

## Kensington Presbyterian Church

Growing in faith and sharing God's love since 1786

# In tune with the past

December 1, 2024

**WELCOME**, we come to you from the un-ceded lands of the Kanien'kehá:ka Nation.

We are offering a variety of ways for people to gather. We are welcoming people to worship in person, as well as through Zoom, YouTube, and this printable PDF.<sup>1</sup> If this is how you are worshipping, know that you are not alone... and if you like, you can invite others to join you. Clicking on or tapping blue text will take you to a web-site.

If you have any prayer requests, ideas, or just want to talk, please reach out to your elder or Rev. Peter (Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca).



# Announcements

**Singing:** Sundays at 10 opportunity to run through the day's music, and sometimes other tunes.

Friday's Fabulous Food & Film Festival: pizza at 6:30, movie at 7:00

Dec 6: Elf

Dec 13: Dr Who Christmas Carol

Carolling: Dec 20

6:30 walking to our neighbours and singing (followed by hot chocolate)

7:30 gathering around the piano

Blue Christmas: Dec 22 at 7 pm

A quiet worship service for those with struggles.



Miriam's Song - Laura James

**Drop Box**: Food donations are welcome for the local Food Pantry, diapers for young mothers through Head & Hands.

Zoom Prayer Group: Wednesday at 6:30 a.m. us04web.zoom.us/j/773730107? pwd=eUo2M09YMEw5dkZvdm9uQmpHNIUrUT09

**Jesus & Java**: Join us as we share the joys and questions of faith. Thursday, 3:30 pm at Beetz, 5914 Sherbrooke @ Clifton

## Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor)......Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca 514-773-4620

Zoé Dupont-Foisy (music director)......zoedupontfoisy@hotmail.com Rose Ngo Mbenoun (Clerk of Session)..admin@Kensingtonchurch.ca

I note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper.



# Approaching God

Today is the first day of advent. This isn't because it's December first, but because it is the fourth Sunday before Christmas. (It is a happy coincidence for those who have commercial advent calendars.) Advent is to help us prepare for Christmas by thinking about the Messiah coming - both in Jesus 2000 years ago, and for the coming end of this age.

To help us the official colour switches from green to blue (as seen in the background of our slides). We also have five candles instead of just one - lighting an additional one each week as we get closer to the birth of Jesus, the Light of the World (a nice thing to do at home too). Advent will also be reflected in our passages, songs, and our liturgy. Like many Presbyterian churches across Canada, we'll be using a call to worship provided by the Presbyterian World Service and Development.

📿 Call to worship (from PWS&D²)

As we enter the season of Advent, we remember God's call to seek justice in the world God loves.

We come longing for a brighter future for all.

We light the first candle of Advent, a symbol of God's hope, which shines in the darkness.

(Light the candle of hope)



May the light of this candle ignite a fire within your people, who are often afraid or hesitant to work for change.

Holy One, strengthen us by your Spirit to commit ourselves to walking with those who are oppressed and marginalized. May our actions reflect your hope, which transforms your world. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

**Prayer** of Approach

To God be the glory, who great things has done!

We praise you, almighty and loving God, for the wonder that you continually try to help us.

The Bible is full of stories of how people try living their way,

how this brings suffering,

and how you try to help.

Jesus, we admit that our lives are like this too.

Sometimes we get it right,

but not always.

We also try things our way,

whether to avoid a broken situation or letting our attitude break the situation

...break the relationship.

Please forgive us. . .

Thank you Jesus and may your Spirit help us to live into your forgiveness.

<sup>2</sup> Presbyterian World Service & Development www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

We also praise you for the way that you come.

Humbly in those society thinks are powerless
or who don't know enough.

...like as a baby to a poor couple.

In Jesus name Amen.



# Listening to God

Prayer for Illumination

Lord,

open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit,

so that we may feel the length and depth of your story with us. Amen.

► Intro to the readings

Today's readings are all linked to three advent hymns - perhaps not originally, but definitely in their themes. We'll hear (or read) from the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada as she gives an overall introduction, and then introduces three readings and hymns. (For those who are interested, there are four more on the website<sup>3</sup> - one of which we'll do another day.)

Many of you have told me how you like to have the passages connected to our daily lives - and I'll do that a bit at the end.

Reflections......Rev. Dr. Pattricia Dutcher-Walls

Greetings this Advent season. I am Patricia Dutcher-Walls, Moderator of the 2024 General Assembly and retired professor of Hebrew Bible at Vancouver School of Theology. Welcome to "The Texts Behind the Tunes"—an exploration of the biblical texts that lie behind our much



beloved Advent hymns. In what follows, you'll hear a series of texts from the Old Testament, some background about those texts, and then sing hymns that are based on the words of those texts. Let me say a bit about what we will share together.

In the Advent season of four weeks leading up to Christmas, the church reflects on and preaches Bible passages that highlight themes such as the coming Messiah sent by God into the world, heightened anticipation of God's reign on earth, and the hope of the poor and lowly in God's merciful and peaceful coming into our lives. These Sundays, and the Scriptures and music they contain, help us anticipate Christ's coming among us as a baby in the manger.

In this time of the church year, we hear many Old Testament/Hebrew Bible passages that have come to be associated with Advent and Christmas. While these passages are often very familiar to Christian congregations, these texts were originally, and have been continually for thousands of years, Jewish scripture. We do well in hearing and understanding God's living word to us to listen to how these texts resonate in both Jewish and Christian traditions.

<sup>3</sup> presbyterian.ca/2024/11/08/new-advent-resource-the-text-behind-the-tunes

This and her other reflections are ©2024 The Rev. Dr. Patricia Dutcher-Wall

So before each Hebrew Bible reading, taken from those used in the churches during Advent, I will give a short background talk on the ancient Jewish context in which the passage was first heard. I'll highlight the situation, needs and hopes of the Israelite audience to whom the message of the passage was first addressed. The background talks remind us that Jews throughout time have read these passages as Jewish hopes and expectations for a messiah who would right the wrongs of injustice and suffering, coming from the traditions of their people going back thousands of years.

The early followers of Jesus, who were all Jews like Jesus, were steeped in these Jewish scriptures from the law and the prophets. In the early church communities were storytellers and gospel writers who recorded the story of who Jesus was and what he had done, and expressed what his life, death and resurrection meant. These storytellers and writers drew on the scriptures they knew to provide foundation and grounding for what they said. Those early Christians proclaimed that Jesus was the one whom their community had been expecting for many centuries.

In all of the New Testament writings, we find a re-use of Jewish scripture in what was on the way to becoming Christian Scripture about Jesus the Messiah, or anointed one of God, the Christ. The use of Hebrew Bible texts to help express who Jesus was by the New Testament writers has meant that these ancient texts have become part of our traditions and worship. And over time, these texts made their way into the hymns of the church, as Christian writers and musicians re-enlivened the ancient texts to become the lyrics of hymns.

So in our time together, each introduction and reading of an Advent Hebrew Bible passage will be followed by singing a hymn that has interpreted that passage for the Church's worship during Advent. You'll see how Christian tradition has used each passage to express an understanding of our hopes and expectations in Advent each year through singing. So I invite you to hear these passages as words that keep alive Jewish traditions that have ageold and continuing Jewish meanings in their own right, and also deep meanings for us as Christians as we celebrate Advent through reading ancient texts and hearing those texts re-used in the beloved hymns of Advent.



**Exodus 19-20** 

The book of Exodus contains some of the most important foundation narratives of God's people - the stories of the liberation of the people from slavery in Egypt, the deliverance of the people at the sea, and the giving of the law on Mt. Sinai. These stories relate the care and grace of God to save the people when they were suffering, and God's constitution of the community through the revelation of the Torah or Law at the mountain of God. Our reading from Exodus is part of one of the earliest oral traditions of God's people and a tale that became part of the developing written traditions of Scripture over hundreds of years. All during those years, the memory of God's deliverance and the giving of the law shaped the practices, life, institutions and social interactions of the people. The story

became their testimony that God had given the law as a covenant that embodied the grace the people had received and the gratitude they needed to live out. These truths became central to the identity of the people, particularly over the centuries when that identity was threatened by oppression, exile and assimilation. So now we listen to a bit of Exodus 19 and 20, and then sing a familiar Advent hymn inspired by this early story of salvation.

Reading: Please look up the passages in your own Bible,<sup>5</sup> or click on the name to be taken to an online version. Exodus 19:16-20, 20:1-3 (or all of 19 and 20)



Walter Kurelek



## Isaiah 44-45

Among the amazing words that Isaiah of the exile preached was the coming of a deliverer who would overthrow the Babylonian empire and establish a new political order—one that would create the conditions where the people of Judah could be restored to their land. What was different about Isaiah's announcement was that this deliverer, God's own appointed shepherd, was Cyrus, the Persian emperor, leader of the rising Persian empire. As shocking as that announcement was, the concept that the Lord could use even a foreign emperor to do the divine will witnessed to the amazing power of God. This power also weighed in on the side of the exilic community by bringing them God's favour—a status that brought comfort and hope to those

weary of exile. That God could bring restoration for the people and return to their land was indeed good news that resonated through the whole post-exilic period. God had proved Godself to be the Lord of all the nations, and that truth found new life in the messianic hopes that confronted the Roman Empire in Jesus' time and that found yet more resonance in the Christian message through the ages. Listen to sections of Isaiah 44-45, and hear how these verses live on in the Advent hymn, Hark the Glad Sound.



Isaiah 44:24 - 45:3

☐ Hymn: Hark the Glad Sound.....pg 12 (118)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jn44sS5U3rs

<sup>5</sup> If you'd like a new Bible with helpful notes, I recommend the 'Life with God Bible' NRSV from Renovaré. ISBN 0061834963 or for the more academically inclined, The New Oxford Study Bible NRSV



new life after a fire - Craig Hannah

## Isaiah 35

Among the amazing words that Isaiah of the exile preached was the coming of a deliverer who would overthrow the Babylonian empire and establish a new political order—one that would create the conditions where the people of Judah could be restored to their land. What was different about Isaiah's announcement was that this deliverer, God's own appointed shepherd, was Cyrus, the Persian emperor, leader of the rising Persian empire. As shocking as that announcement was, the concept that the Lord could use even a foreign emperor to do the divine will witnessed to the amazing power of God. This power also weighed in on the side of the exilic community by bringing them God's favour—a status that brought comfort and hope to those weary of exile. That God could bring restoration for the people and return to their land was indeed good news that

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Isaiah 35:1-7

☐ Hymn: Hark the Glad Sound......pg 15 (118)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jn44sS5U3rs

← Reflection......Rev. Peter Rmbeek

'Presents' is a common word at this time of year. I notice that it is also a running theme through these passages - except it's not about a box under a tree, but that God was present - God being there with them. This is a different word, but I feel that God's presence is a present - a gift - a blessing. We are reminded that God is present in good, and hard, times. It was true then, and when the hymns were written, and now. If you are finding joy in the Christmas spirit - God is there. If you are feeling the weight of the world pressing down on you - God is there. ...and if you are having difficulty with the future - know that God is there too. And when Christ returns again, there will not only be an end to suffering, but glorious in ways we can't imagine.

If you are having difficulty finding God, please reach out to me or someone else. Prayer also helps - though it can take time. This past week Ines was hit unusually hard with the flu (yes, while I was away<sup>6</sup>) As her brain was spinning and her body still needed

This time it was for the actually Assembly Council (<a href="pressysterian.ca/gao/assembly-council">pressysterian.ca/gao/assembly-council</a>), as opposed to the sub-committee considering the future of the denomination. We were at Crieff Hills Retreat Centre

rest she turned to pray - for hours and hours over days - and she found a new peace and understanding. Sometimes it takes that dedication.

I also find scripture and hymns help - such as what we did today. At <a href="https://www.hymnary.org">www.hymnary.org</a> you can find scripture connections to hymns.

To God be all the Glory Amen.<sup>7</sup>

# Responding to God

FaithTalk: These are some questions for you to discuss with somebody... or many somebodies. Do what you feel safe (and practice stretching a little).

Memories: Share your oldest memories of Advent.

Actions: How can you make this Advent different from the

rest of the year?

Etching: These passages help define who the Jews are. What

are the key stories that define us? How can we see

God in them?

Wonder: You could wonder together why Jesus has not yet

returned.

Actions: Take some time to quietly reflect on places or

situations that show beauty, love, hope, or healing. If you're visual, try using pictures. Then share what

came to you. (This is a form of prayer).

Prayer: ...thank God for being present. If you need it, ask for

help feeling this.

#### crieffhills.com

Spirit Sighting
Please check out the PWS&D story on page

## 🔺 Offering

Financially, we have set up a donation option on our **website**. Just click the '**Donate Now**' button, and then the pretty button. It gives you various options that are easy to follow. You can now donate through **interac e-transfer**. Our name is Kensington Presbyterian Church and the e-mail address is info@kensingtonchurch.ca.

Mailing a cheque or signing up for Pre-Authorized Remittance (**PAR**) are also good options.

All donations are gratefully received and support God's work in our local and extended community.



### Communion

☐ Hymn: Let all mortal flesh keep silent.....pg 16 (542)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=n68○999tZhl



Psalms Shin Maeng

<sup>7</sup> You probably noticed the difference, but just for clarity - the last section was Peter, not Pat.

 ★ Invitation to the table

I would like to invite you to The Table.

It's not my table, or the churches. This is God's table.

Maintenant, c'est le moment de se rassembler autour de la Table de notre Seigneur.

Parce que c'est la volonté de Dieu que tous ceux qui veulent connaître Jésus partager ce repas.

So, come, you who have much faith,

and you who would like to have more,

you who have come often

and you who have not joined for a while,

you who feel God's presence, and you who struggle.8

As we come together to share this taste of Lord's Supper, let us also join with Christians around the world and through the centuries in a common confession of our faith.

## Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting.

Amen.

**♣** Great prayer of thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

and also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We praise you Lord for your presence.

That you breathed life into creation.

Your breath is in the rocks and the air,
in the trees and the weeds,
in all the diversity of animals

...and in us.

The wonders of creation are through the wonder of your Spirit.

We thank you that you didn't stop there, but continued be with us
Bringing wisdom from on high and to us the path of freedom show.

Through the Law,

and prophets,

and coming, oh Emmanuel, in Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> very adapted from Iona Wee Worship Book 4<sup>th</sup> ed

Showing us how to live with creation, with each other, and with you.

And so we sing out for your presence, Rejoice, Rejoice with the whole creation to lift our hearts in joyful praise.

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the One who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Our glad hosannas sing welcome for the Saviour comes the Saviour promised long, who bloomed a floweret bright when half-spent was the night. The broken heart to bind, the wounded soul to cure, to bring the treasure of God's grace. Yet in our sin, we cut you down like a weed

that disturbed our ideas of order.

But this was not the end of your presence with us ... Together, we proclaim the mystery of the faith.

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Hark the glad sound!

The Saviour comes, the Saviour promised long.

and to help us as we wait,
your breath - your Spirit
continues to flow in us
and in those around us.
Helping us, guiding us,
to live into the freedom of your way or living.

With the confidence of those who have come before us, we pray to you knowing that you listen and care.

- we pray for areas of conflict
  ...between countries
  ...between neighbours
  ...in families
  ...and within ourselves.
- we pray for healing

9/16

 we pray for your coming and making all things new.

Lord God,
as we gather at your table,
we pray that in sharing the bread and the cup.
your will make them alive
so that we may be closer to you
and be strengthened by you until you come again.

Let us join together in speaking the words Jesus taught us to pray, saying:

Lord's Prayer (feel free to use another version/translation)
Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,

your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

We are all One in Jesus Christ - Soichi Watanabe

Words of Institution

On the night before he met with death, Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to God he broke the bread and shared it, saying "This is my body; it is broken for you." "Ceci est mon corps, qui est rompu pour yous"

[take and eat]

In the same way, he took the cup of wine after dinner and said, "This is the new relationship with God, sealed in my blood Take this, all of you, in remembrance of me."

"Cette coupe est la nouvelle alliance en mon sang; faites ceci en mémoire de moi"

[take and drink]

rayer after Communion

Loving God,

We thank you for this time with you, uniting us with Christ, and each other.

Send us out in the power of your Spirit bringing love, hope & healing to the world.

In Jesus name,

Amen.

☐ Hymn: All earth is waiting......pg 16 (109)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzNiBdW4Le4



Benediction

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may about in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9 (</sup>Romans 15:13)

# Zinenani Finds Hope in Malawi



In Malawi, 15-year-old Zinenani took on the responsibility of caring for her younger siblings after their mother's death and their father leaving to find work in Mozambique.

Zinenani became the caretaker of their household. She faced challenges in providing food, attending school regularly, and lacked basic necessities.

Then, a community-based program for orphans and vulnerable children supported by PWS&D's partner, Mulanje Mission Hospital, intervened. The program supplied essentials like food, offered free medical care and provided school necessities. It also offered vocational skills training for out-of-school youth, including Zinenani and her siblings.

Enrollment in this program alleviated some of Zinenani's burdens, allowing her and her siblings to regain some normalcy. Zinenani expressed gratitude for the program and its donors, recognizing the significant impact on their lives.

This Advent season, faithfully respond to Christ's call to ensure that children have access to the tools they need for success.

240912330



### WeRespond.ca

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, ON M3C 1J7 1-800-619-7301 | pwsd@presbyterian.ca

Rev. Peter Rombeek for Kensington Presbyterian Church

# MISSION MOMENT

Sunday, December 1

The difficulty of accessing much-needed health care for people in Dorica's home village fueled her passion for becoming a doctor and serving the poor population in rural areas of Malawi. With support from Knox Presbyterian Church, St. Catharines and Presbyterians Sharing, Dorica began her studies in 2017. In March 2024, Dorica graduated from the University of Malawi College of Medicine and began the final stage of her medical training, an 18-month internship. Following her



internship, Dorica will be licensed to practice medicine in Malawi. She is grateful to the Knox congregation and the PCC for their financial support and prayer.

#### DAILY PRAYERS

**Sunday, December 1** (1st Sunday of Advent / World Aids Day) We pray for the millions of people affected by HIV and AIDS and for the work of PWS&D in Malawi, which is providing vital support to those living with HIV.

**Monday, December 2** We pray for the people, ministries and mission of the Presbytery of Peace River.

Tuesday, December 3 (International Day for People with Disabilities)

We pray for people living with disabilities in Ghana and Nepal, who are finding confidence and independence with support from PWS&D's partners.

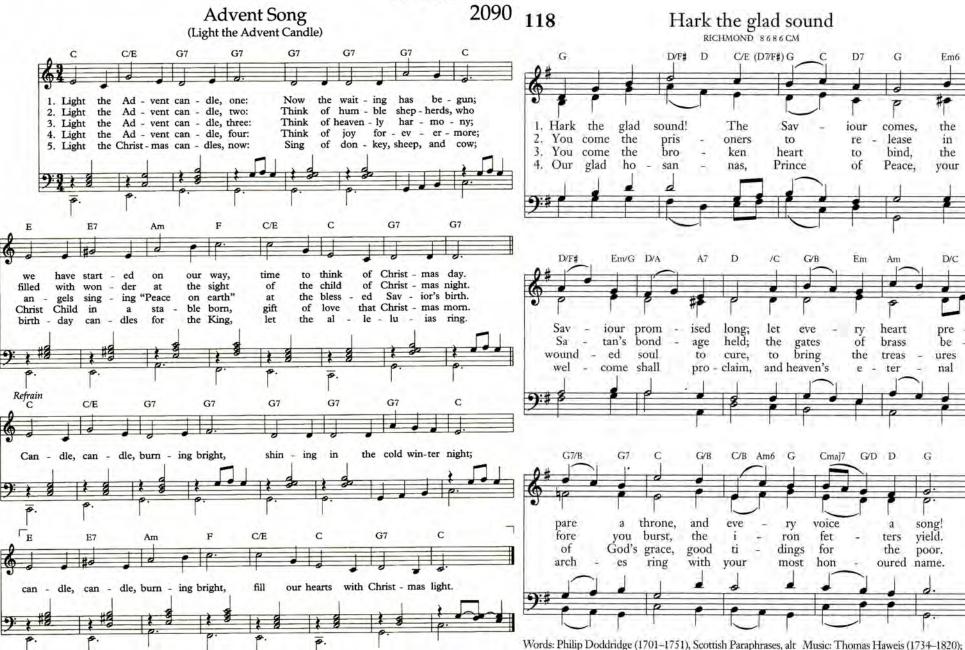
**Wednesday, December 4** We pray for those around the world who are the victims of violence and oppression, those who wonder how they will survive the next day, and those who have lost all they own. May God's reign of justice and peace inspire us to work for peace in their lands and provision for their needs.

**Thursday, December 5** We pray for Dorica Nkhata, the PCC's leadership development student, as she begins the final stage of her medical training, an 18-month internship at Mzuzu Central Hospital in Malawi.

**Friday, December 6 (The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women)** We pray for the healing of women who experience violence, and for God's guidance as we work to build communities that do not tolerate misogyny and gender-based violence.

**Saturday, December 7** We pray for theological students, that they would be taught by their teachers and God about God for the sake of life that is life indeed.

Dec. 1, 2025



Congregation: Unison

WORDS: Mary Lu Walker (Luke 2:1-20)

MUSIC: Mary Lu Walker © 1975 Mary Lu Walker

> Rev. Peter Rombeek for Kensington Presbyterian Church

171

ADVENT CANDLE SONG 77.77 with Refrain

Words: public domain Music: public domain

arrangement, Samuel Webbe the younger (1770–1843)

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Words: Fanny J. Crosby (1820–1915), alt Music: William H. Doane (1832–1916)
Words: this version, copyright © The Preshyterian Church in Canada, 1995 Music: public domain



our spirits by thine advent here; disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice!...

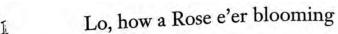
7. Oh come, desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart, one minds bid envy, strife and discord cease, and be thyself our source of peace.
 Rejoice!...

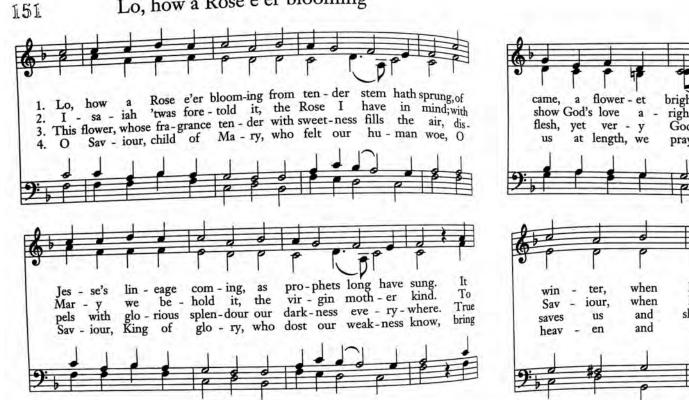
Words: Latin, 13th century; translation, John Mason Neale (1818–1866); French, H. Écuyer Music: Gregorian plainsong; arrangement, Healey Willan (1880–1968)

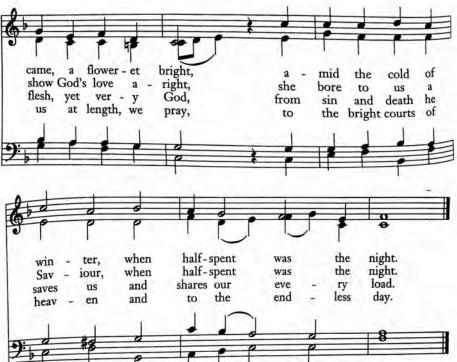
Words: public domain Music: arrangement, copyright © Michael Willan, executor of the estate of Ilealey Willan



- Oh! viens bientôt, Emmanuel, nous délivrer du joug cruel, et du péché briser la loi; ton peuple entier s'attend à toi. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Emmanuel!
- 2. Oh! viens bientôt, que ta clarté dissipe nos obscurités. Errants et tristes dans la nuit, nous appelons le jour qui luit. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Enmanuel!
- 3. Oh! viens bientôt, descends vers nous, Saint Fils du ciel, aimant et doux. Aux coeurs troublés apporte donc la paix divine du pardon. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Emmanuel!
- 4. Oh! viens bientôt, puissant Sauveur, nous réveiller de nos langueurs! Il n'est que toi, céleste Pain, qui puisse apaiser notre faim. Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel, voici venir Emmanuel!









Words: Liturgy of St. James; English translation, Gerard Moultrie (1829–1885), alt Music: French traditional carol

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130