



**Church of the Nativity, Hamilton**

## **Advent Lessons & Carols**

**Fourth Sunday of Advent**

*December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025 at 10 am*



## **Web Edition**

*Called to Life — Compelled to Love*



We will strive to live up to our responsibilities as members of the Dish with One Spoon wampum, first established between the Anishinaabek and Haudenosaunee to set out how this part of Turtle Island would be shared.

**May our actions be guided by our commitment to reconciliation.**

All are welcome in the worship and fellowship of the Church of the Nativity.  
May you find grace and hope in this service.

We try to minimize individuals' appearances on camera for the stream.

Prelude

*Music is offered to provide a time for quiet prayer and preparation.*

*A bell is rung, and the service begins.*

Territorial Acknowledgment

*Opening Hymn*

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel <sup>1</sup>*

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

*Refrain:*

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!**

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who orders all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go. *Refrain...***

O come, O Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain...*

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
in one the hearts of humankind;  
O bid our sad divisions cease,  
and be for us our Prince of Peace. *Refrain...*

Greeting <sup>2</sup>

In the name of God,  
who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness  
and made a place for us in the kingdom of his beloved Son,  
we welcome you:  
    grace to you and peace.

**And also with you.**

As we meet to celebrate anew the coming of God's kingdom,  
we hear revealed the mystery of God's loving purpose for us –  
how that when we were far off,  
    he met us in his Son and brought us home;  
how he humbled himself to take our human nature,  
    that we might share his divine glory.

Let us then so celebrate this coming with our carols and hymns of praise,  
that our lives may be charged with his life;  
that we may bear witness to his glory  
and so bring light to those who sit in darkness.

So first we pray for those among whom the Christ was born:  
those living in poverty and helplessness,  
the aged and young children;  
the cold, the hungry and the unhoused;  
the victims of poverty, injustice and oppression,  
the sick and those who mourn,  
the lonely and the unloved;  
those in despair or in the shadow of death.

Then, as we hear again  
the message of peace on earth and goodwill among all God's people,  
we pray for the leaders of the nations,  
that all may be inspired to work together  
for the establishment of justice, freedom and peace the world over.

And that we may bear true witness to this hope in a divided world,  
we pray for the peace and unity of Christ's Body, the Church universal,  
that the whole earth may live to praise his name.

Finally, as we rejoice with the saints in heaven and on earth,  
we remember all who have gone before us with the sign of faith,  
whose hope was in the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord,  
through whom we offer up our prayers for the coming of his kingdom,  
in the words he himself has taught us, saying:

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.**

Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours, now and for ever.  
Amen.

### Lighting of Advent Candles <sup>3</sup>



1. Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
2. Peace is a rib-bon that cir-cles the earth,  
3. Joy is a song that wel-comes the dawn,  
4. Love is a flame that burns in our heart.



lead-ing us on till the morn-ing is bright.  
giv-ing a prom-ise of safe-ty and worth.  
tell-ing the world that the Sav-iour is born.  
Je-sus has come and will nev-er de-part.

#### *Refrain*



When God is a child there's joy in our song.



The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,



and none shall be a-fraid.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God  
and of one another.

God of mercy,  
**we confess that we have sinned.**  
**We trust earthly powers and human authority alone.**  
**We grow fearful.**  
**We cling to false comforts.**

God of might,  
**we confess that we have sinned.**  
**We have turned away from our neighbours.**  
**We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst,  
**we confess that we have sinned.**  
**We plead: come to us.**  
**Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen.**

Let us pray.

God of grace,  
give us the faith of Joseph to see the Spirit's work  
where the world sees only shame;  
to listen to the promise  
and to awaken to the cry of life renewed and love reborn;  
through Jesus Christ, the one who is to come.  
**Amen.**

Choral Anthem

“Bring Us Hope”

## Looking for the King and his Kingdom

1<sup>st</sup> Reading <sup>6</sup>

A reading from the prophet Zechariah.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!  
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!  
Lo, your king comes to you;  
triumphant and victorious is he,  
humble and riding on a donkey,  
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.  
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim  
and the war-horse from Jerusalem;  
and the battle bow shall be cut off,  
and he shall command peace to the nations;

his dominion shall be from sea to sea,  
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

*Zechariah 9. 9 – 10*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Carol

*People, Look East! The Time Is Near* <sup>7</sup>

**People, look east! The time is near  
of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able,  
trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the guest is on the way.**

**Furrows, be glad! Though earth is bare,  
one more seed is planted there:  
give up your strength, the seed to nourish,  
that in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the rose is on the way.**

**Birds, though you long have ceased to build,  
guard the nest that must be filled;  
even the hour when wings are frozen  
God for fledging time has chosen.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the bird, is on the way.**

**Stars, keep the watch: When night is dim  
one more light the bowl shall brim,**

shining beyond the frosty weather,  
bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth  
Christ who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming  
with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today:  
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Psalm 72. <sup>1-8</sup>

*Deus, judicium* <sup>8</sup>

Give the king your justice, O God,  
and your righteousness to the king's son;  
**that he may rule your people righteously  
and those living in poverty with justice;**

that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,  
and the little hills bring righteousness.

**He shall defend the needy among the people,  
rescuing the poor and crushing the oppressor.**

He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,  
from one generation to another.

**He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,  
like showers that water the earth.**

In his time shall the righteous flourish;  
there shall be abundance of peace  
till the moon shall be no more.

**He shall rule from sea to sea,**

**and from the River to the ends of the earth.**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Reading* <sup>9</sup>

A reading from the prophet Jeremiah.

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

*Jeremiah 23. 5, 6*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

Choral Anthem

"Glad Tidings"

*3<sup>rd</sup> Reading*

*Confitemini Domino*

A reading from psalm 118.

Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter them;  
I will offer thanks to the Lord.

"This is the gate of the Lord;  
those who are righteous may enter."

I will give thanks to the Lord who answered me

and has become my salvation.

The same stone which the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.

This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.  
On this day the Lord has acted; we will rejoice and be glad in it.  
Hosannah, Lord, hosannah! Lord, send us now success.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord;  
we bless you from the house of the Lord.  
God is the Lord and has shined upon us;  
form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

"You are my God, and I will thank you;  
you are my God, and I will exalt you."

Give thanks to the Lord who is good;  
the mercy of the Lord endures for ever.

*Psalm 118. 19 – 29*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 24

*Domini est terra* <sup>10</sup>

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,  
the world and all who dwell therein.  
**For it is God who founded it upon the seas  
and made it firm upon the rivers of the deep.**

"Who can ascend the hill of the Lord  
and who can stand in the holy place of God?"  
**"Those who have clean hands and a pure heart,  
who have not pledged themselves to falsehood,**

**nor sworn by what is a fraud.**

They shall receive a blessing from the Lord  
and a just reward from the God of their salvation.”

**Such is the generation of those who seek you,  
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.**

Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high, O everlasting doors;  
and the One who reigns in glory shall come in.

**“Who is this glorious One?”**

**“The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle.”**

Lift up your heads, O gates;  
lift them high, O everlasting doors;  
and the One who reigns in glory shall come in.

**“Who is this glorious One?”**

**“The Lord of hosts, the Lord who reigns in glory.”**

Carol

*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing* <sup>11</sup>

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the new-born King,  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled.”  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic hosts proclaim,  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”**

Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, the incarnate Deity,  
pleased as one of us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings,  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing,  
“Glory to the newborn King.”

*4<sup>th</sup> Reading* <sup>12</sup>

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness —  
on them light has shined.  
For a child has been born for us,

a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

*Isaiah 9. 2, 6, 7*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.  
**Thanks be to God.**

Choral Anthem

“Bethlehem Boy”

*5<sup>th</sup> Reading* <sup>13</sup>

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name

him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

*Isaiah 7. 10 – 15*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

Carol

*Away in a Manger* <sup>14</sup>

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus—look down from on high  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me forever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

*6<sup>th</sup> Reading* <sup>15</sup>

A reading from the letter to the followers of Jesus in Rome.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world,

but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

*Romans 12. 1, 2; 13. 8, 11 – 14*

Listen for the leading of the Spirit.

**Thanks be to God.**

*Te Deum Laudamus*

*God, We Praise You* <sup>16</sup>

**God, we praise you! God, we bless you!  
God, we name you sovereign Lord!  
Mighty King whom angels worship,  
Father, by your Church adored:  
all creation shows your glory.  
Heaven and earth draw near your throne,  
singing “Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord of hosts, and God alone!”**

**Jesus Christ, the King of glory,  
everlasting Son of God,  
humble was your virgin mother,**

hard the lonely path you trod;  
by your cross is sin defeated,  
hell confronted face to face,  
heaven opened to believers,  
sinners justified by grace.

Christ, at God's right hand victorious,  
you will judge the world you made.  
Lord, in mercy help your servants  
for whose freedom you have paid:  
raise us up from dust to glory,  
guard us from all sin today,  
King enthroned above all praises,  
save your people, God, we pray.

The Gospel <sup>17</sup>

*The acclamation is sung*

Pre - pare the way of the Lord, pre - pare the way of the Lord,  
and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God. Pre-

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew.  
♪ **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.** ♪

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his

mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

But just when he had resolved to do 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 as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us."

When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

*Matthew 1. 18 – 25*

The Gospel of Christ.

♪ Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. ♪

Choral Anthem

"Good Christians All, Rejoice!"

The Prayers of the People

✠ God of grace,  
✠ hear our prayer.

**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 Saviour reigns;  
let us our 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 wrongs and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as our sin is found, far as our sin is found,  
far as, far as our sin 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.**

Parish Announcements

The night is far spent, the day is at hand.  
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness  
and put on the armour of light.

Come, O Lord, comfort the soul of your servant.  
**Even so, Lord, come.**

O Lord Jesus Christ, come  
**at evening time, with light,**  
and in the morning, with your glory,  
**to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

He who receives our prayers says:  
Surely I come quickly.  
I am the root and offspring of David,  
I am the bright and morning star.  
**Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.**

## A Christmas Poem

*by John Bell* <sup>19</sup>

Light looked down and saw the darkness.  
'I will go there', said light  
Peace looked down and saw war.  
'I will go there', said peace.  
Love looked down and saw hatred.  
'I will go there', said love.

So he,  
the Lord of Light,  
the Prince of Peace

the King of Love  
came down and crept in beside us.

## Blessing

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you  
and scatter the darkness from before your path;  
and the blessing of God,  
Source of all being, Eternal Word, and Holy Spirit,  
be with you, now and always.  
**Amen.**

## Closing Hymn

*When the King Shall Come Again* <sup>20</sup>

**When the King shall come again, all his power revealing,  
splendour shall announce his reign, life and joy and healing;  
earth no longer in decay, hope no more frustrated,  
this is God's redemption day longingly awaited.**

**In the desert trees take root, fresh from God's creation;  
plants and flowers and sweetest fruit join the celebration;  
rivers spring up from the earth, barren lands adorning.  
Valleys, this is your new birth; mountains, greet the morning!**

**Strengthen feeble hands and knees; fainting hearts, be cheerful!  
God, who comes for such as these, seeks and saves the fearful.  
Deaf ears, hear the silent tongues sing away their weeping;  
blind eyes, see the lifeless ones walking, running, leaping.**

**There God's highway shall be seen where no roaring lion,  
nothing evil or unclean, walks the road to Zion:  
ransomed people, homeward bound, all your praises voicing,  
see your Lord with glory crowned, share in his rejoicing!**

Dismissal

**Go in peace. Keep awake.  
Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

## **Your Daily Prayers are Requested:**

### ***For the Church:***

For Susan our bishop;  
and for & all the people of the Diocese of Niagara;  
For the parish of St. Paul in Jarvis;  
For Anne, our Metropolitan Archbishop and Acting Primate;  
For the worldwide Anglican Communion,  
remembering the Church of Burundi;

### ***For those in our parish cycle of prayer:***

For Elaine & Brian; for Hazel; for Karen;

### ***For the needs of the world:***

### ***For peace:***

For peace especially in Ukraine, South Sudan, Yemen, Gaza, Palestine, Israel, and all places of conflict

### ***For those we know in need of healing:***

### ***For those who have died, and those who mourn:***

**Thank you for your daily prayers  
for the people, worship, fellowship, and ministries  
of the Church of the Nativity**



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1831 King St. East  
Hamilton, ON L8K 1V8



(905) 549-4335



admin@worshipwithnativity.org

The Right Reverend Susan Bell  
The Reverend Canon Matthew Griffin  
The Reverend Canon David Linn  
The Reverend Deacon Larry Collinson  
Mr. Peter Harding  
Mrs. Laura Brintnell

*Bishop of Niagara*  
*Rector*  
*Honorary Assistant*  
*Parish Deacon*  
*Director of Music*  
*Parish Administrator*

Mrs. Jan Collinson  
Mr. David Eccles  
Ms. Gayle MacDonald  
Mr. Derek Smith

*Wardens*

## Sources

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- <sup>1</sup> Text: Latin (9th c..?); tr. John Mason Neale (1818—66), alt. Music: Plainsong, Mode 1, *Processionale* (15th c.); arr. Healey Willan (1880—1968), alt. Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- <sup>2</sup> Church of England. *Common Worship: Times and Seasons*.
- <sup>3</sup> Text: Brian Wren, 1985. Music: Joan Collier Fogg, 1987. Text & music © 1989 Hope Publishing Co. Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- <sup>4</sup> *Sundays and Seasons*.
- <sup>5</sup> Steven Shakespeare, *Prayers for an Inclusive Church*, 2008.
- <sup>6</sup> New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. <http://nrsvbibles.org>
- <sup>7</sup> Text: Eleanor Farjeon (1881 – 1965). © David Higham Associates Ltd. Music: Melody French trad.; harm. Martin Shaw (1875 – 1958), alt. © Oxford UP. Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- <sup>8</sup> *A Liturgical Psalter* (2016). General Synod from the Anglican Church of Canada.
- <sup>9</sup> See endnote #6
- <sup>10</sup> See endnote #8
- <sup>11</sup> Text: Charles Wesley (1701—88), alt. Music: Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809—47); adapt. William Hayman Cummings (1831—1915). Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- <sup>12</sup> See endnote #6
- <sup>13</sup> See endnote #6
- <sup>14</sup> Text: American (19<sup>th</sup> cent.). Music: William James Kirkpatrick (1838—1921); adapt. Used under OneLicense A-604280.
- <sup>15</sup> See endnote #6

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<sup>16</sup> Text: You are God (Te Deum, Latin hymn 400?); para. Christopher Idle (1938 – a). Para © 1982 Hope Publishing Co. Music: NETTLETON A *Repository of Sacred Music: Part Second*, Harrisburg, 1813.

<sup>17</sup> Acclamation Details: Text: Luke 3.4, 6; para. Taizé Community (France). Music: Jacques Verthier (1923 – 94). Para. and music © 1982, 1983, 1984, Les Presses de Taizé. Used under OneLicense A-604280.

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<sup>18</sup> Text: Isaac Watts (1674—1748). Music: Georg Frederic Handel (1685—1759); adapt. William Holford, *Voce de Melodia*, 1835. Used under OneLicense A-604280.

<sup>19</sup> *Cloth for the Cradle: Worship resources and readings for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany* (Wild Goose Publications, 1998)

<sup>20</sup> Text: Christopher Idle (1938—). Music: Melody *Piae Cantiones*, 1582. Used under OneLicense A-604280.