

Order of Worship

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2024

Call to worship (Luke 2:10-11)

Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:

to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

Call to confession

The angels proclaim good news for all. Let us confess the sins that keep us from glorifying and enjoying our God.

Prayer of confession

Gracious God, you call us to celebrate, yet we struggle to find hope in the suffering and despair of our world. What reason is there to rejoice? We turn from each other and from you, questioning the power of love in the face of the world's cruelty and hate. Comfort your people, sovereign God. Return us to the faith born this night. Save us from hopelessness. May the promise and possibility of every newborn child remind us of the salvation we have in Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."
(Psalm 103:17) Know that you are forgiven and be at peace. Amen.

Prayer for illumination

Savior God, liberate us from the sins which distort our vision and disrupt our hearing as we approach your Word. Standing firm in your love, let us open ourselves to the truth you reveal to us today. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (Apostles' Creed)

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,**





**and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Call for the offering

In gratitude for the gift of Christ our Savior, let present our tithes and offerings to God.

Prayer of dedication

Emmanuel, in gratitude for the gift of your presence with and among us, we present these offerings to you. Accept and bless these gifts so that they might spread the joy of Christmas to others. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

God of Advent blessings and Christmas hope, we welcome the Christ child anew, grateful for all the ways you are present to us and with us.

As we read of angels appearing to the shepherds, proclaiming good news of great joy for all the people, we rejoice at the birth of our Savior. Christ gives us good reason to celebrate; the joy of Jesus' birth helps us resist despair, even in the face of harsh realities. We thank you, God, for the joys to be experienced this Christmas; for the delight of children, the beauty of decorated homes and sanctuaries, the comfort of delicious food, the exchange of gifts. Fill our hearts with joy, so we may overflow with love for your people.

Savior, you break into our lives this Christmas as the embodiment of good news for all people. Your love is all inclusive. Your table is wide and long and there is always room to pull up another chair. Your hospitality is inspiring. Help us love our neighbors as you love us. In a day full of discord and division, lead us in your path of peace and teach us to share your grace. Let us learn to welcome each other as our Savior welcomes every child, open to the possibilities that might be born through authentic, loving relationships.

O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O Root of Jesse, O Emmanuel, hear our prayers for 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. Hear our prayers for 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.

Emmanuel, as you come to us again this Christmas, may the light of your star illuminate the world with your grace and peace. May the miracle of your birth fill us with the faith necessary for the challenges ahead. May the hope of this precious day help us hope every day.

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

Charge and benediction (“Go, Tell It on the Mountain,” GTG #136)

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere; That Jesus Christ is born!

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

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