

Guide for Home Worship

December 20, 2020

Opening Prayer

(select someone from your group to open your service in prayer)

Call to Worship

Isaiah 52:7-10 (ESV)

LEADER: How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.”

CONGREGATION: *The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion.*

LEADER: Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem.

ALL: *The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*

Songs and Liturgy

(sing as a group and/or sing along to recorded versions)

COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

(Charles Wesley, 1744)

Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Joy to those who long to see thee,
Dayspring from on high appear;
Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse,
Of Thy birth we long to hear!
O’er the hills the angels singing news,
Glad tidings of a birth;
“Go to Him, your praises bringing;
Christ the Lord has come to earth.”

Come to earth to taste our sadness,
He whose glories knew no end;
By His life He brings us gladness,
Our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
Born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder,
Christ was born the Lord of all.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious Kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

SCRIPTURE READING: Psalm 89:19-26 (ESV)

¹⁹ Of old you spoke in a vision to your godly one, and said:

“I have granted help to one who is mighty;
I have exalted one chosen from the people.

²⁰ I have found David, my servant;
with my holy oil I have anointed him,

²¹ so that my hand shall be established with him;
my arm also shall strengthen him.

²² The enemy shall not outwit him;
the wicked shall not humble him.

²³ I will crush his foes before him
and strike down those who hate him.

²⁴ My faithfulness and my steadfast love shall be with him,
and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

²⁵ I will set his hand on the sea
and his right hand on the rivers.

²⁶ He shall cry to me, ‘You are my Father,
my God, and the Rock of my salvation.’

Advent Reading

(If you would like to follow along with the Advent Readings – with or without candles – you can do so by reading the Advent Explanation and this week’s Advent Readings below. You may find an Advent wreath diagram [here](#).)

A Word of Explanation:

For many centuries Christians have used the Advent Wreath to remember and celebrate the coming of Christ. The word advent simply means “coming” or “arrival”. With the Advent Wreath, we celebrate not only the birth of Christ 2000 years ago, but also our rebirth in Him through faith. And we look forward with anxious anticipation toward his Second Advent for us.

Week 4 Readings:

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is

going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God.”

“I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May it be to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

Candle Instructions (optional)

As you light the first and second purple candles, the third pink candle, and the final purple candle, say *“This candle reminds us of the promise of joy through the coming King, the Prince of Peace.”*

Sing (a cappella)

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

(Latin Hymn, trans. John M. Neale. Music by Thomas Helmore)

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come
And open wide our heav’nly home
Where all Thy saints with Thee shall dwell –
O come, O come, Emmanuel!
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel!
Shall come to thee, O Israel.
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Prayer Time

(You may have an open time of prayer or select someone to pray)

- Pray for our nation – that the good news of Jesus Christ would draw people to know God genuinely and personally.
- Pray for those suffering from the ongoing spread of the coronavirus.
- Pray for those experiencing racial injustices; specifically, that God would bring hope, reconciliation, and restoration through the good news of His Son.
- Pray for those in authority at every level in our country, that they would govern wisely and justly.

Listen to Sermon

“Knowing God in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ”

preached by Pastor Ryan Bouton

Romans 8:22-23, Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:10-18 (ESV)

Romans 8

²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. ²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Hebrews 1

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Hebrews 2

¹⁰ For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. ¹¹ For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers, ¹² saying, “I will tell of your name to my brothers; in the midst of the congregation I will sing your praise.”

¹³ And again,

“I will put my trust in him.”

And again,

“Behold, I and the children God has given me.”

¹⁴ Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. ¹⁶ For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Confession of Faith

adapted from the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) Question 49

LEADER: How does Christ’s ascension to heaven benefit us?

CONGREGATION: *First, he is our advocate in heaven in the presence of his Father.*

Second, we have our own flesh in heaven as a sure pledge that Christ our head will also take us, his members, up to himself.

Third, he sends his Spirit to us on earth as a corresponding pledge. By the Spirit’s power we seek not earthly things but the things above, where Christ is, sitting at God’s right hand.

Song of Response

JOY TO THE WORLD

(Isaac Watts, 1719)

Joy to the world! The Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.

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Benediction

(The leader or individual should read this aloud relishing in the confident assertion that Christ has conquered.)

Luke 12:29-32

LEADER: Do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

PEOPLE: *Amen!*