, 1859

**Tune:** *DIVINUM MYSTERIUM*, ancient plainsong

Of the Father's love begotten, ere the worlds began to be,  
He is Alpha and Omega, He the source, the ending He,  
Of the things that are, that have been,  
And that future years shall see, evermore and evermore!

This is He Whom seers in old time chanted of with one accord;  
Whom the voices of the prophets promised in their faithful word;  
Now He shines, the long expected,  
Let creation praise its Lord, evermore and evermore!

O ye heights of heaven adore Him; angel hosts, His praises sing;  
Powers, dominions, bow before Him, and extol our God and King!  
Let no tongue on earth be silent,  
Every voice in concert sing, evermore and evermore!

Christ, to Thee with God the Father, and, O Holy Ghost, to Thee,  
Hymn and chant with high thanksgiving, and unwearied praises be:  
Honor, glory, and dominion,  
And eternal victory, evermore and evermore!

## 8. Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

**Words:** by Charles Wesley, 1744

**Tune:** *HYFRYDOL*, Roland Hugh Prichard, 1831

**Alternative Tune:** *STUTTART*, from Psalmodia Sacra. Gotha, 1715

1. Come, Thou long expected Jesus  
Born to set Thy people free;  
From our fears and sins release us,  
Let us find our rest in Thee.
2. Israel's strength and consolation,  
Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation,  
Joy of every longing heart.
3. Born Thy people to deliver,  
Born a child and yet a King,  
Born to reign in us forever,  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
4. By Thine own eternal Spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone;  
By Thine all sufficient merit,  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

## 9. Comfort, Comfort, You My People

**Words:** Johann G. Olearius, 1671, trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863 alt.

**Tune:** *PSALM 42*, Louis Bourgeois, Geneva Psalter, 1551

Comfort, comfort you my people,  
Tell of peace, thus says our God;  
Comfort those who sit in darkness;  
bowed beneath oppression's load.  
Speak you to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell them that their sins I cover,  
And their warfare now is over.

For the herald's voice is calling  
In the desert far and near,  
Bidding us to make repentance,  
Since the kingdom now is here.  
O that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way!  
Let the valleys rise in meeting,  
And the hills bow down in greeting.

Make you straight what long was crooked,  
Make the rougher places plain:  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits God's holy reign,  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o'er the earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That God's word is never broken.

## **10. Hail to the Lord's Anointed**

**Words:** by James Montgomery, 1821

**Tune:** *ELLECOMBE*, Gesangbuch der Herzogl, Wirtembergischen Katholischen Hofkapelle, 1784

**Alternate Tune:** *ES FLOG EIN KLEINS WALDVOGELEIN*, Memmingen ms., 17th century

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!  
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!  
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;  
To take away transgression and rule in equity.

He comes with succor speedy to those who suffer wrong;  
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong;  
To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,  
Whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in His sight.

Kings shall fall down before Him, and gold and incense bring;  
All nations shall adore Him, His praise all people sing;  
For Him shall prayer unceasing and daily vows ascend;  
His kingdom still increasing, a kingdom without end.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;  
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.  
Before Him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,  
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

## **11. Our God Our Help in Ages Past**

**Words:** Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

**Tune:** *ST. ANNE*, William Croft, 1708

1. Our God, our Help in ages past,  
Our Hope for years to come,  
Our Shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal Home!
2. Before the hills in order stood,  
Or Earth received her frame,  
From everlasting Thou art God,  
To endless years the same.
3. A thousand ages in Thy sight  
Are like an evening gone;  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising sun.
4. Time, like an ever rolling stream,  
Bears all of us away;  
We fly forgotten as a dream  
Dies at the opening day.
5. Our God our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Be Thou our guard while life shall last,  
And our eternal Home.

## 12. Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

**Words:** John Bowring, 1825

**Tune:** *ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR*, George J. Elvey, 1858

**Alternate Tune:** *ABERYSTWYTH*, by Joseph Parry, 1879

Watchman, tell us of the night, what its signs of promise are.  
Traveler, over yon mountain's height, see that glory beaming star.  
Watchman, does its beauteous ray aught of joy or hope foretell?  
Traveler, yes - it brings the day, promised day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night; higher yet that star ascends.  
Traveler, blessedness and light, peace and truth its course portends.  
Watchman, will its beams alone gild the spot that gave them birth?  
Traveler, ages are its own; see, it bursts over all the earth.

Watchman, tell us of the night, for the morning seems to dawn.  
Traveler, darkness takes its flight, doubt and terror are withdrawn.  
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease; hie thee to thy quiet home.  
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace, lo! the Son of God is come!

## 13. Savior of the Nations Come

**Words:** Ambrose of Milan, 300's; para. Martin Luther, 1524; trans. Wm. Morton Reynolds, 1850

**Tune:** *NUN KOMM DER HEIDEN HEILAND*, plainsong in Eyn Enchiridion , Erfurt, 1524

1. Savior of the nations, come;  
Virgin's Son, here make Thy home!  
Marvel now, O heaven and earth,  
That the Lord chose such a birth.
2. From the Father forth He came  
And returneth to the same,  
Captive leading death and hell  
High the song of triumph swell!
3. Thou, the Father's only Son,  
Hast over sin the victory won.  
Boundless shall Thy kingdom be;  
When shall we its glories see?
4. Praise to God the Father sing,  
Praise to God the Son, our King,  
Praise to God the Spirit be  
Ever and eternally.

## 14. Hark the Glad Sound

**Words:** Philip Dodderidge (1702-1751)

**Tune:** *DUNDEE*, Scottish Psalter, 1615

1. Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let every heart prepare a throne,  
And every voice a song.
2. He comes, the prisoners to release,  
In Satan's bondage held,  
The gates of brass before him burst,  
The iron fetters yield.
3. He comes, the broken heart to bind,  
The bleeding soul to cure;  
And with the treasures of his grace  
To~enrich the humble poor.
4. Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim;  
And heaven's eternal arches ring  
With thy beloved name.

## 15. Dona Nobis Pacem

**Words and Tune:** Traditional

Dona nobis pacem, pacem.  
Dona nobis pacem.

Dona nobis pacem.  
Dona nobis pacem.

Dona nobis pacem.  
Dona nobis pacem.

## 16. The Desert Shall Rejoice

**Words:** by Gracia Grindal, 1983

**Tune:** *STERLING*, Joy F. Patterson, 1988

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|--|--|
| 1. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>It shall blossom abundantly<br>And rejoice with praise and singing.             | 4. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>For the ground will become a pool<br>And the dry land springs of water. |
| 2. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>For the ears of the deaf shall hear<br>And the blind, their eyes be opened.     | 5. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>As the ransomed return to God<br>And come singing back to Zion.         |
| 3. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>For the tongue of the mute shall sing<br>And the lame will dance with gladness. | 6. The desert shall rejoice<br>And blossom as a rose:<br>Unto Zion we come with joy,<br>For our God has come to save us.         |

## 17. Rejoice, the Lord is King

**Words:** Charles Wesley, 1746

**Tune:** *DARWALL's 148TH*, by John Darwall, 1770

Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore;  
Rejoice give thanks and sing, and triumph evermore;  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

God's kingdom cannot fail, Christ rules o'er earth and Heav'n,  
The keys of death and hell are to our Jesus giv'n;  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Rejoice in glorious hope! For Christ the Judge shall come,  
To glorify the saints, for their eternal home.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice;  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

## 18. People, Look East

Words: Eleanor Farjeon, 1928

Tune: *BESANÇON*, French folk melody

1. People, look east. The time is near  
Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest, is on the way.
2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,  
One more seed is planted there:  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,  
That in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the rose, is on the way.
3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
Guard the nest that must be filled.  
Even the hour when wings are frozen  
God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the bird, is on the way.
4. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim  
One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather,  
Bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the star, is on the way.
5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
With the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

## 19. Wake, Awake for Night is Flying

Words: Philipp Nicolai, 1599; translated by Catherine Winkworth, 1858

Tune: *WACHET AUF*, by Philipp Nicolai; harm. J.S. Bach, 1731

1. Wake, awake, for night is flying;  
the watchmen on the heights are crying:  
Awake, Jerusalem, at last!  
Midnight hears the welcome voices  
and at the thrilling cry rejoices;  
come forth, ye virgins, night is past;  
the Bridegroom comes, awake;  
your lamps with gladness take: Alleluia!  
And for his marriage feast prepare,  
for ye must go and meet him there.
2. Zion hears the watchmen singing,  
and all her heart with joy is springing;  
she wakes, she rises from her gloom;  
for her Lord comes down all-glorious,  
the strong in grace, in truth victorious.  
Her Star is risen; her Light is come.  
Ah come, thou blessed One,  
God's own beloved Son: Alleluia!  
We follow till the halls we see  
where thou hast bid us sup with thee.
3. Now let all the heavens adore thee,  
and saints and angels sing before thee,  
with harp and cymbal's clearest tone;  
of one pearl each shining portal,  
where we are with the choir immortal  
of angels round thy dazzling throne;  
nor eye hath seen, nor ear  
hath yet attained to hear what there is ours;  
but we rejoice and sing to thee  
our hymn of joy eternally.

## **20. Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending**

Words: by Charles Wesley, 1758

Tune: *HELMSLEY* by Th. Olivers, 1763; harmony by R. Vaughn Williams, 1906

1. Lo, he comes with clouds descending,  
once for favored sinners slain;  
Thousand, thousand saints attending  
swell the triumph of his train.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
God appears on earth to reign.
2. Every eye shall now behold him,  
robed in dreadful majesty;  
Those 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. The dear tokens of his passion  
still his dazzling body bears;  
Cause of endless exultation  
to his ransomed worshipers;  
With what rapture, with what rapture, with what rapture,  
Gaze we on those glorious scars!
4. Yea, Amen! Let all adore thee,  
high on thy eternal throne;  
Savior, take the power and glory,  
claim the kingdom for thine own.  
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!  
Everlasting God, come down!

## **21. Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence**

**Words:** from Liturgy of St. James, 4th century, trans. Gerard Moultrie, 1864

**Tune:** *PICARDY*, French carol

1. Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly minded,  
For with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
Our full homage to demand.
2. King of kings yet born of Mary,  
As of old on earth He stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
In the body and the blood;  
He will give to all the faithful  
His own self for heavenly food.
3. Rank on rank the host of heaven  
Spreads its vanguard on the way,  
As the Light of light descendeth  
From the realms of endless day,  
That the powers of hell may vanish,  
As the darkness clears away.
4. At His feet the six winged seraph,  
Cherubim with sleepless eye,  
Veil their faces to the presence,  
As with ceaseless voice they cry:  
Alleluia, Alleluia  
Alleluia, Lord Most High!

## 22. Creator of the Stars of Night

Words: Latin Hymn, 9th century, trans. John Mason Neale, 1851.

Tune: *CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM*, Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th century

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. When this old world drew on toward night,  
You came, but not in splendor bright,  
Not as a monarch, but a child  
Of Mary blameless mother mild.
4. 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.
5. In sorrow that the ancient curse  
should doom to death a universe,  
you came, O Savior, to set free  
your own in glorious liberty.
6. To God the Father, God the Son,  
And God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Praise, honor, might, and glory be  
From age to age eternally.

## 23. Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Words: by Charles Wesley, 1747

Tune: *HYFRYDOL*, Rowland H. Prichard, 1831

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,  
Joy of heaven 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.
2. Come, Almighty to deliver,  
Let us all thy life receive;  
Suddenly return, and never,  
Never more 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.
3. 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 heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

## 24. The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came

**Words:** paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), alt

**Tune:** *GABRIEL'S MESSAGE*, Traditional Basque carol

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,  
With wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;  
"All hail said he, O lowly maiden Mary,  
Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

"For know a blessed mother you shall be,  
All generations laud and honor thee;  
Your son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,  
Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;  
"To me be as it pleases God," she said.  
"My soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name."  
Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born  
In Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,  
And Christian folk through-out the world will ever say;  
"Most highly favored lady." Gloria!

## 25. Song of Mary (The Magnificat)

**Words:** paraphrased Miriam Therese Winter, 1987

**Tune:** *MORNING SONG*, from Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813

1. My soul gives glory to my God,  
My heart pours out its praise.  
God lifted up my lowliness  
In many marvelous ways.
2. My God has done great things for me:  
Yes, holy is this 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.

## 26. On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

**Words:** by Charles Coffin, 1736; translated by John Chandler, 1837; alt.

**Tune:** *WINCHESTER NEW*, from Musikalisches Handbuch, 1690

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry  
Announces that the Lord is nigh;  
Awake and hearken, for he brings  
Glad tidings of the King of kings!

We hail You as our Savior, Lord,  
Our refuge, and our great reward;  
O let Your face up on us shine,  
And fill the world with love divine.

All praise to You, eternal Son,  
Whose advent has our freedom won,  
Whom with the Father we adore,  
And Holy Spirit, evermore.

## 27. Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine

**Words:** German carol, 15th century; translated by Percy Dearmer (1867-1936), alt.

**Tune:** *RESONANT IN LAUDIBUS*, 14th Century German carol

Joseph, Dearest Joseph mine,  
Will you cradle the Child divine.  
God reward thee and all that's thine,  
In paradise, so prays the mother Mary.

### *Chorus*

He comes among us at Christmastide  
At Christmastide in Bethlehem  
We shall bring him from far and wide,  
Love's diadem  
Jesus, Jesus; Lo, he comes and loves and saves and frees us.

Gladly dear one, Lady mine  
I'll help to cradle the Child of thine.  
God's own light on us both shall shine,  
In paradise, as prays the mother Mary. *Chorus*

Peace to all that have goodwill!  
God, who heaven and earth doth fill,  
Comes to turn us away from ill,  
As all may see In Jesus, Son of Mary. *Chorus*

Soon is born Emmanuel,  
Prophesied by Ezekiel,  
Promised Mary by Gabriel, Ah, who can tell  
Thy praises, Son of Mary. *Chorus*

## 28. O Little Town of Bethlehem

**Words:** by Phillips Brooks, 1868

**Tune:** *FOREST GREEN*, English folk tune

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie.  
Amidst thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark street shineth, The everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is given!  
So God imparts to human hearts, The blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem, Descend to us we pray;  
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, Our lord Emmanuel.

## 29. Joy to the World

**Words:** Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

**Tune:** *ANTIOCH*, G. F. Handel, 1742, arr. Lowell Mason, 1836

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! The Savior reigns:  
Let us our songs employ:  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground:  
He comes to make his blessings flow  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found,  
Far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness,  
And wonders of his love,  
And wonders of his love,  
And wonders of his love.