



God's light brings love, and where there is love there is light.

**Hymn**

*"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

O come, O come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, though Dayspring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by thine advent here  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
And death's dark shadows put to flight

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, thousand Wisdom from on high  
And order all things, far and nigh  
To us the path of knowledge show  
And cause us in her ways to go

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel

O come, Desire of nation, bind  
All peoples in one heart and mind  
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease  
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel

### **Opening Prayer**

Come Jesus, and be a welcome guest in our lives.

Come, God-with-us, and free us from the false claims of the material, emotional and spiritual tyrants that seek to rule us.

Come, Emmanuel, and abide with us. Make us Your people. Inspire us to be bring Your love and justice into the world.

Come, Jesus, and lead us. Claim Your rightful place in our hearts, homes, communities and nation. Plant in us Your seeds of hope for a better tomorrow.

We pray all this in the name of the One we wait for, and offer You the words He would one day teach His followers to say...

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass



## The Gospels

## Matthew 1:12-16, 18-24

### (New Revised Standard Version Bible Translation)

<sup>12</sup> And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Salathiel, and Salathiel the father of Zerubbabel, <sup>13</sup> and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, <sup>14</sup> and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, <sup>15</sup> and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, <sup>16</sup> and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

<sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"  
which means, "God is with us."

<sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

## Message

**Solo**

*"Gesù Bambino"*

Yon

(sung in Italian)

Rebecca Shrimpton, soloist

In the humble hut, in cold and poverty the holy infant is born, who the world will adore. Hosanna, hosanna, sing with a joyous heart, your shepherds and angels, O King of light and love.

Come let us adore the Lord. O beautiful boy do not cry, Redeemer! Your mother cradles you, kisses you, oh Savior. Hosanna, hosanna, sing with a joyous heart, your shepherds and angels, oh King of light and love. Oh come let us adore the Lord!

## Blessing

- We encourage all members and friends of First Parish to remain with us immediately after the conclusion of our Worship this morning for our Virtual Friendship Time on Zoom. You can join the meeting by computer, tablet, iPad, or smart phone by clicking this link <https://zoom.us/j/720983063> Password- 244108

Dial in with your phone and join using just audio at this number 1-301-715-8592 (Meeting ID- 720 983 063, Password- 244108). We welcome you for this time of additional community connection.

- **Christmas Eve 5 PM** - A special "Virtual Story Time": *The Grumpy Shepherd* will be presented for all children - and children at heart. Live via Facebook from the First Parish Sanctuary.

**Christmas Eve 7pm**, also on Facebook, Our Worship team will present a time of hymns, solos, Scripture and Dramatic Reflection for all ages.

**In addition, a special Christmas present to all of us – the return of our Choir for a virtual performance of "Silent Night" before the evening's Final Blessing!!!**

- **NEXT SUNDAY, December 27, there will be NO Livestream Worship time from the FPCC Sanctuary. Instead, the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ that we belong to has put together a video Worship time for member churches to use that day. Their reason for doing this is so that churches could give their Worship teams some time off after Advent and Christmas, as well as all these months of providing virtual Worship experiences. Our Church Council learned of this opportunity and voted unanimously to take the conference up on its offer.**

**Therefore, sometime next week, you will receive an email from the Church Office with the instructions for how you can access the video. Then you have the choice to view it whenever you wish, just**

**as you have during these many months of our livestream and recorded Worship offerings.**

- Annual Fund Drive 2021 letters and pledge cards have been sent. If you didn't receive one, please call the Church Office 978-526-7661 ext. 1 or Mary Ellen Cook at 978-500-0018 to have another sent. You can also download a pledge card [here](#)
- "Deacon Fund" Support and Assistance – the "Deacon Fund" remains a vital means of assistance to FPC members in need, especially in this difficult and uncertain time. Contributions can be made "First Parish Church" with "Deacon Fund" in the memo section, and mailed to First Parish Church P.O. Box 187 Manchester, MA 01944. In addition, if a member of our spiritual community is need, please contact Rev. Mark to discuss available support.
- You can contribute to the work of First Parish Church or pay your pledge @ [PayPal.Me/FPCChurchManchester](https://www.paypal.com/paytoee/FPCChurchManchester)
- Manchester Affordable Housing Trust Announces Emergency Rental Housing Payment Assistance - The Manchester Affordable Housing Trust (MAHT), in collaboration with Action, Inc., a Gloucester-based human and social services agency, is offering short-term rental housing payment assistance to income eligible Manchester residents in response to job and income loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Consistent with its mission to support and promote community affordable housing, the MAHT is reaching out to income eligible residents who are experiencing housing rent payment issues.

The MAHT can and wants to help during this difficult and uncertain time. For further information please contact Action, Inc. at 978-282-1000 or live chat at [www.actioninc.org](http://www.actioninc.org)<<http://www.actioninc.org>.