

Christmas Eve Worship for Episcopal Churches without Clergy (Without Communion)

The Hymns selected in this service may be changed as desired. If candles are used, they should be lighted before the Opening Hymn. The worship leaders and acolytes may process to the front during the Opening Hymn, or the leaders may begin from the front of the church.

Opening Hymn or Song: 83 “O come, all ye faithful”

The people standing, the Licensed Minister says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Minister then says:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our
hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

All join in saying the following hymn

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect of the Day

The Minister says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Minister Let us pray.

The Minister says the Collect for Christmas

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

The Lessons

The people sit

A Reading (Lesson) from The Old Testament . Isaiah 9:2-7

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. You 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. 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. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;

authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace

for the throne of David and his kingdom.
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.

After the Reading, the Reader may say

The word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Silence may follow

The Psalm is read together

Psalm 96

Cantate Domino

1 Sing to the Lord a new song; *
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

2 Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; *
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the nations *
and his wonders among all peoples.

4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *
he is more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.

6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!

7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; *
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.

9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; *
let the whole earth tremble before him.

10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King! *
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; *
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the Lord when he comes, *
when he comes to judge the earth.

13 He will judge the world with righteousness *
and the peoples with his truth.

A Reading (Lesson) from The New Testament: Titus 2:11-14

For 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, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

After the Reading, the Reader may say

The word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Hymn or song: 79 "O little town of Bethlehem"

Then the Minister reads the Gospel, first saying

A Reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Luke 2:1-14-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her

firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

After the reading, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord
Christ.

A Reflection on the Gospel

Here the Minister may lead a simple Gospel Based Discipleship discussion of the Christmas Gospel, or may simply tell the congregation what word or phrase stood out for him or her and what the minister thought the Christmas Story was saying to him or her in that word or phrase. Or the minister may simply invite the people to sit silently for a period to think about the Gospel.

Then is said, all standing

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
 he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
 he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
 and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
 he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
 in accordance with the Scriptures;
 he ascended into heaven
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
 and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
 who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
 and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

The Minister introduces the Prayers of the People saying:
Let us pray.

The Leader and People pray responsively

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and
humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
*That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and
Sacraments.*

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations
of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.
Silence

The Minister concludes with this prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles, "Peace I give to
you; my own peace I leave with you." Regard not our sins,
but the faith of your Church, and give to us the peace and
unity of that heavenly City, where with the Father and the
Holy Spirit you live and reign, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Peace

All stand. The Celebrant says to the people
The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: And also with you.

The Offering

The Minister says:
In the joy of Christmas, let us with gladness present our offerings to the Lord.

The people are invited to give their offerings. A person assigned collects the offerings

Hymn during the Offering: 87 "Hark! the herald angels sing"

At the end of the hymn, the offerings are brought forward and placed on the altar while all sing
the Doxology ("Praise God from whom all blessings flow....")

The Lord's Prayer

The Minister then says:

And now, as our Savior
Christ has taught us,
we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

The Minister may conclude the service by saying:

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Closing hymn: 100 “Joy to the world!”

An Elder, Chief, or the Worship Leader says

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

The service ends with the following dismissal

Merry Christmas! Let us bless the Lord.
People: *Thanks be to God. Merry Christmas*