



Order of Worship

1st Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024

Call to worship (based on Luke 21:25-28)

Christ is coming!

We see the signs!

Christ is coming!

We will be ready!

Christ is coming! Raise your heads because your redemption is drawing near!

Praise be to God! We will worship and prepare.

Call to confession

Preparing for Christ's coming requires honest examination of our lives and our hearts. Let us turn to God in prayer to confess our sins.

Prayer of confession

Prince of Peace, the wars and rumors of wars betray our addiction to violence, our destructive and dehumanizing ways. We deserve your judgement and condemnation. Yet, you remain faithful, a steadfast source of peace in the midst of our warring madness. Holy God, turn us from evil. Return us to Christ and his path of peace. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Amen.

Assurance of pardon (2 Corinthians 5:17; Book of Common Worship)

"Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old life has gone; a new life has begun."

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Savior God, guide us by your word and Spirit, that we might hear your truth, heed your call and be prepared for Christ's coming this Christmas. Amen.

Scripture readings



Sermon

Affirmation of faith (Romans 8:1, 28, 38, 39, Book of Common Worship)

**We believe there is no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus;
for we know that all things work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purpose.
We are convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers,
nor things present, nor things to come,
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.**

Call for the offering (2 Peter 3:8-15)

"All things in heaven and earth belong to God, who is coming in glory to reveal a new creation."

Let us present our tithes and offerings to the Lord.

Prayer of dedication

Christ calls us to live generous and grateful lives. Take these gifts we offer today, O God, and use them to the fulfillment of Christ's ministry. May these gifts help to free the captives, heal the sick, comfort the lonely, feed the hungry, heal the wounded. As Christ's hands and feet, use us too, in service to building your beloved community. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Christ is coming. He is coming to make all things new. Eternal God, during this season of Advent, help us prepare Christ's way, help us center our hearts, minds and prayers on your holy presence in our midst.

God of our salvation, **hear our prayers.**

As the days grow short and the nights loom long, we praise you for these seasonal reminders that there is time for work and for rest. For those of us who know warm homes and soft places to sleep, we give thanks for these precious gifts. We pray for those who are unhoused and those whose home is unsafe or financially insecure. May all your children get the rest they need to thrive.

God of our salvation, **hear our prayers.**

As divisiveness and conflict plague us and wars rage across the world, Holy God, we focus on the generosity, kindness and care you encourage within us. As we contemplate the vulnerability of Christ, born a fragile infant in a violent world, let us drop our facades and the masks of strength we hide behind. May this season of Advent prepare us to celebrate the strength that can be found in weakness and the power held in humility



and love.

God of our salvation, **hear our prayers.**

As your people gather in homes and churches to celebrate this season, let us be reminded of all the reasons we have to rejoice in you. Let us be reminded of your protective presence, of your gentleness and love, of your peace which passes all understanding. Guard our hearts and minds this Advent, Savior God, so we can rejoice over your faithfulness through Jesus Christ our Lord.

God of our salvation, **hear our prayers.**

As a people of faith, we lift these prayers to you, trusting you hear us and receive us. Finally, hear us now, as we pray the prayer Christ taught us by saying together, **“Our Father ...”**.

Charge and benediction

We do not leave this sanctuary and leave God behind.

God’s call to prepare our hearts, our minds, our communities and our world for the coming Christ, is clear.

May this call be ever before us; guiding us, inspiring us, enabling us to be Christ’s body – his hands, his feet, his heart – in this, God’s world.

May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott
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