



Order of Worship

Advent 1A

November 27, 2022

Call to worship *(From Psalm 122)*

Leader: "I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

People: Our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Leader: Jerusalem — built as a city that is bound firmly together.

People: To it the tribes go up, and the tribes of the Lord, as was decreed for Israel, to give thanks to the name of the Lord.

Leader: Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you.

People: Peace be within your walls, and security within your towers."

Call to confession *(From Hebrews 4:14-16)*

Remember that our Lord Jesus can sympathize with us in our weakness, since in every respect he was tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with boldness approach the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in the time of need. Let us confess our sins against God and neighbor.

Prayer of confession

Holy God, remind us that you have formed us with your own hands, made us in your own image, and placed us in this world to be stewards of your good creation. Made for generous relationships, we have retreated into ourselves. Created for the purpose of making your goodness known, we allow lesser tasks to occupy our time. Forgive our failure to live in the way you made us to live. Renew within us the knowledge of your love so that we may live joyfully and gratefully, sharing what we have. For we pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who offered himself for us, and opens to us the way of eternal life.



Assurance of forgiveness

With the coming of Christ, God has given us the gift of forgiveness, even seventy times seven. God reaches out to offer us new life, a new day, a chance to begin again — loved and beautiful, even as on the first day of creation.

Believe the promise of the Gospel:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Prayer for illumination

Dear Lord, in the silence of our hearts, the listening of our ears, and the wisdom of our minds, may the word become Word for us, in Christ's name and by his power. Amen.

Scripture

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(From the Confession of 1967)*

In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows. He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all. The risen Christ is the Savior of all humanity. Those joined to him by faith are set right with God and commissioned to serve as his reconciling community. Christ is head of this community, the church, which begins with the apostles and continues through all generations.

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals his love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinners. The power of God's love to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of his love.

Call for the offering

We offer our individual gifts – our time, our talents, and our financial resources – to God; and those gifts become the church's gifts. And then the church offers them to the world. So with generous hearts, let us offer our gifts to the world.



Prayer of dedication

Just as Elisha took up Elijah's mantle, and the disciples took up the ministry of Jesus, their teacher, we present these gifts that through them the church may take up the mantle of Christ and proclaim his transformative Word to the world through acts of justice and love. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Gracious God, because we are not strong enough to pray as we should, you provide Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit to intercede for us in power. In this confidence, we ask you to accept our prayers.

We offer our gratitude for all your blessings and gifts as we pause to celebrate our national day of Thanksgiving. May we share of our bounty with those neighbors who have little.

We pray today for your creation. You entrusted the earth to the human race, yet we disrupt its wholeness with violence and corrupt its purity with our greed. Prevent us from destroying what you have made and called good, so that our children's children may inherit lands and seas brimming with life and beauty.

We pray today for the people of the world. Preserve the people of every nation from tyrants. Heal them of disease. Protect them in disaster and war and famine. We pray especially for the people of Ukraine, for the people of Russia, and for the people of Iran and Syria. Help all women, men and children walk in the ways that lead to peace.

We pray today for our city (town). Heal the rifts and fear caused by violence and racism in our streets and schools. Take away the violence and death wrought by guns. Turn our swords into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks. Protect all of our city's children and give them lives of safety, hope and joy.

We pray today for our country. Especially after our recent election, give wisdom to those who govern us, to our president and our congress, our state governments and our courts. Keep safe those who protect us from danger, and form us as a nation where justice flows like life-giving water.

We pray today for this church. Strengthen its leaders — its ministers, deacons, elders — sustain them and give them the energy of your Holy Spirit so that they may give others new life and hope. Be close to those in our community who are sick in body, heart or mind. We pray today especially for the newly baptized, that they may grow in the community of faith.

As we mark another season of Advent, remembering the One who came as our savior, let us remember too the kingdom he came to bring, the kingdom that we, as his disciples, are called to be partners in bringing.



Eternal God, your love is stronger than death. We rejoice in the lives of those who have died in faith.

Keep us in joyful communion with them until we join the saints of every nation gathered before your throne in ceaseless praise. We pray these things through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the mystery of the Holy Spirit, in the name of the Triune God. In the name of the One who taught us to pray, saying, **“Our Father...”**.

Charge and benediction

As you begin the journey of Advent, remember that you are partners with Christ in bringing in the realm of God, and that in the days of uncertainty as the world is transformed, be watchful and stay awake, remembering that Christ prays for you, and draws you into the very heart of God.

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and may God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, remain with you always. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Barbara Chaapel
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