

COMMUNITY WORSHIP

Come, Let Us Adore Him: Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy
Fourth Sunday of Advent



SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Greetings

During this final week of Advent, we rejoice in the endless love that God has for us, which is made apparent in the birth of his Son. We reflect on the good news of God's love brought to us from the angel Gabriel.

First Reader: Perhaps there is no better example of love in action than Jesus Christ, God's one and only Son, born of a virgin, conceived through the power of the Holy Spirit. He is God incarnate, walking among us, come to hold us, come to look into our eyes, come to hold our trembling hands and to lift our weary heads. "Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

Community: God invites us to receive the promise of God's salvation and the sustenance of God's mercy and grace, enabling us to live the promise as God-bearers to the world. As Christ was born in Bethlehem, so too we answer God's invitation to have Christ born among us today and every day.

Second Reader: God is with us. And God is for us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life". God's gracious gift offered to each and every one of us in the person of Jesus Christ. This is God's love in action.

Community: Love in action can surprise us. Wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a humble manger, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the promised Messiah who would take away the sins of the world.

Reader 1: Love will rule and reign. "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"

Community: May we respond to His extravagant love today through confessing Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, turning away from sin, and living for Him.

Reader 2: Now as we light the candle of love we thank God for who he is. We praise him for his compassionate, gracious, and loving character and that he came to rescue us from our sins and grant us eternal life. At Christmas, we thank God that when he came to this world he didn't come shrouded by a cloud but fully revealed in a small baby boy named Jesus.

Light the fourth candle of the Advent wreath.¹

¹ <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/come-let-us-adore-him-advent-candle-lighting-liturgy-2024>

GATHERING IN PRAISE

+Opening Hymn “*Sleeper wake,*” *A Voice Astounds Us*

61 The Episcopal Hymnal 1982

+Call to Worship/Opening Acclamation

[remain standing, as able]

Presider: Blessed be God: most holy, glorious, and undivided Trinity.

Community: And blessed be God’s reign, now and forever. Amen.

+The Collect of the Day

[remain standing, as able]

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Community: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Oh Immanuel, God with us, truly in this Advent season we celebrate that you are not hidden in some faraway cloud, but you chose to be with us in the blur and mystery of our lives. In the midst of lists and rush, you are with us as a song that echoes in our minds, as the light of a candle, as a card from a friend. They are signs of your presence. We turn to you this season and pray that you will bring joy and healing, blessing and hope in us. Let something wonderful begin in us — something surprising and holy. May your hand be upon us. Let your love fill us. Let your joy overwhelm us. Let our longing for you be met on a coming holy night. Immanuel with us once again. Amen.²

GATHERING IN WORD & PROCLAMATION

Hebrew Scripture

Micah 5: 2-5a

Psalms of the day

Psalms 80: 1-7

Lector: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

Community: Thanks be to God.

New Testament reading

Hebrews 10: 5-10

Gradual Hymn *O, come, O come, Emmanuel*

56 The Hymnal 1982

+The Gospel-Luke 1: 39-45 (46-55)

[remain standing, as able]

Gospel reader: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to

Community: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

[this is what is said after the reading of the gospel]

Gospel reader: The Gospel of the lord.

Community: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Athem/special music presentation.

² Rev. Jerry Chism advent prayer: <https://www.umc.org/en/content/a-prayer-for-the-advent-season#:~:text=Advent>

Sermon

+The Nicene Creed

[spoken by all, stand as able]

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

+Intercession/Prayers of the People

[remain standing as able]

After each prayer, all are invited to respond: "Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer."

Made children and heirs of God's promise, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need. We pray for the church, that it is a safe haven for all who seek your presence. Fill it with pastors, deacons, and leaders who echo your expansive and generous welcome.
Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for the whole of creation, that plants and animals have the habitat and resources to thrive and flourish. Inspire us to protect threatened habitats and ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Lord, in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

We pray for individuals in positions of authority. Raise up wise and discerning leaders in federal, state, and local governments and guide them to seek the benefit of every person. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. We pray for all who are in need. Support and encourage those who are unemployed, underemployed, or experiencing poverty. Bring food, shelter, clothes, and stability for daily life.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

We pray for this community, especially those who have begun their studies. Empower lecturers and members of staff and administrators. Guide students in their learning and development. Accompany parents, guardians and foster parents who provide encouragement and love.

Lord, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

Let us pray for the needs of others and for ourselves. We remember those we know who are sick or in need . . .

[intercessions may be offered here]

We remember those we know who have died and those who mourn . . .

[intercessions may be offered here]

We ask you to bless the work of members of this community to care for others, especially this week for . . .and with grateful hearts, we celebrate the blessings in our lives ...

[intercessions may be offered here]

Receive these prayers, O God, and those in our hearts known only to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GATHERING AT THE TABLE

Confession and Absolution

[kneel or stand as able]

Presider: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God,

We confess that we have sinned against you

in thought, word, and deed,

by what we have done,

and by what we have left undone.

We have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.

**For the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Presider: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

+The Peace

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

Community: And also with you.

During the Sharing of the Peace, the Communion Stewards will join the Presider at the table to the north of the communion table to wash their hands. They will remain on the side as the Presider returns to the table to proceed with the Communion liturgy.

Hymn *Lo, He comes, with clouds descending*

58 The Hymnal 1983

THE HOLY COMMUNION

+The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer B

Presider: The Lord be with you.

Community: And also with you.

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

Community: We lift them to the Lord.

presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Community: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The presider proceeds:

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth. For by water and the Holy Spirit you have made us a new people in Jesus Christ our Lord, to show forth your glory in all the world. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy

#2257-b TFWS

The Presider continues: [remain standing, as able]

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and

above all in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. For in these last days, you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In Christ, you have delivered us from evil and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

Presider may hold hands over the bread, or touch or lift the bread.

On the night before he died for us, our Savior Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Presider may hold hands over the cup, or touch or lift the cup.

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

We remember Christ's death,

We proclaim Christ's resurrection,

We await Christ's coming in glory.

The presider continues. Presider may raise hands.

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior of all, presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through whom we are acceptable to you, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children, through Jesus Christ our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and forever. AMEN.

AMEN

Amen

#2257-d TFWS

+The Lord's Prayer

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray the Lord's Prayer in the language of your choosing.

+The Breaking of the Bread

Presider: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Community: Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

+Sharing the Bread and Cup

This is the table, not of the Church but of Jesus Christ. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you who have little; you who have been here often, and you who have not been here for a long time or ever before; you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, not because the Church invites you; it is Christ, and he invites you to meet him here.

- THE IONA INVITATION

Communion Hymn

Creator of the stars of the night

60 The Hymnal 1982

+The Post Communion Prayer

[spoken by all, remain standing, as able]

Presider: Let us pray.

Eternal God,

you have graciously accepted us as living members

of our Savior Jesus Christ,

and you have fed us with spiritual food

in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.

Send us and these gifts we bring to the world in peace

and grant us strength and courage

to love and serve you

with gladness and singleness of heart;

through Christ our Savior. Amen.

+The Blessing

[stand as able]

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

+Last Hymn

Prepare the way, O Zion

65 The hymnal 1982

[sung by all, stand as able]

Dismissal

Presider: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit

Community: Thanks be to God. ³

³ Today's service uses the ASB Episcopal Church's authorized expansive language for the Holy Eucharist: Rite Two. Today's readings are from fourth Sunday of Advent.

+ stand as able

Liturgy designed by Rev. Dr. John Chawarika.