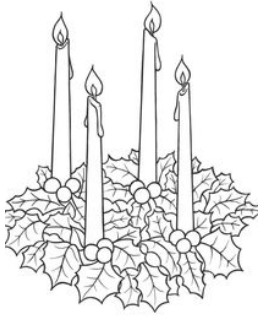


Advent Prayer



Introductory Reading:

Advent is a season of patient waiting. It is a sacred time. It is a time to believe God can accomplish in us something greater than our imaginings. It is a season of quiet and joyful expectancy; a season for prophecy, calling us to conversion, preparation and a constant sense of watchfulness. We can really wait only if what we are waiting for has already begun for us. Waiting is never a movement from nothing to something. It is always a movement from something to something more. It involves nurturing the moment, as a mother nurtures the child that is growing in her womb. Henri Nouwen- *Eternal Seasons*

Make Room for Emmanuel

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

Rejoice! Rejoice! O Israel
To you shall come Emmanuel

Let us pray:

When I become overly-engaged in life's activities and allow them to crowd out space for essential prayer and reflection, help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When the pain of a world weary with war and violence threatens my hope and diminishes my belief in the goodness of humanity, help

me make room for you
in my heart, Emmanuel.

When I am asked to forgive another's failings or to let go of old hurts that cling stubbornly to my aggrieved self, help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

All: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

When I give undue attention to myself, or when excessive preoccupation with my own schedule tempts me to ignore the needs of others, help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When another's religion, skin color, political views or other personal beliefs differ from my own, help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

When the heartache and distress of those dear to me sadden my spirit and suffocates my desire to bring joy to others, help me make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

All: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

When peace seems far away from my deeper self, and crushing distress pays daily visits to my body, mind, or spirit, help me to make room for you in my heart Emmanuel.

When day is done and I look over the hours that have passed before I rest my head on the pillow of sleep, help me to make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.



When I join friends and family to celebrate the gift of your birth in human form and gather to remember your boundless love, help me to make room for you in my heart, Emmanuel.

All: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel....

Let us pray together: Emmanuel, God-with-us, you stand at the door of our heart and await our welcome. Help us to be aware of your presence each day in the people who enter our lives. We desire to open our hearts to make room for you in any part of our selves that tends to keep you out. Show us those places where you still need a welcome. Spur on our courage to open the door and invite you in. We want to make room for you in our hearts, Emmanuel.

Reader 1: Adapted: H. Nouwen- *Eternal Seasons*

Waiting is first of all a 'waiting together'. In the Visitation, Mary and Elizabeth come together and enable each other to wait. They affirmed for each other that something was happening worth waiting for. The visit of Mary to Elizabeth is one of the Bible's most beautiful expression of what it means to form community, to be together, gathered around promise, affirming what is happening among us.

Reader 2:

Real joy always wants to share. It belongs to the nature of joy to communicate itself to others and to invite others to take part in the gifts we have received. As Advent weeks progress, we hear more and more about the beauty and splendor of the One who is to come. Advent leads to a growing inner stillness and joy allowing us to realize that the One for whom we are waiting has

already arrived and speaks in the silence of our hearts.

Intercessions: Lord, teach me to wait.

- for the silence I desire
- for deep peace in my heart
- for an unending longing for You
- for gentleness towards others
- for appreciation of mystery
- for willingness to be empty
- for you loving embrace
- for the Spirit of love within & without
- for blessings on our Province community

The Lord's Prayer:

Together: Our Father...

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil,
and grant us peace in our day.
In your mercy keep us free from sin
and protect us from all anxiety
as we wait in joyful hope
for the coming of our Savior, Jesus
Christ. For thine is the Kingdom, the
Power and the Glory, Now and Forever.

Amen!



Blessing: We raise our hands in blessing and gratitude as we pray:

Most Holy God:

In this Advent of expectation, draw us together in unity,
that our praise and worship
might echo in these walls
and also through our lives.

In this Advent of expectation
draw us together in mission,
that the hope within
might be the song we sing,
and the melody of our lives.

In this Advent of expectation
draw us together in service,
that the path we follow
might lead us from a stable
to a glimpse of eternity.

And may the dawn of His coming
find you rejoicing in His presence
and welcoming the light of His truth.



Hymn of Joy

Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee
God of glory, Lord of love
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee
Opening to the sun above
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness
Drive the dark of doubt a way
Giver of immortal gladness
Fill us with the light of day

Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel
Your love has come
Here to dwell

All Thy works with joy surround Thee
Earth and heaven reflect thy rays
Stars and angels sing around Thee
Center of unbroken praise
Field and forest,
vale and mountain
Flow'ry meadow, flashing sea
Singing bird and flowing fountain
Call us to rejoice in Thee

2x Rejoice, rejoice!
Emmanuel
Your love has come
here to dwell

Mortals join the happy chorus
Which the morning stars began
Father love is reigning o'er us
Brother love binds man to man
Ever singing march we onward
Victors in the midst of strife
Joyful music leads us sunward
In the triumph song of life

Music: Ludwig von Beethoven; Ode to Joy (adapted)
Songwriters: Chris Tomlin / Ed Cash Hymn of Joy
lyrics © Worship Together Music, S.D.G. Publishing,
Sixsteps Songs