



## *Order of Worship*

4th Sunday of Advent

**December 19th, 2021**

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### **Call to worship** (*Luke 1:46*)

Leader: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

**People: With Mary, our spirits rejoice and we sing God's praise.**

Leader: Let us honor God with our worship this fourth Sunday of Advent.

### **Call to confession:**

The prophet Micah tells us that the "one of peace" will come from Bethlehem. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior, let us confess our sins and set ourselves on Christ's path.

### **Prayer of confession**

Soon we will celebrate the Prince of Peace, but we are not a people at peace. We glorify violence and dismiss the pacifist as weak. We dominate and demean in our conversations and relationships. We wage war with our enemies and invest in self-defense without careful regard of the consequences or exhausting non-violent strategies. Lord, forgive us. Help us work towards your peaceable kin-dom, where swords will be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Amen.

### **Assurance of pardon (Micah 5:4-5)**

"And he will stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord ... And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace."

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.



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## **Prayer for illumination**

Open us, Holy One, to your Word and your Way. As we make our final preparations before Christmas, clear our minds of holiday distractions and our long list of to-dos. Help us approach your Word with awe and wonder so that we may hear the message you intend for us today. Amen.

## **Scripture readings**

### **Sermon**

#### **Affirmation of faith** *(from the "Book of Common Worship")*

**Jesus Christ is the image of the invisible God,** Col. 1:15–20  
**the firstborn of all creation;**  
**in him all things in heaven and on earth were created,**  
**things visible and invisible.**  
**All things have been created through him and for him.**  
**He himself is before all things,**  
**and in him all things hold together.**  
**He is head of the body, the church;**  
**he is the beginning,**  
**the firstborn of the dead,**  
**so that he might come to have first place in everything.**  
**For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,**  
**and through him God was pleased to reconcile all things,**  
**whether on earth or in heaven,**  
**by making peace through the blood of his cross. Amen.**

### **Call for the offering**

In this season of generosity, let us remember  
from whom all our blessings flow.  
Let us present our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

### **Prayer of dedication**

Holy God, with Mary we seek to magnify you in our worship  
and in our deeds. Accept these gifts and bless them for Christ's  
ministry. May they lift the lowly and fill the hungry. May they  
reveal your glory present with us today and still yet to come.  
Amen.



### **Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer:**

Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Come to bring peace to those at war with themselves, their families, their enemies. May those who govern do so with good will and justice, breaking down barriers, fostering understanding, and drawing our communities and our nations together in peace.

Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Come to bring comfort to those in pain, those who grieve, those in need of healing and restoration. May those who suffer be assured of your extravagant grace and comforted by the hope that nothing shall separate them from your love.

Come, O Come, Emmanuel...

Come to bring compassion to those who are weak and weary, those who stumble through their days unable to recognize the beauty and meaning of life. May those who are unemployed, those who are struggling financially, those suffering under the crushing weight of debt, find your way out of no way. Grant them options, God. Grant them hope.

Come, O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O Root of Jesse, O Emmanuel. Come to us again this Christmas. Fill the world with your grace and peace.

Finally, hear us now, as we pray the prayer Christ taught us by saying together, **"Our Father ..."**



### **Charge and benediction**

Magnify God the Creator,  
Magnify God the Redeemer,  
Magnify God the Sustainer,  
in your life and the lives of others.

May God bless you, keep you, and encourage you  
this Sunday and forevermore. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott  
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