

Year A; Fourth Sunday of Advent
Liturgical Elements
Developed for December 18, 2022
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Isaiah 7:10-16
- Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
- Romans 1:1-7
- Matthew 1:18-25

CALL TO WORSHIP (*from Matthew 1*)

One: The birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way.

All: When his mother had been engaged to Joseph and before they lived together,

One: she was found to be with child —

All: child of the Holy Spirit.

One: Wanting not to expose Mary to public disgrace,

All: Joseph planned to dismiss her quietly.

One: Just as he resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,

All: “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife,

One: for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

All: She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

One: When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the Lord commanded him,

All: All this took place to fulfill prophecy.

One: When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the Lord commanded him, he took Mary as his wife,

**All: and he named the son Jesus also known as Emmanuel — God with us.
Let us worship God who saves and God with us!**

CALL TO CONFESSION (*from Mathew 1*)

Jesus, the Greek form of Joshua, meaning savior offers salvation to those who commit to him. Also known as Emmanuel, he is God with us having lived as God in human form — walking as we walk and struggling as we struggle. Let us confess our sins to one who knows us, has come to save us, and is God with us. Let us pray.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(from Isaiah 7)*

Merciful God, King Ahaz demonstrates a false humility in claiming he would not put the LORD to the test when the LORD offers to build his faith in showing him a sign. When no such offer is given to us, O LORD, we may call out asking for a sign in order to keep faith. We hide our true intentions and motivations from others and believe, at times, we can hide the same from you. Forgive our dishonesty, and grow us in honesty and authenticity. We pray this in the name of Jesus, the Messiah, our savior and our Lord. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from Romans 1)*

God promised Jesus through the prophets in the Hebrew scriptures. He is Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead. He has offered grace and a calling to each of his people. Follow his calling, live in his ways, and trust in the forgiveness won by him through his suffering on the cross. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(from Matthew 1)*

Almighty and loving God, through your love you chose to come in Jesus Christ through humility. Conceived of the Holy Spirit, you were born to an unwed couple of very meager means. Through your angels, you guided them that they might have your assurance. Through Jesus Christ, you became savior to humankind and God with us — Emmanuel. With thanksgiving, we offer these gifts as a portion of what you have offered us and enabled us to collect. May your kingdom come into its fullness and soon. Amen.

Elements in this document are based on the *New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). Some portions are direct quotes; though, quotation marks and designations are usually left out for ease of use in bulletins and other worship resources. Usually, the Call to Worship is based upon the Psalm of the day and follows that Psalm very closely but modifying it for a leader vs. congregation responsive setting if necessary. Other elements usually deviate more significantly from the text. While they may quote very short sections, they are generally written in the theme of the text. Elements usually designate the book and chapter from which they are derived.

New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.



Portions not from the *NRSV* are licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

For all other uses or cases, © Copyright 2022, Andrew Smothers, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.