



Order of Worship

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 5th, 2021

Call to worship *(from Malachi 3:1)*

See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me,
and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple.

The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight —
indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.

Let us worship the Lord!

Let us worship the One who is coming!

Call to confession:

God calls us to “prepare the way of the Lord” and in order to do so we are to “make his paths straight.” While we do strive to do just these things, we often find curves and bumps in the road along the way. Let us confess our sin together so that God can help us continue to prepare the way going forward.

Prayer of confession *(from Luke 1:75 and Malachi 3:2)*

Holy and righteous God, far too often we are a far cry from the holiness you invite us into. And often we fail to live up to your righteous standards for how we are called to live. Refine us with your righteous refiner’s fire to remove all our sinful impulses and impurities. Cleanse us with the fullers’ soap to make us pure and holy once again. Help us to live in a way that would be pleasing to you, our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of pardon *(from James 5: 15-16)*

We are not perfect, but we do not need to be. God in Christ is!
And God in Christ has taken care of us and this world once again:
“Every valley shall be filled ... and the rough ways made smooth.”
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven and freed! May your ears hear this good news, and your eyes see the salvation of God!



Prayer for illumination

Holy, holy, holy God, just as your word came to John in the wilderness, send it once again to us now in this place. Speak to us your gospel message so that we may cry out with the good news once more. We love you, Lord. Amen.

Affirmation of faith (*from The Heidelberg Catechism*)

Q. 61. Why do you say that you are righteous by faith alone?

A. Not because I please God by virtue of the worthiness of my faith, but because the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ alone are my righteousness before God, and because I can accept it and make it mine in no other way than by faith alone.

Call for the offering (*Luke 1:68*)

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.” As blessed, redeemed, and favored people, may we share what we have been given so generously at this time.

Prayer of dedication (*from Philippians 1:4*)

Holy God, I thank you for these people. I thank you for this assembled body. And I thank you for their continued faithfulness. I find myself constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for each and every one of them because of their sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. Bless these our gifts and multiply them into your blessings! Amen.



Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

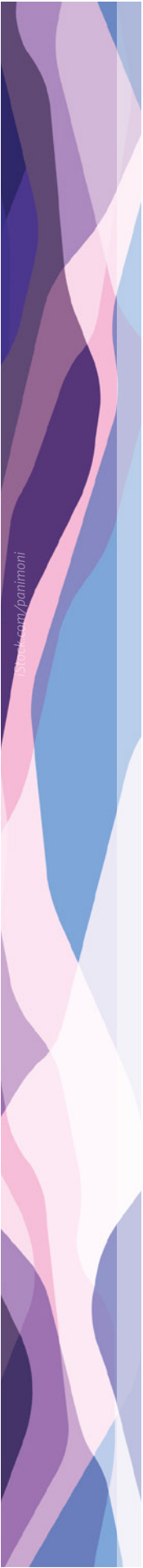
Eternal God, we rejoice that you claim us and behold us. We celebrate being your people and the ability to worship you. Thank you for all our blessings and freedoms that allow us to do just that. Enable us to fully and freely give our all to your glory today and tomorrow and forevermore.

God of love, your compassion for us still surprises us from time to time. It probably shouldn't because it's never changed, but it does. The undistracted attention that you show us and the title of beloved that you bestow upon us feel undeserved and unearned. Nonetheless, help us as we bask in their warmth once again today.

God of justice, we also know that much of what we do gets in the way of others feeling that warmth. Help us recognize and work eliminate the ways in which we participate in larger unhealthy systems of power in which we find ourselves. Enable us to see the world more and more through your eyes with clarity of heart and holiness of mind. Allow us to share in your good news for all.

God of now, we pray for all those who need to feel our prayers on this day. We pray for those who are sick needing strength and endurance. We pray for those who are confused needing guidance and direction. We pray for those who are hurt needing your soothing and healing touch. We pray for those who are experiencing loss needing the comfort and peace that only you can provide. We lift up to you those you place in our hearts and minds at this time ...

And now hear us as we boldly pray that great prayer of trust that you taught us. **"Our Father ..."**



Charge and benediction (*Luke 3:4-6*)

Cry out in the wilderness, cry out in our world:

“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

Now go. Go out. Go forth with the grace and peace of God our
Creator, our Redeemer and our Sustainer now and forevermore.
Amen.

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Liturgy written by Brian Coulter, pastor at
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