

**St Andrew's and St George's West
Order of Service, 25 December 2020**

Christmas Day

Emmanuel - God with us



Ringing of the Christmas Bells

Welcome

Call to Worship

Christian Aid Scotland

Even if we cannot gather in person
Emmanuel, God with us

Even if some Christmas traditions have had to go
Emmanuel, God with us

Even if we might not get to hug family and friends
Emmanuel, God with us

Even if Christmas cheer is harder this year
Emmanuel, God with us.

Even if we cannot sing carols beside each other
Emmanuel, God with us

Carol O come, all ye faithful

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem ;
come and behold him,
born the King of angels ;
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

God of God,
Light of light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb ;
very God,
begotten, not created ;

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above,
'Glory to God
in the highest':

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born on Christmas morning ;
Jesus, to thee be glory given :
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing :

Latin, 18th century, possibly by John Francis Wade (c. 1711–1786) *and others*
Music arr. David Willcocks

Opening Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

God of Joy,
we come to celebrate again
the arrival of Love Incarnate
here in our very midst.

God, you invite us into the light of the stable
where the overlooked and forgotten have gathered
to celebrate the miracle of your love.
Give us the strength and courage
to join you at the manger.

Surprising God,
open our ears to hear this familiar story
as if for the first time.
Open our eyes to see the diverse cast
gathered at the manger.
Open our hearts to the power of your love
as revealed in this amazing story.
Open our lives to the possibility of transformation,
as we encounter once again
Emmanuel, God-With-Us.

We are more aware of thankfulness this year,
because there are so many griefs within us and around us.
Where we have been hurt, or hurt others,
give us a glimpse of what it would look like to loosen our grasp
on the pain we hold.
Enter our lives as you entered our world.
Your presence changes things.
As we long for the vaccine to bring change, grant us hope;
as we long for restrictions to end, grant us resilience;
as we long to see family and friends, this day of all days,
grant us restraint.

And so may our lives reflect your love,
giving and loving,
wherever we are,
whatever it costs
For as long as it takes.

Help us this day and every day to live the prayer that Jesus taught praying together:

**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 in the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.
Amen.**

Lighting of the Christ Candle

One: Waiting for Emmanuel

All: We light the flame of his coming kingdom

One: Anticipating its life

All: We light the flame of justice

One: Fighting for justice

All: We light the flame of hope

One: Grasping hope

All: We light the flame of joy

One: Living joyfully, hopefully and justly

All: We know God with us

Hymn 284 Hope is a candle (verse 5)

Christ is the light that the prophets awaited,
Christ is the lion, the lamb and the child.
Christ is the love and the mystery and laughter –
candles, make way! Christ is the day.

Richard Leach

A Christmas Gift

Our Scripture Reading is taken from the Gospel according to Luke 2: 1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”

Music There is no child so small Taiwanese Hymn

Reflection Emmanuel - God with us Christian Aid Scotland (adapted)

Carol Love came down at Christmas

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine ;
Love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine ;
worship we our Jesus :
but wherewith for sacred sign ?

Love shall be our token,
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and all men,
love for plea and gift and sign.

Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830–1894)

Sharing the Peace

Hear the good news!
“**A Saviour is born!**”

Prayers of the People (based on a Christingle)

It's rounded like an orange
this earth on which we stand ;
and we praise the God who holds it
in the hollow of his hand.

*So Father, we would thank you
for all that you have done,
and for all that you have given us
through the coming of your Son.*

Basil Ernest Bridge (b. 1927)

Let us pray

The orange represents the world.
God of love and hope,
you made the world and care for all creation,
but the world feels very strange right now.
Your gift of Love is big enough for the whole world,
yet many do not experience the world as a loving place.
We pray for our world, that people can live together
with safety and peace
in wholeness and health

God-with-us: **Hear our prayer**

The red ribbon reminds us of your costly love.
Comfort those who are sick and those who are in any kind of need or
distress. Bring comfort to all the homes who will celebrate Christmas in a
bittersweet way this year, missing being with those they love.
Uphold our weary front-line workers who are working hard today and all who seek
the protection, health and wellbeing of others.

God-with-us: **Hear our prayer**

The cocktail sticks remind us of North, South, East and West. We celebrate
the variety of your creation and grieve when it is exploited. You know what it is
like to be born into a place and time that did not welcome you. Protect those
who feel unsafe or unwelcome – especially babies, and children who need
protection. We ask for a blessing on our local community, our city so affected by
the pandemic. Help us to reach out and extend friendship in all directions.

God-with-us: **Hear our prayer**

The dried fruit on the cocktail sticks remind us that everything we have comes
from you, God. Yet at Christmas some people have more presents than they can
count while others have none. Children are encouraged to share. Help adults with
power and resources be mindful of those with less, so that your gifts can be
shared more fairly.

God-with-us: **Hear our prayer**

The candle reminds us of Jesus, Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light
no darkness can put out. As we celebrate the gift of your love and your light.
Help us shine in the world and 'light it forward'. This day and every day. Amen.

Carol Hark! The herald angels sing

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 new-born 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 Man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel !

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 man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth :

Charles Wesley (1707–1788) and others
Music arranged David Willcocks

Blessing and Sending

Beyond this time of worship, a moment of celebration, may we experience the joy of Christmas in our homes and community. Whether we celebrate in quiet ways or noisy, with others or by ourselves, may we each know and experience Emmanuel, God with us.

Beyond this time of worship may we proclaim
that there is a light that shines in the darkness
which the darkness shall not overcome.

And may the love of the Creator,
the joy of the Spirit,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be with you this Christmas, and evermore. Amen.

Worship Leaders: Reverend Dr Rosie Magee, Jocelyn and Michael Cunliffe
Candle Lighting: Adrienne and Philippa Burgess
Scripture Reader: Charles Bergius
Director of Music: Brigitte Harris
Vocal ensemble: Eleanor Cozens, Eleanor Wilson, Caitlin McGillivray,
Drew Crichton, Tim Cooper, Andrew Carvel
Cantilena Orchestra, leader Angus Ramsay
Pianist: Tim Cooper
Contemporary Taiwanese hymn, played by Margaret McLarty (recorder)
Technical team: Alison Bruce, Andrew Carvel, Susan McLarty, Mary Margaret Scott

Sources:

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