



LONGING FOR YOU, EMMANUEL!

SUGGESTED SETTING: Table draped with a purple cloth and a tall candle or Advent wreath.

LEADER:

Advent is the time of year when we reflect on the coming of our Lord into this world. As we make this journey we invite God's light to dispel the darkness and guide us on our way. Believing in a God who draws near to His children, we wait, we hope, and we labor for a more just, loving and peaceful world. We invite God to come again and again and we pray that we are always attentive to his presence in the world and in our lives.

SONG: O Come, O Come Emmanuel (one verse)

O come, O come Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the son of God appears.

REFRAIN: Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel
Shall come to you, O Israel

PRAYER: ALL

God of Light, open our hearts to the mystery of your love and your grace. Come be with us; come live among us and in us; come fill any distances that divide or separate us; and come to reconcile us with You and with each other.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLE:

Someone selected lights the candle as the following is read.

READER: John 1: 6-9

God sent his messenger, a man named John, who came to tell people about the light, so that all should hear the message and believe. He himself was not the light; he came to tell about the light. This was the real light – the light that comes into the world and shines on all people.

LEADER: We bring to mind all the children of God who wait.

READ ALTERNATELY - each taking turns or divide group in two:

We bring to mind all who long to be treated with dignity, and we ask that we may be committed to respect every individual we encounter.

We bring to mind all who wait for peace in our day, and we ask that we may be persuasive in asking our leaders to put away weapons of war and fear.

We bring to mind all those who search for meaningful work, and we ask that we may advocate for just economic systems that provide jobs to all with justice.

We bring to mind those who work for healing of the earth, and we ask that we may be willing to make personal choices that make a difference.

We bring to mind those who are hungry, and we ask that we may take more of a role in transforming our food systems so all may partake of the banquet.

We bring to mind those who have no home, and we ask that we may help them through our friendship and resources.

We bring to mind those who are sick and suffering and dying, and we ask for the grace of a comforting presence and words of hope.

PAUSE and REFLECT on other needs.

PRAYER: ALL (From Ps 25)

Make known to us your ways, Lord: teach us your paths. Guide us in your truth and teach us, for you are God our savior. For you we wait all the day long, because of your goodness, Lord.

PAUSE and REFLECT: How are God's ways made known to you?

How do you reflect God's ways to others?

READER: Isaiah 35:1-6; 10

The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the hands that are feeble, make firm the knees that are weak. Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God; he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared. Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return and enter Zion singing, crowned with everlasting joy; they will meet with joy and gladness, sorrow and mourning will flee.

PAUSE and REFLECT:

What do you need the most during this Advent season this year?

TIME OF SHARING:

SONG: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT - Bernadette Farrell (YouTube)

Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

CHORUS: Christ, be our light! Shine through our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has power to save us.
Make us your living voice. **(Chorus)**

Longing for water, many still thirst!
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed. **(Chorus)**

Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stone. **(Chorus)**

Many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come. **(Chorus)**

CLOSING PRAYER:

LEADER:

May the Angel of Annunciation awaken in you God's profound heartfelt love for every kind of neighbor.

May the Star of Inclusion, poured out, communing love to direct every decision you make on your journey.

May your dreams lead you to profound reverence as you bow before the Divine born in the stable of every heart and in the stable of the whole universe.

May Mary guide you in birthing the Holy One in your life and in birthing Love in others.

May Joseph engage you in a deeper questioning and listening and give you the courage to take the next step.

May your life become like a Luminous Presence leading others to the place in their hearts and in the world where Christ is always born anew.

Peace be yours during this time of Advent and waiting. Amen