



## Advent Worship Series 2024

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

This Advent worship series has been adapted from the work of Fred N. Seay found in the September 2023 edition of *Reformed Worship*. Adaptations and additions by Seth Normington. Please adapt for your context and note that all elements of worship are likely not present.

The worship series and sermons focus on the themes of the hymn, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. Sermon videos will be available by the Thursday before the Sunday in question. The videos will include the prayer for illumination, scripture, and sermon. See the Out & About and the Presbytery's Facebook page for sermon videos and links.

### First Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 1

Theme: Come, Dayspring

*Lighting the Advent Wreath & Call to Worship* (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:22-23, Luke 1:78-79, Revelation 22:16-20)

In this season, we sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." "Emmanuel" means "God with us." We light candles as a visible sign that we look to the advent, or coming, of Christ. The prophet Isaiah tells us, "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel."

**We light this candle because God is with us.**

Zechariah the prophet spoke of "the rising sun that will come to us from heaven **to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.**"

And Jesus declared in Revelation, "**I am the Root and Offspring of David and the bright Morning Star,**"

and he promised, "Yes, I am coming soon." And so we have hope!

**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**

Hymn

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* [v. 1]

Glory to God 88

*Prayer of Confession*

**God of our light and salvation, the bright Morning Star, we confess that we have grown accustomed to darkness. In your light we see challenges to our stability and comfort. We look at ourselves and into our own hearts and deepest thoughts and we do not like what you show us. Forgive us our many sins. In this season of Advent and beyond, teach us to walk in your light, in the power of your Holy Spirit, as disciples of Jesus Christ our Lord.**

*Assurance of God's Grace (from Psalm 97:11-12)*

It is by the work of Christ that we are righteous and our hearts made pure. The light of Christ shines upon us by faith. Proclaim these words of the psalmist:

**Light shines on the righteous and joy on the upright in heart. Rejoice in the Lord, you who are righteous, and praise his holy name.**

Know that you are forgiven and praise the name of the Triune God.

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel [vv. 1, 6]*

Glory to God 88

*Prayer for Illumination*

Holy Lord, as our daylight grows shorter and more faint, we remember the times when your voice has gone silent or felt far off. When we gather in worship and around Your Word, we know that you are here with us and your is strong. Illuminate us, heart, mind, body, and soul as we listen to Your Word read and proclaimed. Amen.

*Scripture*

*Malachi 4:1-2 and Luke 1:78-79*

*Sermon*

*Come, Dayspring*

*Response to the Word/Affirmation of Faith (from the O Antiphons)*

O Adonai, Ruler of the House of Israel, you appeared in the burning bush to Moses and gave him the law on Sinai: **Come with outstretched arm to save us. Come, Lord Jesus.**

O Radiant Dawn, Splendor of Eternal Light, Sun of Justice: **Come, shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

*Benediction (by Bethany Besteman)*

Saints, here Emmanuel God has been near to you. Go from this place comforted by Emmanuel's presence in your life and committed to showing Emmanuel's presence to your neighbors. Here

Dayspring Jesus has shone his light upon you. Go from this place illuminated with Dayspring's light and committed to showing Dayspring's light to your neighbors. And may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be now and ever near you.

## **Second Sunday of Advent**

Sunday, December 8

Theme: Come, Wisdom

*Lighting the Advent Wreath & Call to Worship* (Psalm 85:8-13)

In this season, we sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." "Emmanuel" means "God with us." We light candles as a visible sign that we await the advent, the coming of Christ, the Wisdom of God. Today we light the second Advent candle, the candle of peace. Let us join together in words of wisdom from Psalm 85; words that speak of the promise of peace. We join the psalmist in declaring:

**I will listen to what God the Lord says;**

He promises peace to his people, his faithful servants – but let them not turn to folly.

**Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land.**

Love and faithfulness meet together; **righteousness and peace kiss each other.**

Faithfulness springs forth from the earth, **and righteousness looks down from heaven.**

The Lord will indeed give what is good and our land will yield its harvest. **Righteousness goes before him and prepares the way for his steps.**

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* [v. 2]

Glory to God 88

*Prayer of Confession*

**God of steadfast love and mercy, we confess our sins before you. In your light, we recognize how many of our decisions and our priorities are shaped by the wisdom of this present age. We have brought much trouble and pain upon ourselves, and we have contributed to the trouble and pain of others. Forgive us in your grace and mercy, and teach us your ways through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son and Wisdom.**

*Assurance of God's Grace* (Proverbs 2:3-5, 10-11, 6)

Yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the

knowledge of God. For wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; discretion will watch over you, understanding will guard you.

**For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding.**

Know that you are forgiven and praise the name of the Triune God.

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* [vv. 1, 6, 2]

Glory to God 88

*Prayer for Illumination*

Gracious God, who brings knowledge to the humble and light to the seeker, we ask You to shine Your wisdom upon us as we listen to Your Word. Dispel the shadows of doubt and guide us with understanding, that we may walk in the paths of truth. Open our minds and hearts by Your Spirit, O Lord, that we may fully receive the hope of Christ. Amen

*Scripture*

*Proverbs 8:1, 6, 22-36 and 1 Corinthians 1:18-25*

*Sermon*

*Come, Wisdom*

*Response to the Word/Affirmation of Faith (from the O Antiphons)*

O Root of Jesse, rising as a sign for all the peoples, before you earthly rulers will keep silent, and nations give you honor: **Come quickly to deliver us. Come, Lord Jesus.**

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, you order all things with strength and gentleness: **Come now and teach us the way to salvation. Come, Lord Jesus.**

*Benediction (by Bethany Besteman)*

Saints, here Emmanuel God has been near to you. Go from this place comforted by Emmanuel's presence in your life and committed to showing Emmanuel's presence to your neighbors. Here Wisdom Jesus has guided your steps. Go from this place assured of Wisdom's continued counsel and committed to living lives shaped by Wisdom's call.

And may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be now and forever near you.

## Third Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 15

Theme: Come, Key of David

*Lighting the Advent Wreath & Call to Worship* (Zechariah 9:9-10; Isaiah 22:22)

In this season, we sing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” “Emmanuel” means “God with us.” We light candles as a visible sign that we await the advent, the coming of Christ, the Key of David. Today we light the third Advent candle, the candle of joy. Let us declare God’s Word and we come into worship:

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and victorious...

**He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; **what he opens no one can shut and what he shuts no one can open.**

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* [v. 5]

Glory to God 88

*Prayer of Confession* (by Bethany Besteman)

God, who mercifully has opened wide the doors to life everlasting, **we confess we are a people of shut doors and high walls. Teach us to rejoice in the wide mercy that breaks down barriers and unlocks doors.**

God, who in wisdom closes doors to ways that would harm us, **we confess we are a people who stubbornly persist in knocking on those doors anyway. Teach us to be patient and wait for the wisdom that comes from accepting your timing in our lives. In the name of Jesus, the Key of David, we pray. Amen.**

*Assurance of God’s Grace* (Revelation 3:7-8, 11-12)

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: ‘The words of the holy one, the true one, who has the key of David, who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one opens. “ ‘I know your works. Behold, I have set before you an open door, which no one is able to shut. I know that you have but little power, and yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name. I am coming soon. Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown. The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

**We are assured of our crown because of the gift of faith in Jesus Christ – we hold fast in faith.**

Know that you are forgiven and praise the name of the Triune God.

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* [vv. 1, 6, 2, 5]

Glory to God 88

*Prayer for Illumination*

Lord of all nations, who gathers Your people from every distant shore, come now and unite our hearts to receive Your truth. Break down the walls that divide us and plant within us a longing for Your peace. May Your Spirit open our ears to hear and our lives to obey, that we may follow Christ, our true King. Amen.

*Scripture*

*Revelation 1 and 3:7-13*

*Sermon*

*Come, Key of David*

*Response to the Word/Affirmation of Faith (from the O Antiphons)*

O Key of David, Scepter over the house of Israel, you open and no one can close, you close and no one can open: **Come to set free the prisoners who live in darkness and the shadow of death. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.**

*Benediction (by Bethany Besteman)*

Saints, here Emmanuel God has been near to you. Go from this place comforted by Emmanuel's presence in your life and committed to showing Emmanuel's presence to your neighbors. Here the Key of David has opened your heart. Go from this place confident in the wide-open mercy of God and committed to inviting others into the open doors of God's love.

And may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be now and forever near you.

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Sunday, December 22

Theme: Come, Desire of Nations

*Lighting the Advent Wreath & Call to Worship (based on Haggai 2:7; Luke 1:49)*

In this season, we sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." "Emmanuel" means "God with us." We light candles as a visible sign that we await the advent, the coming of Christ, the Desire of Nations. Today we light the fourth Advent candle, the candle of love. Let us declare God's Word and we come into worship:

Because God is a God of love: “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ...I will shake all nations and what is desired by all nations will come.”

**With Mary of Nazareth we say, “The Mighty One has done great things for us – holy is his name.”  
Let us worship God!**

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel [v. 7]*

Glory to God 88

*Prayer of Confession*

God of grace and glory, we are filled with anticipation as we come closer to Christmas. Many of us are also tired and feel extra stress in this season.

**We confess our sins against you and the people around us: our sharp words, our careless actions, our thoughtless responses, our inability to see past ourselves to the deep needs that surround us.**

As we prepare to celebrate our Savior’s coming, lead us by your Spirit to recognize and hold fast to the things that matter before you.

**Teach us to recognize Jesus Christ your Son, our true desire, and to hunger and thirst for all that only he can give.**

*Assurance of God’s Grace (Malachi 3:1-3)*

“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord.”

**We are refined by Christ our Lord so that we can continually bring our lives as an offering to him.**

Know that you are forgiven and praise the name of the Triune God.

*Hymn*

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel [vv. 1, 6, 2, 5]*

Glory to God 88

*Prayer for Illumination*

O Lord of might, who spoke to Your people in ancient days and revealed Your glory in the cloud and fire, speak to us now through Your Word. Draw near to us with power and grace, dispelling our fears

