



GOD WITH US

Immanuel Has Come

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WORSHIP KIT



Immanuel Has Come

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Immanuel Has Come

Notes and Ordering Information

This service for Christmas Day celebrates that our Savior has indeed come to be with us in human flesh and swaddling clothes to dwell with us forever. Hymns in the service include “What Child Is This,” “Hark the Glad Sound,” “Away in a Manger,” “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” and “Joy to the World.” Use with the God With Us series or alone.

Printed bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code GS9A

Blank bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code GS9B

Blank bulletins (8 1/2" x 14") are available. Code GS9C

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Immanuel Has Come

Newsletter/Bulletin Notices

Newsletter Notice

The prophet Isaiah said, “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). Join us for Christmas Day to celebrate that our Immanuel has come, God with us, in swaddling clothes. Carols, Scripture, a homily and prayers reveal the Good News that the sign long promised has arrived in the flesh: Our Savior is born!

Bulletin Notice

Merry Christmas! The prophet Isaiah said, “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14). Welcome to this Christmas Day service as we celebrate that our Immanuel has come, God with us, in swaddling clothes. Let the Carols, Scripture, homily and prayers reveal to you anew the Good News that the sign long promised has arrived in the flesh: Our Savior is born!



Immanuel Has Come

Order of Service

Opening Hymn.....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!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.
Glory to God, glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Invocation

P We begin our worship in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Confession and Absolution

C Loving God, who sent Jesus as Savior of the world, we confess that our busy doing and decorating have shrouded our Christmas and caused us to lose our focus on the Christ Child. Forgive us for shaping the celebration to fit our desires. Seize us by your Spirit. Focus our eyes and hearts on the coming Christ. Inspire us with that coming so that we shout from the housetops the Good News proclaimed by the angels and shared joyfully by the shepherds. Make us into your joy-filled Christmas messengers, sharing your powerful message of salvation for all.

P Jesus has promised that the sins we forgive on earth will also be forgiven in heaven. Trusting that precious promise, as a called and ordained minister of the Gospel, I confidently declare to you that, in Jesus Christ, all of your sins are forgiven and you are privileged to share that same forgiveness with all the others in your life. We are filled with Jesus' light of life so that we can shine among the people of this world like stars in the sky.

Call to Worship

P A voice cries out, "In the wilderness clear a way for the Lord;

C make a way in the desert, a road for our God.

P Every valley must be lifted up, and every mountain and hill leveled.

C The rough places will become a level plain, the rugged land a wide valley.

P The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it at the same time.

C For the Lord has decreed it."

P "Go up on a high mountain, O herald Zion!

C Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem! Shout, don't be afraid!

P Say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God!'"

C "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son.

P And they shall call his name Immanuel (which means God with us).”

C “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Hymn of Praise Gentle Mary Laid Her Child

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
There he lay, the Undefined, to the world a stranger:
Such a babe in such a place, can he be the Savior?
Ask the saved of all the race who have found his favor.

Angels sang about his birth; wise men sought and found him;
Heaven’s star shone brightly forth, glory all around him:
Shepherds saw the wondrous sight, heard the angels singing;
All the plains were lit that night, all the hills were ringing.

Gentle Mary laid her child lowly in a manger;
He is still the Undefined, but no more a stranger:
Son of God, of humble birth, beautiful the story;
Praise his name in all the earth; hail the King of glory!

Prayer of the Day

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 7:10-16

Epistle Reading 1 John 4:7-14

First Gospel Reading John 1:1-14

Children’s Message

Second Gospel Reading Matthew 2:1-12

Sermon

Hymn of Response Hark the Herald Angels Sing

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



Immanuel Has Come

Children's Message

- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

(Bring a wrapped Christmas gift—nicely wrapped, but make sure that there is nothing inside the wrapping.)

☐ *(Hold up gift.)* What do I have here? *(Allow the children to respond.)* Right, a Christmas present. I believe that the gift is for all of us. Shall we open it? *(Ask an older child to open the gift.)* What is it? *(Allow the children to respond.)* It's empty. There's nothing in there. That's pretty disappointing, isn't it? Sometimes Christmas can be like that. We get all busy with decorating, like this gift is decorated. We work to make sure that Christmas will be the best—with presents and lights and decorations. Then how does it happen that sometimes the gift is empty? How does it happen that for many people and maybe for us too, we find our Christmas nicely decorated but empty? What needs to be in our Christmas? What is the reason for the celebration? Of course, it is the gift of Jesus. He is the center of Christmas—and he brings a gift to each one of us. The gift is Jesus coming to be with us. We have a word for that. It is Immanuel—an Old Testament word that means “God with us.” That's the meaning of Christmas. God gives Jesus to each of our hearts. He comes to be the center of our Christmas and the center of our lives. Here is the Christmas gift, the real gift, the perfect gift. His coming is the reason we decorate, the reason we sing, the reason we give gifts—to remind us of the real gift that comes to each of us. This year let's make sure that Jesus is the center of our celebration. This is Jesus' birthday. He comes to each of us. And we give thanks to God for the perfect Christmas gift. *(Start a sentence prayer, each thanking God for the gift this Christmas.)*



Immanuel Has Come

Sermon

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:
 - ▣ Imagine a beautiful and ornamental Persian palace. We are there watching. It is night and the golden decorations sparkle in the candlelight. The time is many years ago. We see a woman wearing a beautiful, decorated robe. She storms down the hall of the palace and rushes into one of the rooms. Her angry words cut the air: “Caspas, you fool! What in heaven’s name could possess you? Where are you going? Out into the desert? Gone for weeks! Or months! Or years! Wandering? Following what? An illusion? A dream?” Casper seems at peace in the small room—his quiet place. He answered slowly, almost wearily, “No. A star.”

She moves toward him, standing over him, “Follow a star? That’s crazy! You don’t have time to go off tracking stars. For all of the years we have been married, I have lived through dozens of your schemes and dreams. But this! ... This! ... Don’t you care about those here who need you? What about your children? What about your grandchildren? What about your obligations? What about me?”

“I know there are a million reasons not to go,” he says. “Don’t you think I’ve told myself all of them? I can list you a thousand things that won’t get done if I take this journey. But I have to go. I have to ...”

Her anger turns to pleading. “But why? You have everything here. You have a family, friends, people who look up to you. You have your work. You have ...”

He cuts her off. “I have an empty life. For all my working and searching, for all my thinking and dreaming, I have nothing that will last. I am coming to the end of my life. The sun is setting for me. I hear the echo of my voice in my own tomb and my tears stain what might be my death bed. I have chased plans and grand schemes and found them all empty. In my heart I feel a hollowness that will not be filled. Look, my dear wife, my faithful friend—I see the darkness coming and I cannot stop it.” Then in almost a whisper he says: “I have to try this one more chance to find hope.”

“But a star?”

“Why not a star? Perhaps stars are the eyes of God. Perhaps stars mark things that are even beyond our dreams.”

She turns away, her words now touched with her tears, “And where will this journey lead you? Into disappointment? Into danger? Or worse?”

“Or into life. That star may point to what I have looked for all my life—sought in myself and in others and in knowledge and in an endless striving. Perhaps that star will lead to something that is finally eternal. I have to go. I have to follow. I have to come to the place where the finger of God is pointing. I have to find out ... Perhaps the only things worth following are stars.”

(Pause)

It’s fascinating to imagine what it must have been like, isn’t it? Of course, we know very little about the wise men who came to find the newly born king. We know they were probably those who had studied the stars and believed that the heavens had a significant effect on what happened on earth. We don’t know how many wise men there were, but we know they brought expensive gifts to bring to the king they sought. We know they believed that the hand of God marked the birth of the new king by the appearance of a remarkable star. They were so confident that the star was a sign of a special event that they left their homes and traveled, perhaps a long distance, to find the king. They were aware that the appearance of the star in the sky marked the appearance of the unique gift from the hand of God.

Chasing stars seems to be a way of describing the spiritual quests of many seekers today. The stars they follow are not just heavenly bodies, but other events and appearances that they believe are the mark of the hand of God. Some follow strange teachers and “wise men,” seeking in their insights a way to touch the very hand of God. Some see the hand of God in the shape of the face of Jesus or the outline of the virgin Mary on pieces of toast, on the sides of buildings, or any number of mysterious visions. The seeker is a description of many who call themselves spiritual in our world. Remarkably, many if not most of these seekers look for the hand of God in countless places besides churches. They seem to feel that their spiritual journey is unique and that they are able to build their own “religion” out of what they discover in the world of nature or the world of mystery.



Immanuel Has Come

Music Guide

Adeste Fideles irregular meter	32-33
Tempus Adest Floridum 76 76 D	34-35
Mendelssohn 77 77 D and refrain	36-37
Antioch CM and refrain	38-39
Contemporary Music Song Suggestions	40

Tune.....Adeste Fideles irregular meter

Musical notation for measures 1-5. The piece is in A major (three sharps) and common time. Measure 1 is a whole rest. Measures 2-5 contain chords and single notes in both staves.

Musical notation for measures 6-10. Measures 6-10 continue the harmonic progression with various chord voicings and melodic fragments in both staves.

Musical notation for measures 11-16. Measures 11-16 show further development of the harmonic structure with more complex chordal textures.

Musical notation for measures 17-21. Measures 17-21 conclude the section with sustained chords and melodic lines in both staves.

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Adeste Fideles* irregular meter:

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!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above.
Glory to God, glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n.
Word of the Father now in flesh appearing!
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

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