

Transformation – NOW!
ADVENT

Hymn: Hail to the Lord's Anointed

sung by St Martin's Voices

James Montgomery (1771-1854)

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free,
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.

He comes, with succour speedy,
to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
were precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
that love, joy, hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth;
before him, on the mountains,
shall peace the herald go;
and righteousness, in fountains,
from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall bow down before him,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore him,
his praise all people sing;
to him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend,
his kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.

O'er every foe victorious,
he on his throne shall rest;
from age to age more glorious,
all-blessing and all-blest.
The tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand for ever,
his changeless name of Love.

Opening prayer ~ *posted on the website of Old South Church in Boston*

O God,

you broke down the barriers when you crept in beside us.
In Jesus, your hands touched all and touched us.

You opened our eyes
to see how the hands of the rich were empty,
and the hearts of the poor were full.

You took the widow's mite and the child's loaves
and used them to show us the Kingdom.

Here in the company of the neighbour whom we know
and the stranger in our midst,
and the self from whom we turn,
we ask to love as Jesus loved.

Make this the place and time, good Lord,
when heaven and earth become one,
and we in word and flesh
know ourselves beloved. Amen.

Reflection: Just when

Thom M Shuman ©Wild Goose Publications

Just when
we expect you to
arrive
with anger steaming out
of your ears,
you come
to sit next to us,
listening to our deepest
brokenness;

just when
we figure you will show up
to toss us in
the nearest fire,
you come
to sweep up
the ashes
of every broken
hope,
refining them
into the chalice
of wonder.

just when
we are certain you are hiding
there
in the shadows,
ready to leap out
and scare us into
repentance,
you come
to swaddle us
in garlands of grace,
twinkling off and on
in pure joy.

Reading: Luke 1: 46-55

from The Message

And Mary said,
I'm bursting with God-news;
I'm dancing the song of my Saviour God.
God took one good look at me, and look what happened—
I'm the most fortunate woman on earth!
What God has done for me will never be forgotten,
the God whose very name is holy, set apart from all others.
His mercy flows in wave after wave
on those who are in awe before him.
He bared his arm and showed his strength,
scattered the bluffing braggarts.
He knocked tyrants off their high horses,
pulled victims out of the mud.
The starving poor sat down to a banquet;
the callous rich were left out in the cold.
He embraced his chosen child, Israel;
he remembered and piled on the mercies, piled them high.
It's exactly what he promised,
beginning with Abraham and right up to now.



Hymn: O for a closer walk with God

sung by St Martin's Voices

O for a closer walk with God,
a calm and heavenly frame,
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

Return, O holy Dove! return,
sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
and drove Thee from my breast.

The dearest idol I have known,
whate'er that idol be,
help me to tear it from Thy throne,
and worship only Thee.

So shall my walk be close with God,
calm and serene my frame;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

William Cowper (1731-1800)

Prayers: Come, Lord Jesus

Kathy Crawford *Wild Goose*

Come, Lord Jesus,
into the darkness of our world;
a world where there is injustice, racial tension and war,
where many people still lack the basics of food and clean water.

Come, Lord Jesus,
into the uncertain future of migrants
who risk everything to escape atrocities
yet know that they could still end up paying with their lives.

Come, Lord Jesus,
into our communities
where many are struggling with redundancy and debt
and food banks have become a lifeline for those in need.
Come, Lord Jesus,
into the darkness of our cities
where greed and discrimination
make misery in people's lives.

Come, Lord Jesus,
into our lives
and into the lives of those for whom we are concerned.

Bring comfort to the bereaved
and to those who are struggling to cope with life on their own.

Come, Lord Jesus,
give reassurance where there is fear,
and confidence where there is doubt.
Wherever people are hurting,
come and let your light shine.
Amen

The Mothers' Union prayer

Loving Lord,
We thank you for your love so freely given to us all.
We pray for families around the world.
Bless the work of the Mothers' Union as we seek to share your love
through the encouragement, strengthening and support of marriage
and family life.
Empowered by your Spirit, may we be united in prayer and worship,
and in love and service reach out as your hands across the world.
In Jesus' name.
Amen

Dismissal

by Christine Sine

Lord Jesus Christ, we await your coming,
We wait filled with hope,
Knowing your light will shine in the darkness.
We wait anticipating your peace,
Believing that one day it will fill our world.
We wait embracing your love,
May we reach out to share it with our neighbours.
We wait with joy,
Bubbling up in expectation of your birth.
Lord we wait,
Come soon and fill us with your life.
Amen

Hymn: Longing for light, we wait in darkness

sung by St Martin's Voices

Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.
*Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.*

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice.

Chorus

Longing for food, many are hungry.
Longing for water, many still thirst.
Make us your bread, broken for others,
shared until all are fed.

Chorus

Longing for shelter, many are homeless.
Longing for warmth, many are cold.
Make us your building, sheltering others,
walls made of living stones.

Chorus

Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
making your kingdom come.

Chorus

Bernadette Farrell (born 1957)

© 1994 Bernadette Farrell published by OCP Publications 5536 NE Hassalo
Portland OR 97213. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Material: as stated

Theme music: 'Overflowing grace' by Catherine Hilton

Theme image: Lucjan on Pixabay.com

Readers: Christine Faulkner, Christine Sharp, Ruth Taylor,
Denise Smith, Barbara Pye, Ian Butterworth

CCLI: 5097385

January
EPIPHANY