

A Suggested Order for a Neighborhood Christmas Service

ENTRANCE

Leader: Christ the Savior is born!

People: Come, let us adore him!

Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful"

1. O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;

Refrain:

O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2. True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten not created;
(Refrain)
3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest;
(Refrain)
4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be all glory given.
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
(Refrain)

Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-4, 6-7 (KJV)

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased its joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil. For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: And his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Hymn: Joy to the World, The Lord Is Come

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing.
2. Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy.

3. 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 the curse is found.

4. 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 of his love.

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14 (KJV)

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Reflection/Sharing: The Joys and Promise of Christmas

Say: "Today, the feelings of Christmas are often located in joys of family and friends, and perhaps joys of sharing gifts as well."

Ask: "What do you find joyous about this season?"

Say: "The Scriptures for this day promise much more. Listen to these words again."

Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:

*they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,
upon them hath the light shined.*

Thou hast multiplied the nation, and increased its joy:

*they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest,
and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.*

Ask: "What reasons for joy do these Scriptures suggest? How are you seeing signs of these joys in the world around you? How do you identify these joys, too, with the promise of Christmas?"

Prayers of the People:

For all who have walked in darkness and seen the great light,

Glory to God in the highest.

For all who still walk in darkness because of poverty, violence, abuse, war, disasters, discrimination and all forms of sin:

(pause to add names, silently or aloud)

Peace, good will toward all.

For all who have been set free from captivity to tyrants, traffickers, addictions, and every form of enslavement,

(pause to add names, silently or aloud)

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!

For all who still await a harvest of freedom, power and love:

(pause to add names, silently or aloud)

Make your blessing known far as the curse is found.

For all who care for the sick, the prisoners, the poor, and the grieving,

(pause to add names, silently or aloud)

Glory to the newborn King!

For all who are sick or in prison, all who are needy, and all who weep this night:

(pause to add names, silently or aloud)

Rise with healing in your wings!

We offer our thanks and our prayers in the name of Christ, the newborn King, who has taught us to pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn: Hark, The Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"
2. Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th' incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

Sending:

Christ the Savior is born.

Go in peace, rejoicing in the good news.

Christ the Savior is born.

Thanks be to God!