

## O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Latin hymn, 1710 tr by John Mason Neale, 1851; alt. 1961

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

### Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Day-spring, from on high,  
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh:  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

O come, Thou Key of David, come,  
And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.



We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

**Cover art:** *Cover art: Madonna and Child.* Michaelangelo (c. 1522). Black, white and red chalk drawing.

Words to “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” is in the public domain.

## Old Orchard Church

First Sunday of Advent

December 2, 2012 – 10:15-11:50 a.m.

“Can a mother forget the baby at her breast  
and have no compassion  
on the child she has borne?  
Though she may forget,  
I will not forget you....”  
declares the Lord.

Isaiah 49:15, 18b

## Celebrating the Fruit of the Spirit in Messiah Jesus:

### The Promise of Love

#### And the Ordination of Mark Robertson

*Worship led by the Missouri Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in America*

O Lord, how shall I meet you,  
How welcome you aright?

Love caused your incarnation,  
Love brought you down to me;  
Your thirst for my salvation  
Procured my liberty.  
O love beyond all telling,  
That led you to embrace,  
In love all love excelling,  
Our lost and fallen race!

You need not toil or languish  
Nor ponder day and night  
How in the midst of anguish  
To draw Christ by your might.  
He comes, he comes all willing,  
Moved by his love alone,  
Your woes and troubles stilling;  
For all to him are known.

*Paul Gerhardt (1653)*



### Today's Scripture

Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11

Gospel reading: Luke 1:5-17

### Advent Sermon Series

“Pastors and the Mother-Love, Father-Love of God for the World”

I Thessalonians 2:1-12

*Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching*

## Looking For And Waiting For Love, Joy and Peace

In the first three weeks of our Advent liturgy this year we will offer ourselves to God in worship and enjoy the Lord Jesus as we reflect on the first three fruits of the Holy Spirit listed by Paul in Galatians 5: **love, joy and peace**. This will help prepare our hearts for the Christmas message of the grace of God in the incarnation of his Son.

History reflects the deep human longing for these three things—for *love* that is genuine and does not get violated; for *joy* that is not superficial and does not degenerate into boredom; and for *peace* among people and nations that lasts longer than the next lull after a fight, or the next cease-fire agreement. We also know by our own experience the great promise that life holds: the promise of true love, of deep joy, of enduring peace. By God's grace, working through the operation of his image still reflected in sinful people, human beings do taste *something* of real love, deep joy and enduring peace in their lives. It is God's world, and thanks be to him, he preserves good in it. But human beings also know that sin—even if they do not call it that—and death, sooner or later, dash each of these budding promises. So people are left struggling not to get swallowed up either by disappointment and cynicism, or by denial and a kind of fraudulent optimism.

Yet from the time of the catastrophe of our rebellion in Eden, God promised that love, joy and peace would one day be restored to the world by a Redeemer Messiah-Prince. So when the time was “ripe,” the Son was sent into the world, born of a woman. And when he came, he brought from within the mysterious inner bonds of the Trinity itself, a true and tender love that would remain forever faithful; a joy welling upward from such a deep place that it would never dry up; a peace—a moral and emotional and relational equilibrium—that nothing and no one could upset or undo. *Love, joy and peace are first brought into the world in their purest form after the fall, by Jesus, the Jewish man-God born in Bethlehem.* And the same divine love and joy and peace, albeit in a tattered and wrinkled, far-from-perfect form, are also supposed to be reflected now in the lives of those sinners who claim to know and follow and be changed by the Savior from Bethlehem. That would be you and me, if you call yourself a Christian.

In fact, today, the day we are ordaining Mark Robertson, our dear friend, to the gospel ministry, is a very good day to remember that our corporate life together as a church community, and *all* our relationships with other people, insofar as we can influence them, are to be so marked by *love, joy and peace* that non-Christians around us actually see it, appreciate it, and find it remarkable. That's a tall order, but remember that great line in the blessing I often pronounce over you, as Christ's under-shepherd,

**And may He work in us what is pleasing in His sight,  
through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory now and forever.**

In this Advent season, ask yourself whether there might be new ways that Christ waits to work in you his love, his joy, his peace. —Ron Lutjens