

it is important to understand that this new life is permanent. Christ anchors you in this newfound relationship.

Application: Jesus promises that your new life will never be lost. Christ will keep you safe, raising you up in the last day. He will ensure that the good work that God has started in your life will be completed. You are in the arms of Christ and there you will stay forever.

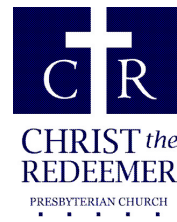
Pray: For a peace in your life that comes from an assurance of your security in Christ.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Neale, John M. / Coffin, Henry S. / Helmore, Thomas

Perhaps the best-known hymn of Advent preparation is "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," which was already well established in the eighth century monastic community of the medieval church. Monks sang a series of seven antiphonal chants at evening vesper services, each beginning with a long drawn out "O," expressive of a deep yearning for the coming of Christ. In so doing the monks were identifying with the Old Testament church, which also yearned for the coming Messiah. In each of these chants Christ was given a particular Old Testament title such as "O Root of Jesse," "O Key of David," and "O King of Nations." During the twelfth century an unknown poet selected five of these antiphonal chants and created a Latin hymn. He also added the refrain to be sung at the end of each stanza, "Rejoice, rejoice." The final stage in the development of the hymn was reached in 1851 when it was translated into English. The original yearning for the coming of the Christ has been preserved with the use and repetition of the "O" at the beginning of each stanza and refrain.

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| <p>1. 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!</p> | <p>2. O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
And order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> |
| <p>3. O come, O come, great Lord of might,
Who to Thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times once gave the law
In cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> | <p>4. O come, thou Root of Jesse's tree,
An ensign of Thy people be;
Before Thee rulers silent fall;
All peoples on Thy mercy call.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> |
| <p>5. O come, thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heavenly home.
The captives from their prison free,
And conquer death's deep misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> | <p>6. O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thy justice here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel,
Shall come to thee, O Israel!</p> |



Taking Gathered Worship Home

The Life of Faith-Rooted in God's Promises,
Running to the New Jerusalem

First Week of Advent –December 2, 2007

This daily litany may be used as an aid for family or personal worship throughout the week.

The Promise Candle

Leader: Why do we light the Advent candle?

Family: **Jesus said, "I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the Light of Life."**

Leader: What is the meaning of the first lighted candle?

Family: **The first lighted candle is a reminder of the Light of Promise given to God's People.**

Leader: What was God's promise to Abraham and his children?

Family: **God's promise to Abraham and his children was that He would give them a home as an everlasting possession where they would know rest.**

Leader: What is God's promise to His children in the Gospels?

Family: **God has promised to be with us in our journeys of this life, to expand His family to all the nations of the earth and to provide a permanent place of dwelling with Him in heaven. Like Abraham we too live as aliens, "looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God." (Hebrews 11:9-10, 16) We know that in Christ God is not ashamed to be our God and that He has indeed prepared a city for us and will give us rest.**

Read aloud the history of the Christmas carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" and sing it together as a family (on back).

Closing prayer to be read in unison: Dear Heavenly Father, we bless You for being completely faithful to all of Your promises. Forgive us when we fail to trust You at Your word. We thank You, dear Jesus, that You have trusted the promises of the Father even unto Your own death. And Dear Spirit, be with us in our current exile in this world, multiply Your heavenly family here on earth and "open wide our heavenly home" as we see the final fulfillment of all of Your promises. We pray this for the glory of Your Name and our good. Amen.

The old testament high priests were appointed by God to perform the "**things pertaining to God**" (**Hebrews 5:1**). God honored the high priests by appointing them as our representatives, to offer gifts and sacrifices to God for the sin of men. Yet the duties of the high priest were limited to the religious realm. By contrast, Melchizedek was both a king and a priest. Melchizedek means "king of righteousness". Even more is Jesus' supreme priesthood. Jesus serves as prophet, revealing to us the will of God for our salvation. As a priest, presenting Himself as a sacrifice for our sin and reconciling us to God. As a king, ruling over and defending us in His perfect righteousness. It is on the rock of Christ that the church is built.

Reading this week from Hebrews 5:1-6:3

Sunday 12/2

Read: The role of Jesus as our prophet, priest and king is fundamental to our Christian life. Christ is the cornerstone upon which all we know about God is built. Through the word of God and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit, we are able to understand the purpose of Christ's death and resurrection and recognize His lordship over our life.

Application: While we are called to "**repent, and believe the gospel**" (Mark 1:15), this life changing knowledge is just the foundation of our new life in Christ. Knowledge of the gospel is just the beginning of our God given wisdom.

Pray: That receiving the gospel will serve as a springboard for a solid understanding of the will of God in your life.

Monday 12/3

Read: By now you may have come to understand that being a part of the church does not come about merely by attending church. It comes only through the forgiveness of sin found in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit makes us aware of the foulness of our sin. The Holy Spirit reforms our attitude about that sin causing us to turn from it, directing our heart and mind towards obedience to God.

Application: You are a part of the church because of the redeeming work of Christ in your life. Jesus is the gate by which you enter into a renewed fellowship with God and are enabled to serve Him as a part of His church.

Pray: If you have already committed your life to Christ pray giving thanks for the forgiveness of your sin and entrance into the body of Christ. If you are not a Christian pray that God would open your eyes to your sin and cause you to look to Christ for salvation.

Tuesday 12/4

Read: Christ is the chief cornerstone of the church (Ephesians 2:21). You are an instrumental part of the church God has built. You are a member of Gods flock, coming together as a worshipping community. The church is holy, universal and apostolic (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Application: You are not on your own. Local congregations such as Christ the Redeemer are not alone. Each person, each congregation, stands united in teaching Gods truth under the banner of Christ.

Pray: For a strong sense of family and partnership with each and every Christian.

Wednesday 12/5

Read: It is good to have faith in Christ. The knowledge of salvation through Christ brings you from a life of despair into a life of hope. But we are not to remain in this elementary knowledge. Turning away from our sin directs us towards a new life. A life of increasing virtue (moral goodness) as we add fruit to our faith through increasing knowledge about "**things pertaining to God**" (Hebrews 5:1, 6:1, II Peter 1:5).

Application: Each day add to your understanding of Gods word. Do not remain in spiritual infancy but grow to maturity. Turn your faith into fruit. Turn the word of God into deeds.

Pray: Your life in Christ would proceed beyond elementary knowledge into one of spiritual fruitfulness.

Thursday 12/6

Read: God has a purpose for your life. He has chosen you to be "**holy and with out blame before Him**" (Ephesians 1:4). He has prepared works for you to do and you are required to walk in those works (Ephesians 2:10).

Application: Understanding God has called you to place your faith in Him is elementary knowledge. Realizing He has also called you for a purpose is adding knowledge to that faith. God has planned many things for your life.

Pray: That God will make known His plan for your life. Pray you will be ready to accept those works God has prepared for you.

Friday 12/7

Read: God equips you for the ministries He has planned for your life. II Timothy 3:16-17 states Gods word is the tool He uses to teach, correct, rebuke and train you in righteousness. The purpose of Gods word is to prepare you for your life's work in His service.

Application: Just as you are not alone in the church, neither does God leave you alone in the works he brings into your life. The edifying power of His word brings spiritual and moral competence to your life. God graciously provides other Christians to further strengthen and support you.

Pray: You would use the word of God to sharpen your understanding of what he expects from you. Pray, giving thanks for other believers in your life.

Saturday 12/8

Read: If you are in Christ, you are a new creation. The old has gone, the new has come (II Corinthians 5:17). Now that you have entered into a reconciled relationship with God,