

SERVICE ORDER
Sunday, 18th December
Fourth Sunday of Advent

WELCOME TO WORSHIP

**Stir up your power and come, Lord.
Support and help us,
so that what is hindered by our sins
may be hastened by your great mercy.
For you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.
Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCE: Matthew 1:22-23

*So, the Lord's promise came true, just as the prophet had said,
"a virgin will have a baby boy, and he will be called Immanuel,"
which means 'god is with us.*

**So, the Lord's promise came true, just as the prophet had said,
"a virgin will have a baby boy, and he will be called Immanuel,"
which means 'god is with us.**

INVOCATION

*In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.*

LHS 2 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, 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 dayspring, 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, thou key of David, come And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the path that leads on high, And close the path to misery:
Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.**

From the Great O Antihons, 12th – 13th Century Tr. John Mason Neale, 1851/1859

LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

*To all who received the true light,
who believed in his name,
he gave power to become children of God.*
**The true light, who enlightens everyone,
was coming into the world.**

CONFESSION

*Let us draw near to God our Father with a true heart to confess our sins,
and ask Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.*

**Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor helpless sinner, confess to You all
my sins, and repent of all the evil I have done. I have deeply displeased You
and deserve Your punishment in time and in eternity. But I am sorry for my
sins, and I ask You, for the sake of the holy innocent sufferings and death of
Your dear Son Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me. Amen.**

*Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given His
only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who
believe in His name He has given the right to become children of God, and has
given them His Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved.*

Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.

PSALM 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear us, Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who sit enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth

² before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.

Awaken your might; come and save us.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine,
that we may be saved**

³ Restore us, O God;

make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

⁴ How long, LORD God Almighty, will your anger smoulder
against the prayers of your people?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have made them drink tears by the bowlful.

⁶ You have made us an object of derision^[b] to our neighbours,
and our enemies mock us.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine,
that we may be saved**

⁷ Restore us, God Almighty;

make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

¹⁷ Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand,
the son of man you have raised up for yourself.

¹⁸ Then we will not turn away from you;
revive us, and we will call on your name.

¹⁹ Restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine,
that we may be saved**

**Glory to the Father and the Son
and the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now,
and will be forever.**

Amen.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray for God to be with us.

[silence]

*Thank you, loving heavenly Father,
for coming with power to the Virgin Mary
and making her the mother of our Lord.*

*Come to us with your Holy Spirit,
so that we receive your saving word
and rejoice in our Saviour.*

*For he lives with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

Amen.

BIBLE READING

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16 A virgin will conceive (NIVUK)

¹⁰ Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹ ‘Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.’ ¹² But Ahaz said, ‘I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.’ ¹³ Then Isaiah said, ‘Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you^[a] a sign: the virgin^[b] will conceive and give birth to a son, and^[c] will call him Immanuel.^[d] ¹⁵ He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, ¹⁶ for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

After the reading

This is the Word of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7 Jesus, son of David, Son of God (NIVUK)

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God – ² the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures ³ regarding his Son, who as to his earthly life^[a] was a

descendant of David, ⁴ and who through the Spirit of holiness was appointed the Son of God in power^[b] by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. ⁵ Through him we received grace and apostleship to call all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from^[c] faith for his name's sake. ⁶ And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. ⁷ To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

After the reading
This is the Word of the LORD.
Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE

Alleluia!
Alleluia! Alleluia!
*A virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and his name shall be Emmanuel, 'God is with us.'*
Alleluia!

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25 God's call to Joseph (NIVUK)

Before the reading
Glory be to You, O LORD.

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^[a]: his mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^[b] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[c] because he will save his people from their sins.' ²² All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ 'The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and

they will call him Immanuel'^[d] (which means 'God with us'). ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

*After the reading
This is the gospel of the LORD.*

Praise be to You, O Christ.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for being born of Mary by the Holy Spirit.

Help us to believe that you came to be with us

to save us from our sins.

Amen.

APOSTLE'S 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 sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty,
from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

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

LHS 800 MAY WE BE ONE

**May we be one Bound in love for ever Growing close together day by day;
Growing as God fills us with his life; We are joined in him, he makes us one.**

May we be one As our Father planned it. May the love of Jesus make us strong. No one can harm us when he is near; He has brought us peace, he makes us one

May we be one – Jesus’ truth to bind us. With his body he unites us all; Dying our death, he restores our life; Living with us now, he makes us one.

May we be one Sharing life together With the Father and his only Son. Now we have life in this world of death; Heaven has begun, he makes us one.

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SERMON

At this point you may wish to Listen to Sermon,
or Read and Discuss the Sermon
For Church YouTube Channel ([click here](#))
The Sermon online may be different to the manuscript.
For LCA Worship Resources ([click here](#))

AT 359 HOLY SPIRIT LIVING WATER

**Holy Spirit, living water, flow in us and set us free.
Cleanse our unbelief and sorrow, wash our eyes and make us see.**

**Holy Spirit, come as wind and blow the dust of death away.
Breathe the gift of life into us, lighten hearts to laugh and play.**

**Holy Spirit, rushing fire, burn with truth and justice here.
Catch our minds alight with passion, perfect love that casts out fear.**

**Holy Spirit, come in silence, wordlessly to heal and bless.
Be the heart that prays within us, fill the void with tenderness.**

**Holy Spirit, blessed Wisdom, teach us all of God’s delight.
Offer us the wine of grace and make us children of the Light.**

OFFERING PRAYER

*Eternal Lord,
we thank you that you sent your Son Jesus
to be with us and to save us.
Teach us to live as your people
and to serve you joyfully,
as we look forward to the coming of Jesus.
Amen.*

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (Philippians 4:6)*

Let us pray.

Father in Heaven, we give you thanks for sending your Son to be with us.
Bless your church in these weeks, so that all people may know Immanuel
through forgiveness in his name.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

The advent of your Son confronted kings and astounded the people. Touch
the conscience of all our leaders and citizens, so that goodness prospers, evil
is curbed, and the light of truth dispels all falsehood.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Thank you for protecting us in trouble and adversity. Sustain all who continue
to serve us in this festive season: the police, the medical services, emergency
services, and all whose hours are long and whose work is arduous or
dangerous.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

We thank you for our families and friends: bind us together in mutual
affection and help us to overlook our grievances. And teach us hospitality,
that in welcoming others, we may welcome you.

Lord, in your mercy: **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we thank you for sending your promised Son, Jesus Christ. Help us, as his brothers and sisters, to imitate him, so that when he comes again we may be ready to greet him with joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come,
Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours
now and forever. Amen.**

BLESSING

Let us bless the LORD.
God be praised forevermore.
The LORD bless us and keep us.
The LORD make His face shine on us and be gracious to us.
The LORD look upon us with favour, and give us peace.
Amen!

GROWING FAITH AT HOME BLESSING

*May God our Father and our Lord Jesus
Christ be kind to you and bless you with peace.*
**May God our Father and our Lord Jesus
Christ be kind to you and bless you with peace.**

WORDS OF SENDING

Go in peace, for Jesus Christ came to save his people.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

AT 408 MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU

**May the Lord bless you today, and may He keep you in His care,
giving His peace to your soul even when times are hard.
May the Lord's love flow through you just like a never-ending stream –
knowing His hand will be there when you call on His name.
May He always smile on you**

Sharney Russell-Schlenker (1995)

HYMNS AND SONGS

First reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

LHS

- 2 O come, O come, Immanuel G7
- 17 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus G6
- 19 Come, Thou Saviour of our race* G4
- 28 Immanuel, we sing Thy praise* (vv 1,2) G4

AT

- 17 Emmanuel, God is with us
- 157 Jesus, name above all names

Second reading: Romans 1:1-7

LHS

- 14 Let the earth now praise the Lord* G4
- 16 Hail to the Lord's Anointed G6
- 232 Rise, Thou light of gentile nations (vv 1,2,3)* G4
- 733 Daughter of Zion, O rejoice G6

AT

- 133 Jesus set us free
- 308 We are called to follow Jesus
- 349 There is a redeemer

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

LHS

- 2 O come, O come, Immanuel G7
- 15 Jesus came – the heavens adoring* G6
- 17 Come, Thou long-expected Jesus G6
- 19 Come, Thou Saviour of our race*G4
- 35 To the name of our salvation
- 36 Jesus, name of wondrous love*
- 156 Jesus our Saviour, of true joy the giver* G3
- 782 At the name of Jesus G7

AT

- 17 Emmanuel, God is with us
- 58 Praise the name of Jesus
- 141 Mary's child
- 157 Jesus, name above all names
- 451 Saviour of the world