

Sermon and Hymn of the Day

The Great O Antiphons

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 20, 2009

Christ the King Lutheran Church - Houston

Mark Mummert, organist

Dr. Albert LeDoux, cantor

The Rev. Dr. Art Preisinger, proclaimer

Cantor: Antiphon I

<i>O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi prodisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem, fortiter; suaviter disponensque omnia: Veni, ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.</i>	O Wisdom, coming forth from the Most High, filling all creation and reigning to the ends of the earth: come and teach us the way of truth.
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Proclaimer: If there are people here today for whom all things are not "mightily ordered," people who can't put their lives together, who can't make sense of their situations, people who understand many things a little but nothing enough to live on, then we say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: The Wisdom from on high, wisdom about yourselves and about God, has now come down from above, permeating our world, reaching way down to the manger, down on a cross, which is the very Wisdom of God; and this Emmanuel, this all-wise, all-understanding God-with-us is with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: Antiphon II

<i>O Adonai, et dux domus Israel, qui Moysi in igne flammae rubi apparuit, et ei in Syna legem dedisti: Veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.</i>	O Lord of Lords, and ruler of the House of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush, and gave him the law on Sinai: come with your outstretched arm and save us.
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Proclaimer: If there are people here today who have stayed behind in Egypt, who are afraid to brave the desert of their responsibilities, who are overwhelmed by a sea of obligations, people who are stuck in Sinai and the demands of the law, people who see no one to lead them past Sinai to the Promised Land beyond, then let us say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: The God who was born of a woman, born under the Law, who has come to redeem those who are under the Law, is Emmanuel--the God-with-us and with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: Antiphon III

*O Radix Jesse,
qui stas in signum populorum,
super quem reges continebunt ossuum,
quem gentes deprecabuntur:*

*Veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli
tardare.*

O Root of Jesse,
standing as an ensign of the people,
before Whom all kings remain silent,
and to Whom the nations shall make
supplication:
come quickly to deliver us.

Proclaimer: If there are people here today for whom their lives have become a rat race, a killing pace seeming to lead nowhere, people who say, I feel like hell, and that is not just a figure of speech, but the very symptoms of Satan's tyranny, of death and the depths of hell, then let us say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: The God whose anger like a forest fire burns sinners to the ground has raised up out of the charred stump, the little twig, the root, the rod of Jesse; and this Emmanuel, this God-with-us, with all his lasting life and vitality, is with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: The Antiphon IV

*O Clavis David,
et sceptrum domus Israel,
qui aperis et nemo claudit,
claudis et nemo aperit:
Veni, et educ vinctum de domo carceris,
sedentem in tenebris et umbra mortis.*

O Key of David
and Scepter of the house of Israel,
Who opens and no one can close,
Who closes and no one can open;
come and rescue the prisoners who are
in darkness and the shadow of death.

Proclaimer: If there are some prodigals here today for whom all the doors to home have seemed to close, people who have lost the key to life, people who have forgotten the combination to heaven, then we say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: The key is Emanuel, the Combination is the God who combines himself with our flesh and our misery; the God who opens wide His house to us; and this Emmanuel, this God-with-us, is with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O 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.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: Antiphon V

*O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae
et sol justitiae:
Veni, et illumine sedentem in tenebris
et umbra mortis.*

O morning star, splendor of the light
eternal and
bright sun of righteousness:
come and bring light to those
who dwell in darkness
and walk in the shadow of death.

Proclaimer: If there are people here today who live in the shadows, who practice their pleasures only under the cover of night, who, like the darkness around them, have become gloomy and have lost the glory of their humanity, then let us say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: there is no night too dark for the dawning Sun of Righteousness, who comes to deliver you from the darkness and terror of death and the grave; and this God-with-us is with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: Antiphon VI

*O Rex gentium,
et desideratus earum:
lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque
unum:
veni, salva hominem,
quem de limo formasti.*

O King of the nations,
the ruler they long for,
the Cornerstone uniting all people:
come and save us all,
whom you formed out of clay.

Proclaimer: If there are people here today who have had the foundations of their lives shaken, who have no firm footing because of a broken home or poor training or an inadequate church, if there are people who desire something more solid than their own feet of clay, then let us say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: No other foundation can any one lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ; the God-with-us and with you, too. So rejoice.

People: O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Cantor: Antiphon VII

*O Emmanuel,
rex et Legi fer noster,
expectation gentium
et Salvatore arum:
Veni, ad salvandum nos,
Domine Deus noster.*

O Emmanuel,
our King and our Lawgiver,
the anointed of the nations
and their Savior:
come and save us,
O Lord our God.

Proclaimer: If there are people here today who are in bondage to someone other than Christ, who are captive to their lusts, to their resentments and secret grudges, to their work, to their family, to the tyrannical crowd, to demonic powers, people who no longer have the price to buy themselves back from their lonely exile from God, then let us say to them as our sisters and brothers in Christ: The Son of God has now come and has redeemed us from our captors with His supreme sacrifice, and he is determined not to let that ransom go to waste; that is why he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, and with you, too. So rejoice.

People: 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 you, O Israel.

Text: Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite
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