

An Order of Worship for Christmas Eve



Adapted for the use of lay Worship Leaders and Deacons, from An Order of Worship for the Evening, The Book of Common Prayer 1979, p. 109 and following. Christmas hymns are found in The Hymnal 1982 from Hymn 77 to Hymn 115.

The church is dark, or partially so, when the service is to begin.

All stand, and the Officiant greets the people with these words.

Opening Greeting

Officiant Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Short Lesson of Scripture

John 1:1-5

Reader In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

The Prayer for Light

Officiant Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

*The candles at the Altar are now lighted, as are other candles and lamps,
including electric lights, as may be convenient.*

Lighting of the Candles

Hymn 83

During the candle-lighting, Hymn 83 "O come, all ye faithful" or some other Christmas hymn may be sung, or silence kept. There may be a procession, including a Station at the Christmas Creche, during this hymn.

After the candle-lighting, a hymn is then sung

Hymn 96

Hymn 96 "Angels we have heard on high" or some other Christmas hymn suitable.

The people sit for the psalm and readings. The Lessons appointed are from Christmas Day – selecting either Christmas I, II, or III, found on pages 889-890 in The Book of Common Prayer 1979.

The Psalm

One or two Lessons are then read, the Reader first saying

A Reading (Lesson) from_____.

A citation giving chapter and verse may be added.

After each Reading, the Reader may say

The word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

or the Reader may say Here ends the Reading (Epistle).

Silence may follow each Reading. A Christmas hymn may follow each Reading.

The Gospel reading (either Luke or John) is read, using the language above to introduce and conclude the reading. The people remain seated.

The Prayers

Officiant or Deacon

As we join the angels and celebrate with joy the birth of the Son of God, let us offer prayers to God who gives new birth to sons and daughters in every place.

Leader By the birth of the timeless Son of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For Carlye our bishop and the presbyters, for the deacons and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For all believers who put their trust in the incarnate Son of God.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For the leaders of the nations and all in authority, and for peace and justice.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For the conversion of the whole human race to our blessed Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, for those in prison, and for the dying and the dead.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader For our deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need.

People Glory and praise to you, O living God.

Leader Remembering our most glorious and blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

People To you, O Lord our God.

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant

Let us pray in the words our Savior has taught us.

Officiant and People

Our Father . . .

Hymn

“Silent Night”

Hymn 111

The Collect of the Day

One of the Christmas Day Collects is prayed, page 211-212 of The Book of Common Prayer 1979.

The Blessing and Dismissal

A deacon or lay person may use the following prayer for blessing, which substitutes "us" for "you" from the traditional blessing.

The Lord bless us and keep us. *Amen.*

The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. *Amen.*

The Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace. *Amen.*

A dismissal may be used, the People responding

Thanks be to God.

The Peace may then be exchanged.