

# 2015 Advent – Getting Ready

## GATHERING



## ENTRANCE

## CANDLE LIGHTING

## REFLECTION

Perhaps the hardest thing to remember about Christmas is this. It celebrates the incarnation, not just the nativity. The incarnation is an on-going process of salvation, while the nativity is the once-for-all-historical event of Bethlehem. We do not really celebrate Christ's 'birthday,' remembering something that happened long ago. We celebrate the stupendous fact of the incarnation, God entering our world so thoroughly that nothing has been the same since.

Sourcebook, 1996, Liturgy Training Publication

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Holy God, the world around us  
prepares to celebrate your birth.

People: We celebrate the incredible power  
of your ongoing incarnation.

Leader: Holy Jesus,  
you entered our world as flesh and blood.

People: We gather in your presence with praise and joy.

Leader: Holy Spirit,  
you came into our midst to transform all of  
creation.

All: We are getting ready  
to celebrate our amazing redemption.

## OPENING PRAYER

## HYMN

## WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

**SILENCE**

**PRAYERS**

**CONFESSION**

Leader: Holy Mystery, you came to earth as one of us,

sharing our joys and pains,

becoming flesh in our midst,

getting us ready to bear the good news.

People: We want presents and decorations,

sentimental stories and cheap grace,

instead of allowing you to become flesh in us.

Leader: You call us to get the world ready,

to put an end to war and oppression and violence,

to bring in your reign of justice and peace.

People: We want you to stay in the past,

dressing up in robes and crowns and shepherds' crooks,

instead of making room for you in our lives today.

Leader: You became flesh and walked among us,

teaching us how to love,

teaching us how to forgive.

All: Forgive us when we forget that the baby  
in the manger  
  
is just the beginning of the story  
about the holy one who lived and died,  
and lives again in us as the Body of  
Christ.

#### INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

##### ASSURANCE

Leader: Christ is ready in every  
moment,  
  
to transform us and all of  
creation.

We are forgiven and loved  
so that we may transform  
the world.

All: Amen.

##### THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

##### INTERCESSION AND PETITION

##### COMMITMENT

All: O Holy One, we come today  
to claim our relationship  
with you.

We pray for the commitment  
to grow together,  
sharing the gifts you give  
us with others

world. here and in the wider

Forgive us for the hurt we  
have inflicted,  
and help us forgive those  
who have hurt us.

Give us strength and discipline  
to nurture our relationship with  
you;  
to care for every part of your  
creation;  
to foster justice and be in  
solidarity with those in need;  
to work to end all war, and  
violence, and discord;  
and to respond joyfully when you  
call,  
freely giving our selves as you  
have shown the way.

We open our hearts to you  
and your creation  
in the name of Jesus, who  
is the Christ. Amen.

## **HYMN**

## **THE WORD**

## **SCRIPTURE**

## **SERMON**

## **SILENT REFLECTION**

## **OFFERING**

## COMMUNION

### PREPARATION

Leader 1: This is the table of the Heavenly Feast,  
the joyful celebration of the people of God.

Leader 2: We gather now as one body, joined around the  
table.

Here we celebrate God's presence among us  
united in Christ's spirit, broken and whole all at  
once;

All: Nourished and hungry, loved and loving,  
sinner and forgiven; we make one circle of  
knowing,  
believing, rejoicing, being,  
as God lights and rests among us.

### GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader 1: Holy Maker of all that is,  
we offer gratitude for the world that  
you have made  
and for its magnificent complexity.

People: We give you thanks for your Holy Spirit,  
our comforter in the chaos,  
our guide to the peace within.

Leader 2: We give you thanks for your Holy Child,  
Jesus,  
who through his life, death, and  
resurrection  
showed us the way to peace.

People: We give you thanks for your Holy Church,  
the bearer of your message,  
the fragile vessel of your peace.

### BLESSING THE ELEMENTS

Leader 1: Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of  
life,  
to drink the cup of the new covenant.

Leader 2: Jesus said, I am the bread of life.

You who come to me shall never hunger,  
You who believe in me shall never thirst.

Leader 1: On the night of his arrest, Jesus took bread,  
and after giving thanks to God, broke  
it and said,  
This is my body,  
broken for the healing of the world.  
Whenever you eat it, do so remembering me.

Leader 2: After supper, Jesus took the cup and said,  
This is the cup of the new covenant,  
poured out for you and for all.  
Whenever you drink it, do so remembering me.

All: O Holy One, send down your Spirit  
that these gifts of bread and cup  
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.  
Unite us with Christ forever  
and bring us with the whole creation  
to your eternal realm.

### SHARE THE ELEMENTS

If you do not wish to receive the elements today you are welcome to join the circle and allow them  
to pass, or remain in your seat. We serve grape juice in our cups.

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

All: God of abundance and mercy,  
we give joyful thanks  
for your eternal love and healing presence  
in our celebration of bread and cup.  
Bless this body of Christ  
that we may attend faithfully  
to our call to be your servants,  
with each other and throughout the world.

All: Amen.

### SHARED REFLECTIONS

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

### HYMN

### BENEDICTION

Leader:  
midst,  
  
commitment  
  
Christ:  
  
voices,  
  
world  
  
and justice  
  
inclusive ways,  
  
with signs of peace.  
All:

As God becomes flesh in our  
  
let us celebrate our  
  
to be part of the Body of  
  
hands and feet, hearts and  
  
welcoming all who come.  
As we go out into the  
  
daring to work for peace  
  
in ever more creative,  
  
let us greet one another  
  
Amen.