



CHRIST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
MILFORD

November 29, 2020
1st Sunday of Advent

REFLECTION

Celebrating the Three Comings of Christ: The First Coming: In the Flesh

There are three comings of our Lord:

The first in the flesh.

The second in the soul.

The third in the judgment.

The first coming was humble and hidden;

The second is mysterious and full of love.

The third will be majestic and terrible.

In his first, a lamb;

In his third, a lion;

In the one between the two,

The tenderest of friends.

— *Peter of Blois, France, 12th century*

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Advent + Christmas + Epiphany + Lent + Easter + Pentecost

Gathering Hymn O come, O come, Emmanuel

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Call to Worship John 1:14:

And 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.

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes, on
 3. O come, thou Rod of Jes - se, free thine own from Sa - tan's
 4. O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us by thy
 5. O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come and o - pen wide our

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here,
 Si - nai's height, in an - cient times didst give the law
 • tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple save,
 draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
 heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high,

REFRAIN
 un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
 • and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
 and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
 and close the path to mis - er - y.

man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

Unison

1. Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and
2. King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on
3. Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van - guard
4. At his feet the six - winged ser - aph; cher - u - bim, with

trem - bling stand; pon - der noth - ing earth - ly - mind - ed,
earth he stood, Lord of lords, in hu - man ves - ture,
on the way, as the Light of light de - scend - eth,
sleep - less eye, veil their fac - es to the pres - ence,

for with bless - ing in his hand, Christ our God to
in the bod - y and the blood, he will give to
from the realms of end - less day, that the pow'rs of
as with cease - less voice they cry, "Al - le - lu - ia,

earth de - scend - eth, our full hom - age to de - mand.
all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
hell may van - ish as the dark - ness clears a - way.
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Invocation

Old Testament Lesson Isaiah 40:1–9

Praise Hymn Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

— God + calls + cleanses + speaks + strengthens + sends —

Confession of Sin Responsive Prayer (based on Scripture's titles of Christ):

O Wisdom, coming forth from the mouth of the Most High
reaching from one end to the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things:
Come and teach us the way of prudence.

O Adonai, and leader of the House of Israel,
who appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush
and gave him the law on Sinai:
Come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.

O Root of Jesse, standing as a sign among the peoples;
before you kings will shut their mouths, to you the nations will make their prayer:
Come and deliver us, and delay no longer.

O Key of David, and scepter of the House of Israel;
you open and no one can shut;
you shut and no one can open:
**Come and lead the prisoners from the prison house,
those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.**

O Morning Star, splendor of light eternal and sun of righteousness:
Come and enlighten those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

O King of the nations, and their desire, the cornerstone making both one:
Come and save the human race, which you fashioned from clay.

O Emmanuel, our king and our lawgiver,
the hope of the nations and their Savior:
Come and save us, O Lord our God.

1. Thou who wast rich be - yond all splen - dor, all for love's sake be -
 2. Thou who art God be - yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be -
 3. Thou who art love be - yond all tell - ing, Sav - ior and King, we

cam - est poor; thrones for a man - ger didst sur - ren - der,
 cam - est man; stoop - ing so low, but sin - ners rais - ing,
 wor - ship thee. Em - man - u - el, with - in us dwell - ing,

sap - phire - paved courts for sta - ble floor. Thou who wast rich be -
 heav'n - ward by thine e - ter - nal plan. Thou who art God be -
 make us what thou wouldst have us be. Thou who art love be -

yond all splen - dor, all for love's sake be - cam - est poor.
 yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be - cam - est man.
 yond all tell - ing, Sav - ior and King, we wor - ship thee.

Individual Confession

Absolution Jeremiah 23:5–6

Behold, the days are coming, declares 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 dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

Thanksgiving Hymn Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor

Gospel Lesson Luke 3:1–18

Peace of Christ

The peace of the Lord be with you!
And also with you!

Trinity Song

Holy Father Son and Spirit
Holy Communion Three in One
Come with Your peace with Your invitation
Bind us together in holy love
Holy Father Son and Spirit
Holy Communion Three in One

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Sermon Text Isaiah 7:1-12

This is the Word of the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

Sermon The Book of Emmanuel, I | Curran Bishop

Response Hymn O little town of Bethlehem

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie;
 2. For Christ is born of Mar - y; and gath - ered all a - bove,
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4. O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

a - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by:
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.

yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him still, the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el.

Bringing Our Life to God

Prayers | Collection | Profession

Prayers of the People

Collection

text **MNA 1708** to **76959** and follow the prompts or visit give.pcamna.org/to/1708/

Confession of Faith

The Nicene Creed (AD 325)

We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
begotten from the Father before all ages, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made; of the same essence as the Father.

Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and was made human.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried.
The third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures.
He ascended to heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again with glory to judge the living and the dead.
His kingdom will never end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.

He proceeds from the Father and the Son,
and with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.

He spoke through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We affirm one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and to life in the world to come. Amen.

Communion in Christ Jesus

All Christians are invited to join us to receive Christ's presence of bread and wine. During this time of social distancing we offer for our pastor to come and bless your partaking of elements you provide to preserve the corporate-presence of Christ pictured in the supper as best we can. If you've been part of our streaming service please text Curran (203-812-9928).

Alleluia Sinclair Alleluia

Prayer for those searching *Oh God, I am discovering that the more I have, the more I need to have, the more I am loved, the more I need to be loved, the more I achieve, the more I need to achieve. Nothing seems to satisfy me. Could it be, as someone once said, that “Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.” Dear God, if this is true, and if as the Bible teaches there is life and life eternal in Christ alone, please guide me to Him. Open me to the reality of the One who alone can satisfy my restless heart. Give me the courage to believe that which I cannot see but can understand, feel and touch through the Word, sacraments and church family. Lord I want to believe, help my unbelief! Amen.*

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Coronation Hymn Lo, how a rose e'er blooming

Benediction I Thessalonians 3:11–13
Now may our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus... make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all... so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community Group will meet tonight, November 29, 4-5:30pm. Since the cold means we'll need to meet indoors we will meet in several smaller groups to protect each other. Please RSVP to info@cpcmilford.org and we'll let the sorting hat script assign us between houses to enjoy (socially distanced) time together.

Thursday Night Prayer Meeting – 7-7:50pm

Please join us as we follow a short prayer and scripture liturgy, pray for each other, and have some “digital fellowship.” [Zoom link](#) Meeting ID: 856 4475 2681 Passcode: 665297

Caroling at “Unofficial Lamplight Stroll” Friday, December 4, 6:30pm: we'll meet downtown and spend 45 minutes strolling around the downtown, caroling in outdoor locations as a way of serving the downtown business community. Contact for more info:

Contact us 203.812.9928 | info@cpcmilford.org | [facebook.com/CPCMilford](https://www.facebook.com/CPCMilford)
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1. Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing from ten - der
 2. I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the rose I
 3. The shep - herds heard the sto - ry, pro - claimed by
 4. This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet - ness
 5. O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, who felt our

stem hath sprung, of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing,
 have in mind; with Mar - y we be - hold it,
 • an - gels bright, how Christ, the Lord of glo - ry,
 fills the air, dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor
 hu - man woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry.

as men of old have sung. It came, a flow'r - et bright,
 the vir - gin moth - er kind. To show God's love a - right
 • was born on earth this night. To Beth - le - hem they sped
 the dark - ness ev - 'ry - where. True man, yet ver - y God;
 who dost our weak - ness know, bring us at length, we pray,

a - mid the cold of win - ter, when half - spent was the night.
 she bore to men a Sav - ior, when half - spent was the night.
 • and in the man - ger found him, as an - gel her - alds said.
 from sin and death he saves us and light - ens ev - 'ry load.
 to the bright courts of heav - en and to the end - less day.

REFLECTION

The Theater of the Incarnation

The Child in the crib is not a sweet romance. It is only our love and often our sentimentality which have turned his story into a pastoral romance. The Child was homeless. He was shoved off into a stable. Shortly afterward his parents went out on the road as refugees in order to escape Herod's massacre of the children. Then came the lifelong hostility of men; the Child always remained, even after he grew up, a fugitive. His heart trembled under the impact of all the temptations and fears that shake us too. And finally this life ended as it began: he was shoved out of the world; he died on a gallows that had the form of a cross. This Man who loved infinitely, and there fore suffered infinitely as he saw men running headlong to their own destruction—they had no use for him. Crib and cross—they are both of the same wood, they are of a piece.

And I believe that all this, with all its terror, is infinitely more comforting than the soft, sweet spirit we seek at Christmas, which afterward leaves only a hung-over, letdown feeling if it is the only thing there is in it. Jesus Christ did not remain at base headquarters in heaven, receiving reports of the world's suffering from below and shouting a few encouraging words to us from a safe distance. No, he left the headquarters and came down to us in the front-line trenches, right down to where we live and worry about what the Bolsheviks may do [remember when this was preached; now the threat is terrorism], where we contend with our anxieties and the feeling of emptiness and futility, where we sin and suffer guilt, and where we must finally die. There is nothing that he did not endure with us. He understands everything.

Or do we no longer sense how knowing are the features of this face, which... later gazed upon us from the cross? He does not wear the disinterested face of those people who live in the village called "religion" far behind the mountains of the wicked world; he has the eyes of a person who knows his way about the ruins in our life. Wounds must heal wounds. He became one of the wounded because he wanted to be one of us. And therefore that Face does not vanish when the candles go out. For this Figure knows everything... Here is One who is waiting and looking for me.

– Helmut Thielicke, German pastor, in a sermon, "Jesus Christ in the Front Line Trenches," preached during World War II



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