

Advent 4 - A Season of

LOVE

*Welcome to our home!
We would love for you to
join our family!*

December 22, 2024



We Gather for Worship

The English service of lessons and carols in Advent originated in Cornwall, in southern England, where Bishop Edward Benson created the liturgy to be sung at his cathedral in the city of Truro. In 1918 the service was adapted by Eric Milner-White for Kings College, Cambridge, and in that form it has become a beloved tradition in many cathedrals and parishes in England and North America. The lessons provide for focus on the creation and re-creation (or redemption) of humankind, especially the words of the prophets proclaiming God's promises of a "new heaven and a new earth" through the coming of the Messiah. This year's program is centered around the seven "O Antiphons" (also called the "Greater Antiphons" or "Major Antiphons") which are prayers that come from the Breviary's Vespers during the Octave before Christmas Eve, a time which is called the "Golden Nights." Each Antiphon begins with "O" and addresses Jesus with a unique title which comes from the prophecies of Isaias (Isaiah) and Micheas (Micah), and whose initials, when read backwards, form an acrostic for the Latin "Ero Cras" which means "Tomorrow I come." Those titles for Christ are:

<u>Latin</u>	<u>English</u>
Sapientia	Wisdom
Adonai	Lord of Israel
Radix Jesse	Root of Jesse
Clavis David	Key of David
Oriens	Radiant Dawn
Rex Gentium	King of All Nations
Emmanuel	God With US

An antiphon (Greek "opposite"+"voice") in Christian music and ritual, is a "responsory" by a choir or congregation, usually in Gregorian chant, to a psalm or other text in a religious service or musical work.

Advent Candle Lighting

Stephen: According to tradition, each candle has a special meaning. The fourth candle symbolizes love. Christmas happened because of God's great love for all people.

Katherine: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." *John 3:16*

Stephen: At Christmas, God gave us the best gift ever. He sent his Son, Jesus, to live among us and show us the way.

Katherine: During this week, take a moment to reflect on God's love in Jesus as our greatest Christmas gift.

After sharing, the four candles are lit and all say:

People: **Four candles, burning bright, chasing away the darkness for light.
Four candles, glowing light, the blessing of God, giving new sight.**

Processional Hymn: #324 *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent* *Please stand & sing as you are able.*

Opening Sentences

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Van: In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *Isaiah 40:3*

We Hear God's Word

Bidding Prayer

Book of Occasional Services p. 32

Van: Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Antiphon I: O Sapientia (sa.pi.'en.ti.a)

Van: O come, Thou Wisdom, from on high, and order all things far and nigh; to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading I: Knowledge of good and evil Gen. 3:1-15

Stephen: Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

The man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Choir Anthem: *Of the Father's Love Begotten* *Please remain seated.*

Antiphon II: O Adonai

Van: O come, o come, Thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai's height in ancient times did give the law, in cloud, and majesty, and awe.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading II: Prepare the way of the Lord Isaiah 40:1-11

Tyler: 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 for ever. 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.

Choir Anthem:

What Sweeter Music

Please remain seated.

Antiphon III: O Radix Jesse

Van: O come, Thou Rod of Jesse's stem, from ev'ry foe deliver them that trust Thy mighty power to save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading III:

The way of the redeemed

Isaiah 35:1-10

Lance: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; 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.

Solo:

He Shall Feed His Flock / Come Unto Him

Caitlin Lindsey

From Händel's Messiah

Antiphon IV: O Clavis David

Van: O come, Thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heav'nly home, make safe the way that leads on high, that we no more have cause to sigh.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading IV: Immanuel, God with us Isaiah 7:10-15

Thomas: 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. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Song: Emmanuel, God with Us *Please remain seated.*

Antiphon V: O Oriens

Van: O come, Thou Dayspring from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh; disperse the gloomy clouds of night and death's dark shadow put to flight.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading V: The King will come from Bethlehem Micah 5:2-4

Killian: 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 labour 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;

Choir Anthem: Magnificat *Please remain seated.*

Antiphon VI: O Rex Gentium

Van: O come, Desire of the nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind; bid every strife and quarrel cease and fill the world with heaven's peace.

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading VI: A little child shall lead them Isaiah 11:1-9

David: A shoot shall come out from the stock 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.

Hymn: #81 Lo How a Rose *Please remain seated.*

Antiphon VII: O Emmanuel

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

People: **Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

Reading VII:

Mary Consents

Luke 1:26-38

Katherine: 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.

Solo:

Mary Did You Know?

Lora Sellers

Homily: Van Odom

Apostles' Creed

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Please stand as you are able.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

We Pray

Lord's Prayer

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Van: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Van: Let us pray.

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

Collect of the Day

The collect prayer "collects" the themes from the various readings for the day.

Van: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Van: Let us pray. Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

Form VI (BCP page 383)

Please kneel, sit or stand.

BJ: In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence.

BJ: For all people in their daily life and work.

People: **For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

BJ: For this community, the nation, and the world, especially our leaders:

People: **Joe, our President; Donald, our President-elect; Kamala, our Vice-president; JD, our Vice-President-elect; Josh, our Congressman; James and Markwayne, our Senators; Kevin, our Governor; and Patrick, our Mayor. For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

BJ: For the just and proper use of your creation;

People: **For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

BJ: For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble, especially...

People: **Ronnie, Mike, John, Stuart, Nancy, Catheryne, Jennifer, Paula, Ched, Phillip, Roger, Patricia, Leslie, Anna, Pam, Jonathan, D.G., Lester, Mark, Falling family, those impacted by war and violence, all emergency responders, United States Military, and those whose suffering is known only to God. For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

BJ: For the peace and unity of the Church of God, especially...

People: **St. Paul's, Clinton; Whirlwind Mission, Watonga; Diocese of Western Massachusetts; Diocese of Albany; The Church of the Province of Uganda. For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.**

BJ: For...

People: **Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Poulson, our Bishop; Tom, our clergy; Katherine and B.J., our wardens; vestry, delegates; and all who serve God in his Church.**

BJ: For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence. The People may add their own petitions.

BJ: Hear us, Lord;

People: **For your mercy is great.**

BJ: We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence. The People may add their own thanksgivings.

BJ: We will exalt you, O God our King;

People: **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

BJ: We pray for all who have died, (*especially...*), that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence. The People may add their own petitions.

BJ: Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

People: **Who put their trust in you.**

BJ: We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Silence may be kept.

All: **Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Peace

Please stand as you are able.

Van: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Greet one another in the name of Christ.

Announcements, Birthdays & Anniversary Prayers *BCP Page 830*

Please be seated.

Welcome to our guests today. If you are new to Grace for the first time or even if you have been here once or twice before, please fill out a visitor card and put it in the plate. We promise not to harass you, but we would like to include you on our weekly email broadcasts and other event notifications. Thank you for the blessing of your presence today.

Offertory Music

Please remain seated.

We Go Into the World

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

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All: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Sending

BCP Page 102

Van: Let us bless the Lord.

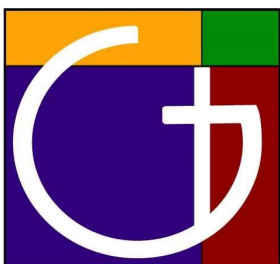
People: **Thanks be to God.**

Van: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. **Amen.** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

Closing Hymn: #100

Joy to the World

Please stand and sing.



Grace Episcopal

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Ministers: All the People of God (BCP p. 855)

Sr. Warden: Katherine Coburn

Jr. Warden: B.J. Charbonneau

Deacon Emeritus: The Rev. Thomas A. Harrington

Organist/Choirmaster: Malcolm McGuire

Youth & Children's Director: Nancy Scott

