

Order of Worship

Second Sunday of Advent
December 10, 2023

Call to worship (Isaiah 40:1-5)

Comfort, O comfort my people!

We welcome God's tender words to us today.

Prepare the way for your God!

We gather for worship to prepare ourselves for Christ's coming.

Christ is coming! The glory of God will be revealed!

Thanks be to God for this good news!

Call to Confession

God promises forgiveness through Jesus Christ. On this second Sunday of Advent, let us approach God in humility and faith.

Prayer of confession

Eternal God, John the Baptist prepares the way by calling upon us to repent. We have failed to share as we should. We have failed to honor the poor and the oppressed. We have failed to bear fruit worthy of your salvation. Have mercy upon us, God. Heal and forgive us so we can welcome Christ with pure and genuine hearts. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon (Isaiah 12:3-4)

With joy, let us draw water from the springs of salvation. Give thanks to the Lord! Call on God's name.

Prayer for illumination

Open us, Holy One, to your Word and your way. Clear our minds of holiday distractions and busy tasks. Fill our hearts with the humility we need to hear and receive the message you intend for us today. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon



Affirmation of faith (Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,

and in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell;
the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost;
the holy catholic church;
the communion of saints;
the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body;
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Call for the offering

With joy and gratitude for all we have been given, let us offer our tithes and gifts to God.

Prayer of dedication

Gracious God, accept these gifts in grateful response for your generosity. May these gifts bring joy to those most in need of Christ's mission and ministry. Amen.

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Eternal God, the one who comes, and the one with the power to break through our darkness and despair, the one who risks being born into a broken world, we give you thanks for the hope this Advent provides. Help us repent and return to you to prepare our hearts to receive Christ this Christmas. Help us straighten our paths, fill our valleys, and make our rough places smooth. Help us turn to you in prayer for comfort and strength.

Almighty God, who taught us to pray not only for ourselves but for people everywhere, hear us as we pray now for others, in the name of Jesus Christ.

In your mercy, Creator God, hear our prayers for the hurting; for innocent civilians trapped in the horrors of war; for those longing for safety and shelter; for the sick and wounded; for refugees living in exile, for the poor and the oppressed.

In your mercy, Loving God, hear our prayers for those in our community who are in need of more support; for those who feel alienated or es-



tranged; for those navigating life alone and lonely; for those who feel exhausted and weak; for those who feel overwhelmed and suffer in silence.

In your mercy, Communal God, hear our prayers for our friends and family members; for those who are sick and their caregivers; for those who are grieving and missing loved ones during the holidays; for those who are distracted and frazzled; for those who cannot hear the whisper of your angels' wings amidst the busy chaos of their lives.

As the Body of Christ and a community of faith we lift these prayers up to you, Holy God. Comfort your people. Strengthen us with your love. May our faith build bridges of welcome to all who are wandering this Advent.

Hear us now as we pray the prayer Christ taught us saying, **“Our Father...”**.

Charge and benediction

We do not leave this sanctuary and leave God behind.

God's call is clear. We are to prepare our hearts, minds, communities and world for our Prince of Peace.

May this call be ever before us; guiding us, inspiring us, enabling us to be Christ's body – his hands, his feet, his heart – in this, God's world.

May the grace, hope, peace, and love of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Teri McDowell Ott and provided for free distribution.

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