**Morning Prayer**

**Preparation**

O Lord, open our lips

All and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Reveal among us the light of your presence

All that we may behold your power and glory.

One or more of the following is said or sung:  
a prayer of thanksgiving,  
a suitable hymn,  
or A Song of God’s Compassion

**Thanksgiving**

Blessed are you, Sovereign God of all,  
to you be praise and glory for ever.  
In your tender compassion  
the dawn from on high is breaking upon us  
to dispel the lingering shadows of night.  
As we look for your coming among us this day,  
open our eyes to behold your presence  
and strengthen our hands to do your will,  
that the world may rejoice and give you praise.  
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

All Blessed be God for ever.

A Song of the King’s Glory

1 The earth is the Lord’s and all that fills it, ♦   
 the compass of the world and all who dwell therein.

2 For he has founded it upon the seas ♦   
and set it firm upon the rivers of the deep.

3 ‘Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord, ♦   
or who can rise up in his holy place?’

4 ‘Those who have clean hands and a pure heart, ♦   
who have not lifted up their soul to an idol,  
 nor sworn an oath to a lie;

5 ‘They shall receive a blessing from the Lord, ♦   
a just reward from the God of their salvation.’

6 Such is the company of those who seek him, ♦   
of those who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

7 Lift up your heads, O gates;  
 be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦   
and the King of glory shall come in.

8 ‘Who is the King of glory?’ ♦   
‘The Lord, strong and mighty,  
 the Lord who is mighty in battle.’

9 Lift up your heads, O gates;  
 be lifted up, you everlasting doors; ♦   
and the King of glory shall come in.

10 ‘Who is this King of glory?’ ♦   
‘The Lord of hosts,  
 he is the King of glory.’

Psalm 24

All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

This opening prayer may be said

The night has passed, and the day lies open before us;  
let us pray with one heart and mind.

Silence is kept.

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,  
so may the light of your presence, O God,  
set our hearts on fire with love for you;  
now and for ever.

All Amen.

**The Word of God**

Psalmody  
  
The appointed psalmody is said.

Each appointed psalm may end with:

All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now:  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

Psalm 62, 63

Psalm 62

1 On God alone my soul in stillness waits; ♦   
from him comes my salvation.

2 He alone is my rock and my salvation, ♦   
my stronghold, so that I shall never be shaken.

3 How long will all of you assail me to destroy me, ♦   
as you would a tottering wall or a leaning fence?

4 They plot only to thrust me down from my place of honour;  
 lies are their chief delight; ♦   
they bless with their mouth, but in their heart they curse.

5 Wait on God alone in stillness, O my soul; ♦   
 for in him is my hope.

6 He alone is my rock and my salvation, ♦   
my stronghold, so that I shall not be shaken. R

7 In God is my strength and my glory; ♦   
God is my strong rock; in him is my refuge.

8 Put your trust in him always, my people; ♦   
pour out your hearts before him, for God is our refuge.

9 The peoples are but a breath,  
 the whole human race a deceit; ♦   
on the scales they are altogether lighter than air.

10 Put no trust in oppression; in robbery take no empty pride; ♦   
though wealth increase, set not your heart upon it.

11 God spoke once, and twice have I heard the same, ♦   
that power belongs to God.

12 Steadfast love belongs to you, O Lord, ♦   
for you repay everyone according to their deeds.

Psalm 63

1 O God, you are my God; eagerly I seek you; ♦   
my soul is athirst for you.

2 My flesh also faints for you, ♦   
as in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water.

3 So would I gaze upon you in your holy place, ♦   
that I might behold your power and your glory.

4 Your loving-kindness is better than life itself ♦   
and so my lips shall praise you.

5 I will bless you as long as I live ♦   
and lift up my hands in your name. R

6 My soul shall be satisfied, as with marrow and fatness, ♦   
and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips,

7 When I remember you upon my bed ♦   
and meditate on you in the watches of the night.

8 For you have been my helper ♦   
and under the shadow of your wings will I rejoice.

9 My soul clings to you; ♦   
your right hand shall hold me fast. R

10 But those who seek my soul to destroy it ♦   
shall go down to the depths of the earth;

11 Let them fall by the edge of the sword ♦   
and become a portion for jackals.

12 But the king shall rejoice in God;  
 all those who swear by him shall be glad, ♦   
for the mouth of those who speak lies shall be stopped.

If there are two Scripture readings, the first may be read here,  
or both may be read after the canticle.

**Canticle**

A Song of the Wilderness

Refrain:

All

Lift up your voice with strength,  
O herald of good tidings.

1 The wilderness and the dry land shall rejoice, ♦   
the desert shall blossom and burst into song.

2 They shall see the glory of the Lord, ♦   
the majesty of our God.

3 Strengthen the weary hands, ♦   
and make firm the feeble knees.

4 Say to the anxious, ‘Be strong, fear not,  
 your God is coming with judgement, ♦   
coming with judgement to save you.’

5 Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, ♦   
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

6 Then shall the lame leap like a hart, ♦   
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

7 For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, ♦   
and streams in the desert;

8 The ransomed of the Lord shall return with singing, ♦   
with everlasting joy upon their heads.

9 Joy and gladness shall be theirs, ♦   
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Isaiah 35.1, 2b-4a, 4c-6, 10

All Glory to the Father and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning is now  
and shall be for ever. Amen.

All Lift up your voice with strength,  
O herald of good tidings.

Scripture Reading  
  
One or more readings appointed for the day are read.  
  
The reading(s) may be followed by a time of silence.  
  
A suitable song or chant, or a responsory may follow.

**First Reading**

Isaiah 31

Alas for those who go down to Egypt for help  
   and who rely on horses,  
who trust in chariots because they are many  
   and in horsemen because they are very strong,  
but do not look to the Holy One of Israel  
   or consult the Lord!  
Yet he too is wise and brings disaster;  
   he does not call back his words,  
but will rise against the house of the evildoers,  
   and against the helpers of those who work iniquity.  
The Egyptians are human, and not God;  
   their horses are flesh, and not spirit.  
When the Lord stretches out his hand,  
   the helper will stumble, and the one helped will fall,  
   and they will all perish together.

For thus the Lord said to me,  
As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey,  
   and—when a band of shepherds is called out against it—  
is not terrified by their shouting  
   or daunted at their noise,  
so the Lord of hosts will come down  
   to fight upon Mount Zion and upon its hill.  
Like birds hovering overhead, so the Lord of hosts  
   will protect Jerusalem;  
he will protect and deliver it,  
   he will spare and rescue it.

6Turn back to him whom you have deeply betrayed, O people of Israel. 7For on that day all of you shall throw away your idols of silver and idols of gold, which your hands have sinfully made for you.  
‘Then the Assyrian shall fall by a sword, not of mortals;  
   and a sword, not of humans, shall devour him;  
he shall flee from the sword,  
   and his young men shall be put to forced labour.  
His rock shall pass away in terror,  
   and his officers desert the standard in panic,’  
says the Lord, whose fire is in Zion,  
   and whose furnace is in Jerusalem.

**Second Reading**

Matthew 15.1-20

Then Pharisees and scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, 2‘Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands before they eat.’ 3He answered them, ‘And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? 4For God said, “Honour your father and your mother,” and, “Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.” 5But you say that whoever tells father or mother, “Whatever support you might have had from me is given to God”, then that person need not honour the father. 6So, for the sake of your tradition, you make void the word of God. 7You hypocrites! Isaiah prophesied rightly about you when he said:  
“This people honours me with their lips,  
   but their hearts are far from me;  
in vain do they worship me,  
   teaching human precepts as doctrines.” ’

10Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, ‘Listen and understand: 11it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.’ 12Then the disciples approached and said to him, ‘Do you know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard what you said?’ 13He answered, ‘Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. 14Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.’ 15But Peter said to him, ‘Explain this parable to us.’ 16Then he said, ‘Are you also still without understanding? 17Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? 18But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. 19For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. 20These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.’

Now it is time to awake out of sleep,

All for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.  
Now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed,

All for the night is far spent.  
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness  
and put on the armour of light,

All for the day is at hand.  
Put on the Lord Jesus Christ  
and make no provision for the flesh,

All for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.

from Romans 13

**Gospel Canticle**

Gospel Canticle  
  
The Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah) is normally said,  
or A Song of Redemption (page 620) may be said

From Advent Sunday until 16 December:

All

Refrain  
Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,  
and see the glory that is coming from God.

From 17 December until Christmas Eve:

All Refrain  
Like the sun in the morning sky,  
the Saviour of the world will dawn;  
like rain upon the meadows,  
the Christ will come down upon us.

Benedictus (The Song of Zechariah)

1 Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, ♦   
who has come to his people and set them free.

2 He has raised up for us a mighty Saviour, ♦   
born of the house of his servant David.

3 Through his holy prophets God promised of old ♦   
to save us from our enemies,  
 from the hands of all that hate us,

4 To show mercy to our ancestors, ♦   
and to remember his holy covenant.

5 This was the oath God swore to our father Abraham: ♦   
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

6 Free to worship him without fear, ♦   
holy and righteous in his sight  
 all the days of our life.

7 And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, ♦   
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,

8 To give his people knowledge of salvation ♦   
by the forgiveness of all their sins.

9 In the tender compassion of our God ♦   
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

10 To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, ♦   
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Luke 1.68-79

From Advent Sunday until 16 December:

All

Refrain  
Look towards the east, O Jerusalem,  
and see the glory that is coming from God.

From 17 December until Christmas Eve:

All Refrain  
Like the sun in the morning sky,  
the Saviour of the world will dawn;  
like rain upon the meadows,  
the Christ will come down upon us.

**Prayers**

Watchful at all times,  
let us pray for strength to stand with confidence  
before our Maker and Redeemer.

That God may bring in his kingdom with justice and mercy,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

That God may establish among the nations  
 his sceptre of righteousness,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

That we may seek Christ in the Scriptures  
and recognize him in the breaking of the bread,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

That God may bind up the broken hearted,  
restore the sick  
and raise up all who have fallen,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

That the light of God’s coming may dawn  
on all who live in darkness and the shadow of death,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

That, with all the saints in light,  
we may shine forth as lights for the world,  
let us pray to the Lord: R

Let us commend the world, which Christ will judge,  
to the mercy and protection of God.

Lord, in your mercy  
hear our prayer

Silence may be kept.

The Collect of the day or the following is said

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power  
and come among us,  
and with great might succour us;  
that whereas, through our sins and wickedness  
we are grievously hindered  
in running the race that is set before us,  
your bountiful grace and mercy  
may speedily help and deliver us;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honour and glory, now and for ever.

The Lord’s Prayer is said

Awaiting his coming in glory,  
as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

All Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.

**The Conclusion**

May the Lord, when he comes,  
find us watching and waiting.

All Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

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