

Year B; Christmas Eve
Liturgical Elements
Developed for December 24, 2023
Prepared by Pastor Andy Smothers

Lectionary Texts

- Isaiah 9:2-7
- Psalm 96:1-13
- Titus 2:11-14
- Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

CALL TO WORSHIP (*from Psalm 96*)

One: O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.

All: Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.

One: Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.

All: For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.

One: For all gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.

All: Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

One: Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

All: Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.

One: Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.

All: Let us worship God!

CALL TO WORSHIP *(from Isaiah 9)*

One: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.

All: You, LORD, have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

One: For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

All: For all the boots of the trampling warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

One: For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders;

All: and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

One: His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom.

All: He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. Let us worship God!

CALL TO CONFESSION *(from Psalm 96)*

The Psalmist writes, “All the gods of the peoples are idols, but he LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.” Let us confess when we have trusted in other things before God.

SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

CORPORATE PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(from Psalm 96; Luke 2)*

God of mercy, you came into this world in Jesus the Messiah making yourself known to the world. We, though, put our faith in other things before we put our faith in you. What we create in our minds and people and institutions in our world are no match for your honor and majesty and power. Help us to trust in you first for you know us — you can seek out our hearts and minds but have also come as one of us. You came into our world not with the majesty and honor you deserved but as a tiny baby from a poor and vulnerable family and under an oppressed state. Form us in your image that we might trust in you, Mighty God and Everlasting Father. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON *(from Titus 2)*

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly. Let us live into our calling and trust in the salvation brought to us in Jesus Christ. Friends, hear and believe this good news.

All: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(from Luke 2)*

Almighty God, though we were created in your image, you are so unlike us. You are holy and just, grace-filled, merciful, patient, wise, everywhere-present, all-powerful, glorious, spiritual, and loving. You had every reason to separate yourself from us due to our sinfulness and unlikeness. You, though, chose to seek us in coming as one of us in Jesus Christ. You came as a tiny, human infant with all the vulnerability of a baby and that of a family of limited means and power. In so doing, you demonstrated how we could live for others. With thanksgiving, we offer these gifts. Help us to bless your world as you intend with what we give today and what you provide us in all our days. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION *(alternate, from Luke 2)*

Gracious God, you looked upon your creation and despite our sinfulness, you desired reconciliation. Though, we had wronged you, you wanted to draw us back. Rather than coming in power and might, you chose to come as one of us — as a baby in a manger. You experienced a birth like ours and a life like ours — even perhaps a life more meager. With our thanksgiving, we offer these offerings that all may know your incredible gift to humankind. We pray this in the name of the one who came that first Christmas and reigns in power today, Jesus, Emmanuel. 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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