

New Year's Eve Prayer Service

(Non-Eucharistic)



Concerning the Service

General Instructions and preparation

While it is preferable for a Licensed Worship Leader to lead this service, any member or members of the congregation may serve as the Leader. There may be more than one person serving as Leader with portions of the service assigned to each individual.

Music (hymns, chiligs, or songs) should be selected from local resources and familiar to the community. This is a Christmastide service, so Christmas hymns are especially appropriate, but any joyful hymns may be used.

*If desired, the service begins with the church dark, or partially so (for example, half the lights on), any candles used for the celebration are left unlit until after the "Prayer for Light." The Leader(s) should assign an Acolyte or other individuals to light the candles or turn on any lights that were off at the beginning of the service. If it is not practical to have the church dark, the **Service of Light** may be limited to the lighting of a single candle or may said without the lighting of any candles.*

The Service of Light

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

Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

The following Lesson of Scripture may then be read

Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one lights a lamp to put it under a bucket, but on a lamp-stand where it gives light for everyone in the house. And you, like the lamp, must shed light among your fellow men, so that they may see the deed you do, and give glory to your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16

The Leader then says the Prayer for Light first saying

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 as may be convenient. During the lighting of the candles, the following is said (if no candles are used, the congregation still joins in saying the Phos hilaron)

O Gracious Light Phos hilaron

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

Hymn/Chilig: A hymn or song is sung. Christmas Hymns are appropriate.

The Lessons

First Reading: *A person assigned reads the following lesson*

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15: A Season for all Things

3 There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:

2 a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,
3 a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,
4 a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,
5 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,
6 a time to search and a time to give up,
a time to keep and a time to throw away,
7 a time to tear and a time to mend,
a time to be silent and a time to speak,
8 a time to love and a time to hate,
a time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What do workers gain from their toil? ¹⁰I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race. ¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet^[a] no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end. ¹²I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. ¹³That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God. ¹⁴I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that people will fear him.

¹⁵Whatever is has already been,
and what will be has been before;
and God will call the past to account

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: *Thanks be to God*

After the lesson the Leader says:

Leader: Let us pray (Silence)

In your wisdom, O Lord our God, you have made all things, and have allotted to each of us the days of our life: Grant that we may live in your presence, be guided by you Holy Spirit, and offer all our works to your honor and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Hymn/Chilig: A hymn or song is sung. Christmas Hymns are appropriate

Second Reading: *A person assigned reads the following*

2 Corinthians 5:17-6:2: The Acceptable Time

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin^[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

6 As God's co-workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ² For he says,

“In the time of my favor I heard you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you.”^[c]

I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: *Thanks be to God*

After the lesson the Leader says:

Leader: Let us pray (Silence)

Most gracious and merciful God, you have reconciled us to yourself through Jesus Christ your Son, and called us to new life in him: Grant that we, who begin this year in his Name, may complete it to his honor and glory; who lives and reigns now and for ever. *Amen.*

The following Psalm is said. All together.

Psalm 95:1-7

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Third Reading: *A person assigned reads the following*

Revelation 21:1-14, 22-24 : A New Heaven and a New Earth

21 Then I saw “a new heaven and a new earth,”^[a] for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death,^[b] or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.”

⁵ He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”

⁶ He said to me: “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. ⁷ Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. ⁸ But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

⁹ One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” ¹⁰ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. ¹¹ It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹² It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. ¹³ There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. ¹⁴ The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb

²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God

After the lesson the Leader says:

Leader: Let us pray (Silence)

Almighty and merciful God, through your well beloved Son Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, you have willed to make all things new: Grant that we may be renewed by your Holy Spirit, and may come at last to that heavenly country where your people hunger and thirst no more, and the tears are wiped away from every eye; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Hymn/Chilig: A joyful song is sung.

The Prayers

An Act of Self-Dedication:

The Leader introduces the Act of Self-Dedication with these words:

Leader: As we begin this New Year, let us with hope and faith ask for forgiveness or our sins and rededicate ourselves to God, trusting in His mercy and grace throughout the New Year.

Let us confess our sins to God.

Leader and People

Almighty God, our heavenly Father:

We have sinned against you,
through our own fault,
in thought, and word, and deed,
and in what we have left undone.

For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ,
forgive us all our offenses;
and grant that we may serve you
in newness of life,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Leader then says:

May the Almighty God grant us forgiveness of all our sins,
and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

The Leader then invites the congregation to join in the Prayer of Self-Dedication with these words:

Leader: Let us offer together a prayer of Self-Dedication

All join in saying the following prayer:

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray you, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

A General Thanksgiving

Leader: Now let us offer our prayers of Thanksgiving for the blessing of the year that is ended and in hope for the New Year beginning.

All join in saying the following prayer:

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. *Amen.*

Individual Petitions

Leader: I invite your prayer concerns silently or aloud

Time is giving for people to offer their prayer concerns and needs. The Prayers conclude with the Lord's Prayer, the Leader saying:

Leader: And now let us gather all our prayers together in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, saying:

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 Dismissal

The congregation joins in saying the following benediction, the Leader fist saying

Leader: As we welcome this New Year with joy, let us remember that God gives us all that we need.

The Leader and people then say:

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:
Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever.
Amen.

Leader: Let us Bless the Lord throughout the New Year!

People: *Thanks be to God!*

Hymn/Chilig: A joyful song is sung and the people dance out of the church and into the New Year.