

First Hymn

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail,” said he, “thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favoured lady.”

Gloria!

“For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
all generations laud and honour thee,
thy son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold;
most highly favoured lady.”

Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
“To me be as it pleaseth God,” she said,
“My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name”:
most highly favoured lady.

Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say
“Most highly favoured lady.”

Gloria!

Basque Carol

Tune Gabriel's Message

After the Reading

We remain seated to sing

O come, thou Root of Jesse! draw
the quarry from the lion's claw;
from those dread caverns of the grave,
from death and hell, thy people save.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

O come, thou Lord of David's Key!
the royal door fling wide and free;
safeguard for us the heavenward road,
and bar the way to death's abode.

O come, O come,
thou Dayspring bright!
pour on our souls thy healing light;
dispel the long night's lingering gloom,
and pierce the shadows of the tomb.

O come, Desire of nations! show
thy kingly reign on earth below;
thou Corner-stone, uniting all,
restore the ruin of our fall.

Latin, Tr. T.A. Lacey (1853-1931) & others

Tune: Veni Emmanuel

Second Hymn

For Mary, Mother of the Lord
God's holy name be praised,
who first the Son of God adored
as on her child she gazed.

The angel Gabriel brought the word
she should Christ's mother be;
Our Lady, handmaid of the Lord,
made answer willingly.

The heavenly call she thus obeyed,
and so God's will was done;
the second Eve love's answer made
which our redemption won.

She gave her body for God's shrine,
her heart to piercing pain,
and knew the cost of love divine
when Jesus Christ was slain.

Dear Mary, from your lowliness
and home in Galilee,
there comes a joy and holiness
to every family.

Hail, Mary, you are full of grace,
above all women blest;
blest in your Son, whom your embrace
in birth and death confessed.

J.R. Pearcey (1896-1971)

Tune: St Botolph

Communion Hymn

The Lord will come and not be slow,
his footsteps cannot err;
before him righteousness shall go,
his royal harbinger.

Truth from the earth, like to a flower,
shall bud and blossom then;
and justice from her heavenly bower,
look down on mortal men.

Rise, God, judge thou the earth in might,
this wicked earth redress;
for thou art he who shalt by right
the nations all possess.

The nations all whom thou hast made
shall come, and all shall frame
to bow them low before thee, Lord,
and glorify thy name.

For great thou art, and wonders great
by thy strong hand are done:
thou in thy everlasting seat
remainest God alone.

John Milton 1608-74

Tune St Stephen

Final Hymn

Long ago, prophets knew
Christ would come, born a Jew.
Come to make all things new;
bear his People's burden,
freely love and pardon.
Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
When he comes,
When he comes,
Who will make him welcome?

God in time, God in man,
this is God's timeless plan:
he will come, as a man,
born himself of woman,
God divinely humana herald voice is calling:
'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'Cast away the dreams of darkness,
O ye children of the day!'

Mary, hail! Though afraid,
she believed, she obeyed.
In her womb God is laid;
till the time expected
nurtured and protected.

Journey ends! Where afar
Bethlem shines, like a star,
stable door stands ajar.
unborn Son of Mary,
saviour, do not tarry!
Ring, bells, ring, ring, ring!
Sing, choirs, sing, sing, sing!
Jesus comes!
Jesus comes!
We will make him welcome!

F. Pratt Green b 1903 Tune: Personent Hodie