



CLOSE to
HOME

CHOSEN HOME

An At-Home Liturgy for the
First Sunday After Christmas

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed

We invite you to implement this liturgy as-is, or adapt it for your context.

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INTRO

Each congregation, like each family, has different rhythms and rituals around the holidays. In an effort to help carve out meaningful space for reflection and prayer during a busy holiday season, we offer you this at-home liturgy. Use it in the comfort of your own home, or adapt it for a communal worship space. Regardless of where you worship, God will be there.

SUPPLIES

- Advent wreath or candle
- Lighter or matches
- Bible
- Blank piece of paper or a journal
- A computer or phone to play music (from Spotify)
- Pen or pencil
- Optional: a stationery note card

1. SET THE SPACE

In the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, take a moment to create a space for calm. Light the candles in your Advent wreath. If you don't have an Advent wreath, light a candle. Pour a cup of tea. Play some Christmas music in the background. Turn off the TV and silence your phone. Breathe deeply. Allow this place to become holy ground.

Tips for Children

- Invite your kids to have a hands-on role in this liturgy by having them collect the supplies from around the house, lighting the candles, turning off distractions, etc.
- Before you begin the liturgy, invite your children to create a special place for you all to sit and reflect. They can make a comfortable fort out of pillows for you to sit on the floor, or gather all the supplies needed around the table!

2. OPENING PRAYER

One common psychological practice for clearing our mind and opening space in our hearts is to write a “brain dump.” In a brain dump, you write down everything that’s on your mind: to-do lists, concerns, worries, things that pop into your subconscious—anything that might distract or pull you away from the here and now.

You might play a Christmas song from the *Barnaby Bright* Christmas album, “Bleak Midwinter.”¹ You can also cue up the Sanctified Art Close to Home playlist on Spotify: spotify.com/playlist/3Y40ddQ745btYzMIPUnpUL?si=f300e74d1ca54d6c.

Choose a song, and as the music plays, commit to writing down your brain dump prayer until the song ends. If you run out of things to write, give yourself space to listen, and trust that more ideas will come.

Tips for Children

Encourage kids to draw what they’re thinking and feeling instead of writing, if that feels easier. There’s no wrong way to pray.

When the song is over, put your pencil down and pray the following words:

Holy God,
Even here,
even now,
you are with me.
And so I pray—
hover over this swirl of words that make up a prayer.
Read between the lines.
See what weighs heavy on me.
Know what distracts,
and carry it all.
I am giving it to you.
I am clearing out space.
I am opening myself up
to draw closer to your home.
Gratefully I pray,
Amen.

¹ You can listen to *Barnaby Bright*’s 2020 Christmas album on Spotify here: spotify.com/album/5uPP3JDIfqPDvuNBAXASDk?si=VrUZnfM6QSKdzXcs8jeASw&dl_branch=1.