



COME LORD JESUS | ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2015-2016



RESURRECTION

B R O O K L Y N

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THE CHURCH YEAR

As another calendar year draws to a close, a new church year is just beginning. The church, or liturgical, year was developed during the first centuries of the early church as a tool to help the people of God remember and celebrate the full mystery of the Gospel. Each season of the liturgical year calls us to focus on different aspects of the Gospel, from Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, as well as his ascension, the day of Pentecost and his promised return. To that end, each season has its own colors, prayers, rituals and moods to aid in our remembrance and celebration. By marking the passage of time redemptively, the liturgical year reminds us that God has acted and continues to act in history, redeeming for himself his people. Taken altogether, we see that the liturgical year acts in concert with Scripture and our weekly and daily worship, amplifying the invitation to lose ourselves in the good news of Jesus so that we might truly find ourselves and live.

ADVENT

The four-week season of Advent starts the new church year, preparing the people of God for the celebrations of Christmas and Epiphany. Advent means "coming" and its mood is that of longing, expectation and waiting. The color purple is used because of its association with repentance, preparation and sacrifice.

Appropriately during this time, the church remembers Jesus' first coming and anticipates his coming again. This world is broken, and so we yearn for Jesus to come back as our King and to make all things new. The cry of Advent is the cry of those who have experienced the tyranny of injustice in a world under the curse of sin. It is the cry from those who still have hope of deliverance because they believe in a God who hears the cries of the oppressed and delivers them.

Of course, Scripture teaches us that we need redemption from our broken world because we broke it! Advent calls us to wait and prepare for Jesus' return by repenting and believing. We are to turn away from the false hopes and desires that twist our hearts and destroy our relationships. Instead, we are to turn toward Jesus, who frees us so that we may serve one another in grace and truth. Just as John the Baptist was born to prepare the way for Jesus' first coming, so we are given to each other in the community of the church to encourage each other and challenge the world around us to prepare for his coming again.

So, what do we exactly do during Advent? We wait and prepare by re-committing ourselves to the Christian practices: weekly worship, daily prayer, gathering with brothers and sisters in Christ for mutual encouragement, hospitality and sacrificial giving, and the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. We re-commit to experiencing God anew and to praying with new hope the final prayer of the Bible: "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20)

CHRISTMAS

At Christmas, we remember the birth of Jesus. Derived from "Christ Mass," Christmas is a feast of fulfillment and future fulfillment. The mood is that of celebration. The colors white and gold are used because of its association with the glory, royalty, joy, holiness and light of God.

With all of our past, present and future waiting answered in Jesus, we continue the song sung by the chorus of angels present at Jesus' birth: "Glory to God in the highest!" (Luke 2:14). And it's not a one-day affair. It's actually a twelve-day celebration beginning at sunset on Christmas Eve! How could it not be a multi-day, extravagant and joyous feast when the King of Kings, the Prince of Peace, Creator and Redeemer has come to make the world and us new and is coming again?

So what do we do during Christmas? We rejoice, celebrate and give gifts. In some traditions, gift giving occurs on each of the twelve days of Christmas. Regardless of your gift giving practice, it is one that emulates and points to God's great sacrificial generosity towards us. Thus, celebrating Christmas is an exercise in humility. As Paul says, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit...In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Philippians 2).

So while we celebrate, we also look for ways to be united with Jesus in his humiliation so that others in our lives can know the joy of the Incarnation, God with us. In other words, we continue to cultivate the Christian practices to be shaped into the people of God.

THE ADVENT WREATH AND THE ADVENT GUIDE

Many celebrations of Advent include the use of an Advent wreath. The Advent wreath is a relatively new tradition (19th century), but an increasingly popular one. The wreath consists of evergreen boughs encircling five candles. Four candles represent each week of Advent and the fifth represents Christmas. One candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent. Two are lit on the second Sunday, and so on. All four candles and the remaining fifth candle are lit either on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

It's worth noting that in some traditions, the candles also represent the different themes of the seasons:

- **The first candle** (*purple*)—Hope. For centuries and throughout the Old Testament, God had told His people that He would fulfill the promise by sending the Savior that all humanity needs.
- **The second candle** (*purple*)—Peace. One of Jesus' many titles is the Prince of Peace. He is the means for reconciliation between the Righteous God and His unrighteous people. He is also the means of peace between people, within families, across cultures, generations, classes, and nations.
- **The third candle** (*pink*)—Joy. It is through Jesus Christ that we participate in eternal, abundant life. One of the fruits of His Spirit dwelling in us is joy. How could it be otherwise since nothing can separate us from the love of God through the Savior? The change in color helps us mark the midpoint of Advent.
- **The fourth candle** (*purple*)—Love. God's love is shown by this—while we were yet sinners, His Son Jesus died for us. And now we have been redeemed and adopted into His family as His children. Experiencing God's love for us, we are now made free to love others.
- **The fifth and center candle** (*white*)—Jesus Christ is the light of the World. In Him we find truth and purpose. He not only died to purchase us as a people for His own possession, He rose from the dead as the pledge that we also shall be raised to a new and everlasting life.

We recommend using the wreath because it offers a visual way to mark our Advent waiting and the fulfillment of our expectations in Jesus Christ. Lighting the candles also offers a moment in our busy days, whether we are alone or with others, to pause and to reflect on our longings and to offer them to the one who created us, knows us and comes to us.

This guide offers daily prayers, readings and hymns for Advent and Christmas. The readings reflect the seasonal theme and mood of waiting and preparation. Many of the prayers reflect the Advent theme of the week. We believe this guide, along with the wreath, will help you as individuals, roommates, groups, and families to enter into the story of the gospel in new and deeper ways. Our goal is not to load you down with more tasks in an already busy life, but rather to provide you with tools to help you experience God's goodness more fully.

It is a great joy for us to be your pastors. We are so thankful that God has brought us together and we are honored to be able to worship and serve our Lord together with you. May Christ grant us all a blessed Advent and Christmas!

With great love for you all,

The Pastoral Staff of Resurrection Brooklyn

* Portions of the introduction have been adapted from materials from our friends at Christ Church Berkley (CA) and Trinity Presbyterian Church (VA).

ADVENT WEEK 1 - HOPE

OPENING PRAYER

God of hope, make us ready for this Advent. Prepare us for the Way of the Lord. We are listening to your Word as you announce the arrival of our Savior, who is Jesus, the King of Kings, the Creator and Redeemer. *Amen.*

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLE 1

Q. Why do we light the Advent candle?

A. To remember this truth: Jesus is the Light of the World and we who follow Him do not walk in darkness but have the Light of Life. In him the nations will put their hope. *(based on John 8:12 & Matthew 12:21)*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We are captive and exiled, O God, because we have, each in our own way, chosen our own path, away from you. We confess that we have placed our hope in lesser things. We are lost, in need of your help. Come, Lord Jesus. Forgive and restore us. Guide and deliver us. Renew our hope. *Amen.*

READINGS FOR WEEK 1

- Sunday: *Mark 13:35-37*
- Monday: *Isaiah 2:1-5*
- Tuesday: *Isaiah 11:1-5*
- Wednesday: *Isaiah 11:6-10*
- Thursday: *Matthew 7:24-27*
- Friday: *Matthew 9:27-31*
- Saturday: *Isaiah 40:1-5*

PRAYER OF FAITH AND RESPONSE

The Lord's Prayer *or* The Apostles' Creed

SONG FOR THE WEEK *(See Appendix)*

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

CLOSING PRAYER

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

ADVENT WEEK 2 - PEACE

OPENING PRAYER

Our gracious God, in this season of waiting, draw your people together in renewed peace and unity, that our praise and worship might echo through our lives. In this season of expectation, draw us together in renewed mission, that we may peacemakers as you have commanded. Keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, the true Prince of Peace. *Amen.*

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES 1-2

Q. Why do we light the Advent candles?

A. To remember this truth: Jesus is the Lord our God who lights our candle and lightens our darkness. For Jesus himself is our peace, the one who has broken down the dividing wall of hostility. *(based on Psalm 18:28 & Ephesians 2:14)*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We have, O God, each in our own way, forgotten your Law, forgotten your love for us. We have, too often, given ourselves to powers and practices that would destroy peace. We are lost, in need of your help. Come, Lord Jesus. Forgive and restore us. Guide and deliver us. Renew our peace. *Amen.*

READINGS FOR WEEK 2

- Sunday: *Deuteronomy 18:15-19*
- Monday: *Isaiah 35:1-4*
- Tuesday: *Matthew 18:12-14*
- Wednesday: *Matthew 11:25-30*
- Thursday: *Psalm 24:7-10*
- Friday: *2 Peter 3:8-13*
- Saturday: *Isaiah 61:1-4*

PRAYER OF FAITH AND RESPONSE

The Lord's Prayer *or* The Apostles' Creed

SONG FOR THE WEEK *(See Appendix)*

Jesus Shall Reign

CLOSING PRAYER

Merciful God, you sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation. Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

ADVENT WEEK 3 - JOY

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty God, may the splendor of your glory dawn in our hearts, that all shadows of the night may be scattered and we may be shown to be your joyful children of light by the advent of your Only Begotten Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

LIGHTING ADVENT CANDLES 1-3

Q. Why do we light the Advent candles?

A. To remember this truth: Jesus is the Word through whom all things were made. In him is life and his life is the light of all people. If we receive his light, our joy is made complete. *(based on John 1:1-3 & John 15:11)*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, we have neglected Advent disciplines. We've crowded them out with Christmas celebrations that arrive too early and with our anxieties, selfishness and lack of trust. Because of this, we have forgotten you and we are joyless. We are lost, in need of your help. Come, Lord Jesus. Forgive and restore us. Guide and deliver us. Renew our joy. *Amen.*

READINGS FOR WEEK 3

- Sunday: *Matthew 1:1-17*
- Monday: *Luke 1:5-17*
- Tuesday: *Luke 1:18-25*
- Wednesday: *Luke 1:26-38*
- Thursday: *Luke 1:39-45*
- Friday: *Luke 1:46-56*
- Saturday: *Luke 1:57-66*

PRAYER OF FAITH AND RESPONSE

The Lord's Prayer *or* The Apostles' Creed

SONG FOR THE WEEK *(See Appendix)*

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

CLOSING PRAYER

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

ADVENT WEEK 4 - LOVE

OPENING PRAYER

God of Light, grant that your people may love one another and together be ever watchful for the coming of your Only Begotten Son, that as the author of our salvation himself has taught us, we may hasten alert and meet him with lighted lamps when he comes. *Amen.*

LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES 1-4

Q. Why do we light the Advent candles?

A. We welcome God's light into our lives and we welcome the full revelation of God's unfailing love for us and for all of creation. For Jesus is the Word of God, the lamp to our feet and the light to our path. *(based on Psalm 119:105)*

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We have brought discord, O God. Each of us, in our own way, has locked ourselves out of relationships and we have filled our lives and world with darkness because we lack love. All too often, we have put our own judgment and desires before yours. Come, Lord Jesus. Forgive and restore us. Guide and deliver us. Renew our love. *Amen.*

READINGS FOR WEEK 4

- Sunday: *Deuteronomy 7:9*
- Monday: *John 1:1-14*
- Tuesday: *Philippians 2:4-11*
- Wednesday: *Mark 1:1-7*
- Thursday, Christmas Eve: *Luke 2:1-7*

PRAYER OF FAITH AND RESPONSE

The Lord's Prayer *or* The Apostles' Creed

SONG FOR THE WEEK *(See Appendix)*

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

CLOSING PRAYER

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.*

THE 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

OPENING PRAYER

Shout for joy the whole earth, and everything within. Rejoice! For Light has come into the world! The mountains sing, the seas resound to the praise of your name. Salvation once promised is here on earth! The angels' song rings in the air, a child has been born. Hallelujah! The Savior of the world is here and he is coming again to complete his work of redemption!

LIGHTING OF ALL ADVENT CANDLES + THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Q. Why do we light the Christmas candle?

A. With joy we remember Christ's coming and with joy we look forward to his coming again when night will be no more and lamp and sun will no longer be needed because he will be our light forever and ever. *(based on Revelation 22:5)*

CHRISTMAS PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Spend a few moments reflecting on the many ways you've experienced God's goodness this season and this past calendar year and give God thanks. If you're with others, share your thanksgivings and pray together.

READINGS FOR CHRISTMAS

- Christmas Day (Friday): *Luke 2:8-21*
- 2nd Day of Christmas (Saturday): *Psalms 120*
- 3rd Day of Christmas (Sunday): *Psalms 121*
- 4th Day of Christmas (Monday): *Psalms 122*
- 5th Day of Christmas (Tuesday): *Psalms 123*
- 6th Day of Christmas (Wednesday): *Psalms 124*
- 7th Day of Christmas (Thursday): *Psalms 125*
- 8th Day of Christmas (Friday): *Psalms 126*
- 9th Day of Christmas (Saturday): *Psalms 127*
- 10th Day of Christmas (Sunday): *Psalms 128*
- 11th Day of Christmas (Monday): *Psalms 134*
- 12th Day of Christmas (Tuesday): *Matthew 2:1-12*

PRAYER OF FAITH AND RESPONSE

The Lord's Prayer *or* The Apostles' Creed

SONGS FOR CHRISTMAS *(See Appendix)*

Joy to the World
Come All Ye Faithful
Go Tell it on the Mountain
The First Noel
Angels We Have Heard on High

CLOSING PRAYER

God, we are as confounded as Joseph and Mary,
as busy as the innkeepers,
as lonely as the shepherds,
as frightened as Herod,
as wayfaring as the Magi.
Turn us again to the place where,
with quietness,
you wrap up your truth and promise,
your love and salvation in the child born in a crude barn.
We ponder these things as the noise and clamor of the world
are stilled for a time,
and there is a peace that settles deep within us.
Bring us to Bethlehem,
to the place where Jesus was homeless,
but where we are truly at home.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil;
for thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory,
forever and ever. *Amen.*

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,

and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come 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.*

COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

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.
Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee,
Dayspring from on high, appear;
come, thou promised Rod of Jesse,
of thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing news,
glad tidings of a birth;
"Go to him, your praises bringing;
Christ the Lord has come to earth."

Come to earth to taste our sadness,
he whose glories knew no end;
by his life he brings us gladness,
our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
born within a cattle stall;
this the everlasting wonder,
Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born thy people to deliver,
Born a child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us for ever,
Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all-sufficient merit
Raise us to thy glorious throne.

JESUS SHALL REIGN

1. Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does His successive journeys run;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
'Til moons shall wax and wane no more.
2. For Him shall endless prayer be made,
And praises throng to crown His head;
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.
3. People and realms of ev'ry tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early blessings on His name.
4. Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blessed.
5. Where He displays His healing power,
Death and the curse are known no more:
In Him the tribes of Adam boast
More blessings than their father lost.
6. Let ev'ry creature rise and bring
His grateful honors to our King;
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeat the loud amen!

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

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, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
In ancient times did'st give the Law,
In cloud, and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of Hell Thy people save
And give them victory o'er the grave
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Day-Spring, from on high
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
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, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

HAIL TO THE LORD'S ANOINTED

Chorus: Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!

1. He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free,
To take away transgression, and rule in equity. (*Chorus*)
2. He comes in succor speedy to those who suffer wrong,
To help the poor and needy, and bid the weak be strong.
3. To give them songs for sighing, their darkness turn to light,
Whose souls, condemned and dying, are precious in His sight. (*Chorus*)
4. He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth,
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth. (*Chorus*)
5. The tide of time shall never His covenant remove.
His Name shall stand forever, That Name to us is Love. (*Chorus*)

JOY TO THE WORLD!

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 Heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the World, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, 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, 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, wonders, of His love.

O COME ALL
YE FAITHFUL

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him
Born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

Highest, most holy,
Light of light eternal,
Born of a virgin,
A mortal he comes;
Son of the Father
Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God
In the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

While shepherds kept their watching
Over silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens
There shone a holy light

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled
When lo! above the earth
Rang out the angels chorus
That hailed the Savior's birth

Refrain

Down in a lowly manger
The humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation
That blessèd Christmas morn

THE FIRST NOEL

The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepards in fields as they lay:
In fields where they lay a keeping their sheep
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel Noel Noel Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far:
And to the earth it gave great light
And so it continued both day and night.
Noel Noel Noel Noel
Born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from the country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the north-west;
O'er Bethlehem it took it's rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of nought,
And with his blood mankind has bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!
Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Refrain

Come to Bethlehem and see
Christ Whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee,
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.



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