Advent Lessons and Carols

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Solo: O come, O come, Emmanuel

Introduction

The priest introduces the service, and greets the people:
The grace and peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
and also with you.

The priest bids the people to prayer, concluding with the Collect, *to which the people respond:*
Amen.

Hymn: On Jordan's Bank

On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh.
Awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!

Then cleansed be every breast from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
prepare we in our hearts a home,
where such a mighty guest may come.

For thou art our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without thy grace we waste away,
like flowers that wither and decay.

To heal the sick stretch out thine hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let thy light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee
whose advent doth thy people free;
whom with the Father we adore
and Holy Ghost for evermore.

Lesson 1: Genesis 2.15-17, 3.4-6

The first lesson is read, telling the story of humanity's disobedience to God in the Garden of Eden.

O Sapientia

The first Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O wisdom, which camest out of the mouth of the most High, and reachest from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things. Come and teach us the way of prudence.

Hymn: Creator of the Stars of Night

Creator of the starry height,
thy people's everlasting light,
O Jesu, Saviour of us all,
regard thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving at the bitter cry
of all creation doomed to die,
didst come to save a ruined race
with healing gifts of heavenly grace.

Thou camest, Bridegroom of the bride,
as drew the world to evening-tide,
proceeding from a virgin shrine,
the Son of Man, yet Lord divine.

At thy great name, exalted now,
all knees must bend, all hearts must bow,
all things in heaven and earth shall own,
that thou art Lord and King alone.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,
our judge in that tremendous day,
preserve us while we dwell below,
from every onslaught of the foe.

All praise, eternal Son, to thee,
whose advent sets thy people free,
whom with the Father we adore,
and Spirit blest, for evermore.

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Lesson 2: Exodus 24.12-13,15-18; 31.18

The second lesson is read, telling of the giving of the law by God through Moses.

O Adonai

The second Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.

O Adonai, and Leader of the house of Israel, who appearedst in the Bush to Moses in a flame of fire, and gavest him the law in Sinai: Come and deliver us with an outstretched arm.

Hymn: Lo, he comes

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,
once for favored sinners slain;
thousand, thousand saints attending
swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia! God appears on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him,
robed in dreadful majesty;
those who set at naught and sold him,
pierced and nailed him to the Tree,
deeply wailing, shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion
still his dazzling body bears,
cause of endless exultation
to his ransomed worshippers:
with what rapture gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, Amen, let all adore thee,
high on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the power and glory,
claim the kingdom for thine own:
Alleluia! Thou shalt reign, and thou alone.

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Lesson 3: Isaiah 11.1-10

The third lesson is read, telling of God's promises.

O Radix Jesse

The second Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O Root of Jesse, which standest for an ensign of the people, at whom kings shall shut their mouths, to whom the Gentiles shall seek: Come and deliver us, and tarry not.

Hymn: Come, thou long expected Jesus

Come, thou long-expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us;
let us find our rest in thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver;
born a child and yet a king;
born to reign in us for ever;
now thy gracious kingdom bring.

By thy own eternal Spirit,
rule in all our hearts alone:
by thy all-sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

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Lesson 4: Isaiah 22.21-23

The fourth lesson is read, telling of God's kingdom.

O Clavis David

The fourth Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O Key of David and Sceptre of the house of Israel; thy openest and no shutteth; and shuttest and no man openeth: Come and bring the prisoner out of the prison-house, and him that sitteth in darkness, and the shadow of death.

Solo: The people that walked in darkness

The soloist sings The people that walked in darkness *from G. F. Handel's* Messiah.

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Lesson 5: Luke 1.67–79

The fifth lesson is read, telling of the coming of Jesus and of John the Baptist.

O Oriens

The fifth Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.

O Dayspring, Brightness of Light everlasting, and Sun of righteousness: Come and enlighten him that sitteth in darkness, and the shadow of death.

Hymn: People look east

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.

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.

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Lesson 6: Acts 4.1-12

The sixth lesson is read, telling of the apostles' proclamations of the gospel.

O Rex Gentium

The sixth Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O King of the nations, and their Desire; the Cornerstone, who makest both one: Come and save mankind whom thou formesdst of clay.

Hymn: Hark the glad sound!

Hark the glad sound! The Saviour comes,
the Saviour promised long:
let every heart prepare a throne,
and every voice a song.

He comes, the prisoners to release
in Satan's bondage held;
the gates of brass before him burst;
the iron fetters yield.

He comes, the broken heart to bind,
the bleeding soul to cure,
and with the treasures of his grace
to enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
thy welcome shall proclaim;
and heaven's eternal arches ring
with thy beloved name.

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Lesson 7: Matthew 1.18-23

The priest reads the seventh lesson, telling of the visitation by an angel to Joseph in a dream.

O Emmanuel

The seventh Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of all nations, and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord our God.

Hymn: The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail,' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

'For known a blessèd Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honour thee,
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;
most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God,' she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name':
most highly favoured lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say
'Most highly favoured lady.' Gloria!

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O Virgo Virginum

The eighth Great Advent Antiphon is said or sung.
O Virgin of virgins, how shall this be? for neither
before thee was any like thee, nor shall there be after.
Daughters of Jerusalem, why marvel ye at me?
The thing which ye behold is a divine mystery.

Hymn: 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:
[Refrain]

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:
[Refrain]

O come, thou Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery:
[Refrain]

O come, O come, thou Lord of Might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe:
[Refrain]

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Blessing

The priest says a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.
Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given.