

# Holy Darkness: Service of Word and Prayer for Advent

## Darkness is Holy - December 1, 2021

### Greeting

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,  
the love of Christ that guards our hearts and minds,  
and the joy and consolation of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

### Opening Prayer

Stir up our hearts, O God,  
to prepare a pathway for your Christ.  
By his coming speak peace to your people  
and turn our hearts toward you,  
that your saving grace and splendid glory  
may dwell in all the earth;  
through Jesus Christ, whose day draws near.

**Amen.**

### Silence

### Opening Song: *Come now, O God* ACS 902

- 1 Come now, O God, when our love is forsaken.  
Come, when our bedrock of faith has been shaken.  
Come, when our deepest of hopes are mistaken.  
Come, Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
- 2 Come, when we squander the freedom you gave us.  
Come, break the systems of sin that enslave us.  
Come, though we wonder if you can still save us.  
Come, Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.
- 3 Come, put an end to our self-serving madness.  
Come, while the world is enshrouded in sadness.  
Come, turn the tears of our mourning to gladness.  
Come, Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

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**Scripture:** Genesis 1:1-2:4

**Reflection:** *Darkness Is Holy*

**Song: *God Created Heaven and Earth* ELW 738 (Tune ELW 685)**

God created heav'n and earth, all things perfect brought to birth; God's great pow'r made dark and light, earth revolving day and night.	3	Let us praise God's mercy great; for the Lord in hope we wait; God, who fashions all that lives, to each one a blessing gives.	3	God's rich grace beyond compare saves us all from death's despair. All earth's creatures, small and great, praise God for that blessed state!
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Text: Taiwanese traditional; tr. Boris Anderson, b. 1918, and Clare Anderson, b. 1923  
Text © Boris and Clare Anderson, admin. Christian Conference of Asia.

**Prayer**

In Christ Jesus we meet the God who knows our weakness and bears the wounds of the world.  
Therefore, let us be bold as we pray, trusting that God draws near to those in any kind of need.

Let us remember before God all that flourishes in the darkness . . .  
. . . for our bodies which grow and rest and heal during our night's sleep . . .  
. . . for the babies that develop in the darkness of the womb . . .  
. . . for the stars that shine the brightest when night is at its darkest . . .  
. . . for our other senses that come to life when we cannot see . . .  
. . . for all of us who rest and trust even in the darkness . . .

**Concluding Prayer**

Into your wide embrace, O God, we place all our prayers, spoken and unspoken, trusting that you will receive them into your heart of mercy, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior.

**Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Song: *We are waiting for Jesus* ACS 905**

1	We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. Sun of justice, shine upon us; we are trusting in your promise. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.	2	We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace. Loving Shepherd, walk beside us; stir our hearts, and gently guide us. We are waiting for Jesus; Jesus brings peace.
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Text: John Helgen, b. 1957  
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**Blessing**

Keep watch, dear Lord,  
with those who work, or watch, or weep this night,  
and give your angels charge over those who sleep.  
Tend the sick, Lord Christ;  
give rest to the weary, bless the dying,  
soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted,  
shield the joyous;  
and all for your love's sake.

**Amen.**

Christ goes with you into this dark night.

**Thanks be to God.**