

Year A; First Sunday after Christmas
Liturgical Elements
Developed for January 1, 2023
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Isaiah 63:7-9
- Psalm 148
- Hebrews 2:10-18
- Matthew 2:13-23

CALL TO WORSHIP (*from Psalm 148*)

One: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

All: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

One: Praise him, sun and moon, shining stars, highest heavens, you waters above the heavens!

All: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created.

One: He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

All: Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

One: Praise the Lord mountains and hills, fruit trees and all cedars, wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

All: Praise the Lord kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth, young men and women alike, old and young together!

One: Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

All: He has raised a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for his people who are close to him. Praise and worship the Lord!

CALL TO CONFESSION (*from Psalm 148*)

The Psalmist calls on all creation to give praise to God for his power in creation. The Lord merely commanded, and they were created. Let us confess when we have not given God our due praise, attention, and awe.

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*from Psalm 148; John 1*)

Creator God, humanity over many millennia has been able to accomplish many things, but we can regularly take too much credit. You merely command, and it is created. You start with nothing to make all that is; we merely fashion new items from material you have created. Forgive our arrogance, and receive our praise. Forgive our lack of attention, and find us turning to you. Forgive our lack of awe, and remind us of the limits of our capabilities. We pray this in the name of the one through whom all things came into being and without whom not one thing came into being, our Lord Jesus. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (*from Hebrews 2*)

The author of Hebrews teaches that Jesus is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters. Through his suffering, the pioneer of our salvation was made perfect. We who are being sanctified and Jesus who sanctifies have one Father. Trust in the mercy of God and in his Son. May his sanctifying work make you perfect in all things and ready you for the Kingdom of Heaven. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*from Isaiah 63*)

You, O God, have done many gracious and praiseworthy deeds. You have shown us your mercy through the abundance you provide us and through your steadfast love. You did not send a messenger or angel to rescue us, but you, yourself, became our savior. You redeemed us through your love and your pity. In thankfulness, we offer these gifts from your abundance. Guide our church leaders to invest them wisely. 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.

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