

Now and Forever
Contemporary Collects
Written and Arranged
for the Three-Year
and Historic Lectionaries

Paul C. Stratman



Now and Forever: Contemporary Collects Written and Arranged for the Three-Year and Historic Lectionaries

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Introduction

The title of this book is taken from the last phrase in the Prayer of the Day. In Latin it is “*in saecula saeculorum*,” “in age of ages.” In German it is rendered “*von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit*,” “from eternity to eternity.” Strangely, the *Book of Common Prayer* rendered it as “world without end.” Modern English liturgy and prayer books use the phrase “now and forever.”

I think the phrase has a dual meaning. First, it is part of a confession of faith in the Trinity, that Father, Son and Holy Spirit live and reign, now and forever. Second, it is part of our prayer, that what we are asking for is not just for us, just for now, but our prayers, prayed in Jesus name, have an eternal goal.

The Collect

The *collect* is a classic style of prayer that dates back almost to apostolic times. In modern books, the collect is often called the *Prayer (or Collect) of the Day*. Prayers in the collect style are also found in other places in services. Collects begin with an address, some attributive phrase that describes God or what he does, a petition, and a desired result.

Collects typically end with a short termination, “...through Jesus Christ, our Lord.” or with a long termination, “...through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.” The long termination gives the prayer a distinctly Christian and trinitarian confession.

Contemporary Prayers of the Day

All of the prayers in this book are my own composition and are appearing here in print for the first time. As I wrote the prayers, I had the following priorities in mind:

- The prayers should follow the ancient form of a collect, but use the form flexibly and creatively, especially in the transitions to the terminations.
- The prayers should use phraseology and imagery of the lectionary readings for the day, giving special weight to the Gospel for the day.
- The prayers should distill and summarize theological truths in the readings, in a way that a reader could almost guess what the readings are from the prayer. In this way, the prayers serve as an introduction to the theme of the day’s readings.

Possible Uses

This book gives additional options for the Prayer of the Day. These prayers may also be used for concluding petitions in the Prayer of the Church (Prayers of Intercession or Prayers of the People) or may be used as closing prayers that fit thematically with the readings of the day.

A few prayers may appear to be repeated from lectionary years A to B, etc. Often there is a minor adjustment to make the prayers fit more directly with the readings for the day. In one instance, a prayer was used in a different lectionary year when the themes were similar.

The titles on each page correspond to the designations in the Revised Common Lectionary. The designations in square brackets, e. g. [Lectionary 6], correspond to the propers in Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELCA). The designations in square brackets also correspond with Sundays in Ordinary Time in Roman Catholic lectionaries. The designations in curly brackets e. g. {Pentecost 7} correspond to propers in older systems (ILCW). The older designations will not always fit with the dates, but most of the time there should be corresponding themes because of common Gospels.

“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” (Isaiah 40:8)

Paul C. Stratman, S. T. M.
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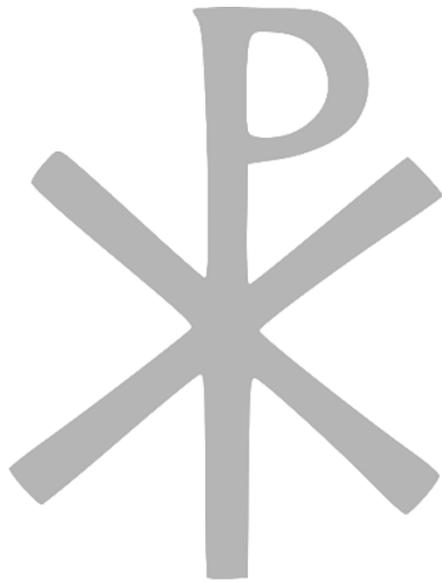
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First Sunday in Advent

When the theme is "See, your King comes to you!"

A

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself
when you appeared in human flesh at your first coming,
you humbly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey
when you brought your saving work to fulfillment,
and without fear or force,
you come to us in Word and Sacrament.
Fill our hearts with the joy and peace
that comes with your Word of promise,
that we may live secure in you;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [1]

BC

Lord Jesus Christ,
you humbled yourself
when you appeared in human flesh at your first coming,
you humbly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey
when you brought your saving work to fulfillment,
and without fear or force,
you come to us in Word and Sacrament.
Lift up our heads and open our hearts,
that you may come in, King of Glory.
You are the Lord, strong and mighty;
and you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [2]

First Sunday in Advent

A

Stir up your power, O Lord,
and come.

Keep us mindful of our present time
and watchful for the day of your return.

Clothe us with your armor of light
and keep us faithful to the end;

through your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns

with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. [3]

B

Stir up your power, O Lord,
and come.

Keep us watchful and ready
for the day and hour of your return.

Empower us with the gifts and strength we need,
and keep us faithful to the end;

through your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns

with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. [4]

C

Stir up your power, O Lord,
and come.

Keep us watchful and ready
for the signs of your return,
keep us from being overcome

with anxiety and sorrow,

and keep us faithful to the end;

through your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord,

who lives and reigns

with you and the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. [5]

Second Sunday in Advent

A

O God of hope,
give us endurance,
encouragement,
joy and peace.

Move us to repentance,
change our hearts with your eternal Word,
and dwell with us forever;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [6]

B

Lord Jesus Christ,
turn our hearts to you,
and enter.

Move us to repentance,
change our hearts with your eternal Word,
and dwell with us forever;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [7]

C

O Lord,
you send your messengers
that we may find you in your holy Word.
Help us grow in our knowledge of you,
take your Word to heart,
and straighten our crooked hearts
to live according to your commands;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [8]

Third Sunday in Advent

A

Stir up our hearts, O Lord.
Strengthen us,
open our eyes and ears
and fill us with joy that our Savior has come;
for he lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [9]

B

Stir up our hearts, O Lord,
to joy.
Lift up our heads from the dust
and adorn us with your righteousness,
that we may rejoice and testify that our Lord has come;
for he lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [10]

C

Lord Jesus Christ,
your coming moves us
to sing and shout with joy.
Remove all anxiety from our hearts,
that we live in joyful obedience
because you are near;
you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [11]

Fourth Sunday in Advent

A

O Lord,
you promised in your Holy Scriptures
to send your Son Jesus Christ as the Son of David,
and your own Son.

Reveal this saving promise also to us
and move our hearts to faith and obedience;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [12]

B

O Lord,
you have established your house and your kingdom forever
through your Son Jesus Christ.

Reveal your saving work and your holy love to us,
and move our hearts to faith and obedience;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [13]

C

Lord Jesus Christ,
you shepherd your flock,
this Christian church,
with strength and wisdom.

We rejoice that you are our Savior
and that your mercy has reached us.

Fill us with all good things,
that we may magnify your holy name;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [14]

Christmas Eve

ABC

O Lord,
you have filled this holy night
with the brightness of the true Light,
Jesus Christ.

You have revealed your peace and goodwill through him
and have given us blessed hope.

Increase our joy with that news
that a child is born to us,
a Son is given to us;
your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [15]

Christmas Day

ABC

Glorious Father,
you have revealed your glory,
your grace and your truth by sending your only Son
to become flesh and dwell among us.

Enlighten darkened hearts with this true light
that shines on everyone,
that all might hear, believe,
and receive the right
to become children of God;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [16]

First Sunday after Christmas

A

O God,
when Herod killed
the children of Bethlehem,
you saved your only Son from death,
so that later, by his death,
he would redeem the world,
and give us full rights as your children.
Help us realize this privilege and freedom,
and to live as your people all the days of our lives;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [17]

B

Gracious God,
you reveal your truth
to those who hear your Word.
Let us also see your salvation
prepared before the creation of the world,
but now revealed in your Son;
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [18]

C

God,
you bring us to glory
and have welcomed us into your family
through Jesus Christ.
Make us diligent to do our Father's business
in church, school, home,
and in our daily lives;
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [19]

Second Sunday after Christmas

A

We praise you,
O Lord our God,
for giving us every spiritual blessing
through your beloved Son.

Enlighten our hearts and minds
that we may shine as lights in this dark world,
to the praise of your glorious grace;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [20]

B

We praise you,
O Lord our God,
for fulfilling your holy law for us
through your beloved Son.
Free us from slavery to death and sin
and unite us in our faith in him;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [21]

C

We praise you,
O Lord our God,
for rescuing us from the dominion of darkness
and bringing us into your kingdom
through your beloved Son.
Show us your mercy
that we may serve you all our days;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [22]

The Epiphany of Our Lord

ABC

O Lord,
your glory shines on us
in your Son Jesus Christ.
You revealed your glory to all nations
and led the Wise Men to your Son with a star.
Reveal the unsearchable riches of Christ
to us in your Holy Word;
through your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [23]

First Sunday after the Epiphany (Baptism of Our Lord)

ABC

O Lord Jesus Christ,
in order to fulfill all righteousness,
you were baptized by John in the Jordan.
Clothe us with this same righteousness,
that as your baptized people,
we, too, may be called beloved children of your Father,
and because of you,
know he is well pleased with us;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [24]

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

[Lectionary (Ordinary) 2]

A

Lord Jesus, Lamb of God,
by your Word you have been revealed to us, your people.
Enlighten us by your Spirit,
enrich all our speaking and knowledge,
and keep us strong to the end;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [25]

B

Lord Jesus,
you have called us to follow you.
Keep our hearts and minds from everything false,
that we may stand firm and hold on to your teachings;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [26]

C

Lord Jesus,
you reveal your glory in your mighty words and works.
You strengthen us with the gifts of your Spirit.
Bind us together as your holy people
that we glorify you before the world;
for you live and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever. [27]

Contemporary Collects Arranged for the Historic Lectionary

Reference numbers with an 'A' added means that the collect was altered to better fit the themes in the Historic Lectionary readings for the day.

First Sunday in Advent

Lord Jesus Christ, you humbled yourself when you appeared in human flesh at your first coming, you humbly rode into Jerusalem on a donkey when you brought your saving work to fulfillment, and without fear or force, you come to us in Word and Sacrament. Fill our hearts with the joy and peace that comes with your Word of promise, that we may live secure in you; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [1]

Second Sunday in Advent

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Keep us watchful and ready for the signs of your return, keep us from being overcome with anxiety and sorrow, and keep us faithful to the end; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [5]

Third Sunday in Advent

Lord, you send your messengers that we may find you in your holy Word. Help us grow in our knowledge of you, take your Word to heart, and straighten our crooked hearts to live according to your commands; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [8]

Fourth Sunday in Advent

God of hope, give us endurance, encouragement, joy and peace. Move us to repentance, change our hearts with your eternal Word, and dwell with us forever; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [6]

Christmas Eve

O Lord, you have filled this holy night with the brightness of the true Light, Jesus Christ. You have revealed your peace and goodwill through him and have given us blessed hope. Increase our joy with that news that a child is born to us, a Son is given to us; your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [15]

Christmas Day

Glorious Father, you have revealed your glory, your grace and your truth by sending your only Son to become flesh and dwell among us. Enlighten darkened hearts with this true light that shines on everyone, that all might hear, believe, and receive the right to become children of God; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [16]

First Sunday after Christmas

Gracious God, you reveal your truth to those who hear your Word. Let us also see your salvation prepared before the creation of the world, but now revealed in your Son; Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [18]

Second Sunday after Christmas

O God, when Herod killed the children of Bethlehem, you saved your only Son from death, so that later, by his death, he would redeem the world and give us full rights as your children. Help us realize this privilege and freedom, and to live as your people all the days of our lives; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [17]

The Epiphany of Our Lord

O Lord, your glory shines on us in your Son Jesus Christ. You revealed your glory to all nations and led the Wise Men to your Son with a star. Reveal the unsearchable riches of Christ to us in your Holy Word; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [23]

First Sunday after the Epiphany

God, you bring us to glory and have welcomed us into your family through Jesus Christ. Make us diligent to do our Father's business in church, school, home, and in our daily lives; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [19]

Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Lord Jesus, you reveal your glory in your mighty words and works. You strengthen us with the gifts of your Spirit. Bind us together as your holy people that we glorify you before the world; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. [27]

Minor Festivals

Suggestions for usage of the prayers on minor festivals.

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Suggestions for usage of the prayers on special occasions

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