

Prelude *O Come, O Come Emmanuel* Praise Team (**Grace**)

Welcome

We begin the Christian Year with the season of Advent, which means "Coming." We celebrate this season in expectation and preparation for Christ's arrival. We remember Christ's birth and look forward in hope to the hope of Christ's coming again as the King of kings and Lord of Lords. Advent makes innkeepers out of all of us, asking each of us to make room for the arrival of Christ the King. Let us, today, prepare Him room in our hearts, our lives, and our homes!

May the loving kindness of this Advent Season and the true Spirit of Christmas not only creep into our hearts this season, but there abide, so that not even the return to earthly cares and responsibilities, not all the festivities of our own devising may cause it to creep away weeping. May the joy and spirit of Christmas remain with us now and forever. [Adapted from a prayer for Christmas by Peter Marshall]

In the 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 hill;
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 God may teach us God's ways
and that we may walk in God's paths."**

— Isaiah 2:2-3 alt.

Lift up your heads, O gates!
and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the Ruler of glory may come in.

Who is the Ruler 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 Ruler of glory may come in.

Who is this Ruler of glory?

The Lord of hosts,

the Lord is the Ruler of glory!

— Psalm 24:7-10

With what shall we come to God's house? **Bring branches of cedar and holly, bring evergreens and a pine tree, hang wreaths and garlands.**

People of God, as we stand at the doorway to the Christian year on this *first* Sunday of Advent let us mark the entrance to the church building, and our hearts and minds, as portals for Christ to enter. May the ways we adorn this space engage our senses during the days of Advent and enliven our praise and worship.

Come, Lord Jesus! Come, Lord Jesus!

Among ancient Romans evergreens were an emblem of peace, joy, and victory. The early Christians placed them in their windows to indicate that Christ had entered the home. Holly and ivy, along with pine, and fir are called evergreens because they never change color. They are ever - green, ever - alive, even in the midst of winter. They symbolize the unchanging nature of our God, and they remind us of the everlasting life that is ours through Christ Jesus.

[Put garlands and wreaths up]

Hymn or song: *The Holly and the Ivy* **(Grace) (pg. 11)**
 People Look East - UMH #202 Verses 1 & 2 **(pg. 11)**

Good Lord, by your mercy guide our outward actions in such ways that our inward being is formed in faith, hope, and love. Forgive us for the good left undone and the wrong done. Forgive us for not noticing you when you are in need. We ask this in the name of the child of Bethlehem, our risen and coming savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

God is good, all the time and his mercy is never ending. By his grace your sins are forgiven+. Amen.

Blessing of Paraments and Seasonal Art and Environment

Gracious God,
we offer to you these paraments and banners
that will beautify our worship space,
which have been inspired by our love for you.
Accept our grateful thanksgiving for what you have given us
in the Word made flesh,
and bless our Christmas worship
as we announce once again the coming of your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

[Put up banners, paraments and linens.]

Hymn or Song: *Emmanuel* **(Grace) (pg. 12)**

The Christmas Tree

The first use of the Christmas tree was in the medieval German Paradise Plays, held outdoors and portraying the

creation of humankind. The Tree of Life was a fir tree decorated with apples. Later other ornaments were hung upon them, such as paper flowers and gilded nuts. In England branches or whole trees were forced into bloom indoors for Christmas. From these beginnings the use of a tree at Christmas was established.

Martin Luther was perhaps the first to use a lighted tree. The story is told that on one Christmas Eve Martin Luther wandered outdoors and became enraptured with the beauty of the starry sky. Its brilliance and loveliness led him to reflect on the glory of the first Christmas Eve as seen in Bethlehem's radiant skies. Wishing to share with his wife and children the enchantment he had felt, he cut from the forest an evergreen, glistening with snow, and took it home. He placed upon it candles to represent the glorious heavens he had seen.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah, chapter 41:
When the poor and needy seek water,
and there is none,
and their tongue is parched with thirst,
I the LORD will answer them,
I the God of Israel will not forsake them.
I will open rivers on the bare heights,
and fountains in the midst of the valleys;
I will make the wilderness a pool of water,
and the dry land springs of water.
I will put in the wilderness the cedar,
the acacia, the myrtle, and the olive;
I will set in the desert the cypress,
the plane and the pine together,
so that all may see and know,

all may consider and understand,
that the hand of the LORD has done this,
the Holy One of Israel has created it.

— Isaiah 41:17-20

The word of the Lord.

[Place the Christmas trees (Grace) Tree will be up already at
Trinity.]

Hanging Chrismons or Other Symbols of Christ and Faith

Here in this place,
we prepare for the coming of the Lord.
Here we will remember his Advent,
his birth in Bethlehem,
weak and helpless as an infant.
And here we rekindle our prayer,
"Come, Lord Jesus"
as we await his coming as the bright and morning star.

**Hang symbols and signs of Christ — ruler, prophet, priest.
Hang stars, crosses, triangles, the "alpha" and the
"omega" to remind us of his identity, his story, and of the
holy Trinity.**

A reading from the book of Revelation, chapter 22:

"See, I am coming soon ... I am the Alpha and the Omega, the
first and the last, the beginning and the end."

Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have
the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates.

"It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony
for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David,
the bright morning star."

Hymn *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah (Grace)* (pg 13)
Advent Song (Trinity) (TFWS #2090 verse 1) (pg 13)

Loving God, you have gathered and enlightened us, and you give us the gift of creativity.

**We give you our thanks and praise
for this community of faith
and ask your blessing on our witness in the world.**

May this space and our lives be invitations to others to experience the love you have so freely shared with us.

We pray in the name of the babe of Bethlehem,
our Lord Jesus.

Amen.

Offertory

Doxology

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "Praise God for these gifts that we offer today and bless them for good in the world, this we pray. Praise Je - sus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay, the Spi - rit, our Kee - per, our guide on the way." The piano accompaniment includes chord markings: F, C7, Bb, F, F, Bb, F, Gm7, C7, F.

Praise God for these gifts that we offer today
and bless them for good in the world, this we pray.
Praise Je - sus, the Christ-Child, our Hope and our Stay,
the Spi - rit, our Kee - per, our guide on the way.

The greatest Gift of Christmas is the Gift of God in Christ Jesus. All that we do at this Holy Season points to that expression of Holy Love. As we give thanks for God's love, we celebrate Holy Communion, or Eucharist, which means thanksgiving.

Words of Institution

Let us come to the table and receive the body and blood of Christ given for us.

[**Grace** Praise Team Special Music "*Make Room*" (Matt Maher) & Blessing after communion]

Luke 3:1-6

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.

⁵ Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Reflection

Hymn/song

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

(Grace & Trinity) (pg. 14)

And now as you go forth from this place,
know that all the places you encounter in the world
will contain signs and markers of God's work among us.

So keep your senses alert, your perception wide,
and your heart open to new discoveries along the way.
For Christ is being born within you and among you.

Sung: *O Little Town of Bethlehem (Benediction)*
 (Grace and Trinity) (Pg. 15)

Sung: *We're On Our Way*
(Grace - Praise team) (pg. 16 & 17)

Spoken: **(Trinity)**
We're on our way
We're on our way
Dream of the day
When hope will stay.
With all the earth
In all our hearts
We're on our way
This is the day.

Postlude

(Grace) *The Holly and the Ivy* by 18th Century Carol

Verse 1:

The holly and the ivy, when they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood, the holly bears the crown.

Refrain:

The rising of the sun, and the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ sweet singing of the choir.

Verse 2:

The holly bears a blossom, as white as lily flow'r,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, to be our sweet Saviour.

Refrain

Verse 3:

The holly bears a berry, as red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, to do poor sinners good.

Refrain

(Trinity) *People Look East* - UMH #202 Verses 1 & 2

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 (People, look east:)
and sing today: (People, look east:)

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 (People, look east:)
and sing today: (People, look east:)

Love, the Rose, is on the way.

(Grace) *Emmanuel* by Bob McGee

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us, His name is called Emmanuel.

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, His name is called Emmanuel;
God with us, revealed in us, His name is called Emmanuel.

(Grace & Trinity) *O Christmas Tree* - Traditional German Carol

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
you stand in verdant beauty,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
you stand in verdant beauty,
Your boughs are green in summer's glow,
and do not fade in winter's snow,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
you stand in verdant beauty.

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
much pleasure doth thou bring me,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
much pleasure doth thou bring me,
For ev'ry year the Christmas tree,
brings to us all both joy and glee,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
much pleasure doth thou bring me.

O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
thy candles shine out brightly,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
thy candles shine out brightly,
Each bough doth hold its tiny light,
that makes each toy to sparkle bright,
O Christmas tree, O Christmas tree,
thy candles shine out brightly.

(Grace & Trinity) *Away in a Manger*

by John McFarland, Jonathan Spillman

Away in a manger, no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head,
The stars in the heavens looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus no crying He makes,
I love thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle to watch lullaby.
Be near me Lord Jesus I ask Thee to stay,
Close by me forever and love me I pray,
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.
Away in a manger no crib for His bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head,
The stars in the heavens looked down where he lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep in the hay.

(Grace) *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*

- 1 Light one candle to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel,
God fulfills the promise.

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(Trinity) *Advent Song* TFWS #2090 vs. 1

1. Light the Advent candle, one: Now the waiting has begun;
we have started on our way, time to think of Christmas day.

Refrain

Candle, candle, burning bright, shining in the cold winter night;
candle, candle, burning bright, fill our hearts with Christmas light.

(Grace & Trinity) *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*
by John M. Neale & Thomas Helmore

Verse 1:

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

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

Verse 2:

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.

Refrain

Verse 3:

O come Desire of nations bind,
in one the hearts of all mankind,
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
and be Thyself our King of Peace.

Refrain

O Little Town of Bethlehem (Benediction)

F F° F C°7 Gm Bb F C7 F

THRESHOLD O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!

✓BENEDICTION O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, des - cend to us, we pray;

F/Eb D Gm Bb F/C C7 F

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
cast out our fear, and draw us near; be born in us to - day.

F E°/G B°7/G# A Dm Gm A

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the e - ver - las - ting Light;
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;

F F° F C°7 Gm Bb F G7 F/C C7 F

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - ma - nu - el.

Segue to "We're On Our Way"

We're On Our Way

♩ = 80

B♭/C

C

Gm7

C7

F

Fmaj F6

We're on our way. We're on our way.

mf *a tempo*

Dm7

Gsus G

Csus

C

Gm7

4 Dream of the day when [hope]* ~~hold~~ ~~stay~~ will stay With all the earth, in

F/A

B♭2

Csus

C

F

To Coda ⊕

7 all our hearts. We're on our way. This is the day.

11

B \flat F/A Gm C B \flat F/A C/E C/G

pp

Repeat As Needed

16

B \flat F/A E \flat 6 B \flat /D A \flat maj7 E \flat 2/G D \flat

rit.

20

C_{sus} C D.C. al Coda

Coda

21 B \flat /F F

mp

23

Gm F/A E \flat (#11) F

rit.

p

