



Liturgy for Worship for Christmas Eve or Christmas Season

WRITTEN BY SARAH ARE

You are welcome to use or adapt this for your worship liturgy (with credit).

Feel free to adjust lines for different numbers of speakers.

Bulletin Poem or Opening Meditation¹

LOVE DRAWN HERE

I know love's real,
for I have felt it in my bones
the way cold air finds my lungs
and music finds my memories—
certainly and entirely.

And I know winter is real,
for I have worn grief like a blanket—

A blanket of what once was,
covering my bony elbows
and forgotten smile lines.

Somewhere in between
those certain realities,
I find myself wishing on shooting stars
and wondering if they were the same ones
that Jesus slept under.

I find myself whistling,
“O come, O come, Emmanuel,”
followed shortly by, “All is calm, all is bright.”

¹ This is the poem printed in our “Love Drawn Here” Christmas poem foldable. We encourage you to provide copies of the foldable to children (or adults) who wish to color the illustrated poem throughout the service.

CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY

Reader A: The life of faith is often a dance—two steps forward and one step back.

Reader B: A child is born—

Reader A: Two steps forward.

Reader B: We fall in love—

Reader A: Two steps forward.

Reader B: Love falls apart—

Reader A: One step back.

Reader B: We finally get sober—

Reader A: Two steps forward.

Reader B: We are affirmed in our sense of call—

Reader A: Two steps forward.

Reader B: Tragedy and hatred strike again—

Reader A: One step back.

Reader B: In this crazy thing called life, it can often feel as if we are dancing alone—but that could not be further from the truth. Through the ups and the downs, we are held by the Creator, led by the Spirit, and surrounded by the love of Christ.

Reader A: With every step we take toward God, God has already drawn toward us. No matter how far we might roam—no matter where we might go—God's love is forever near.

Reader B: So tonight we light the Christ candle as a reminder that so many years ago, a child was born—and that child was love, and that love is here today.

Reader A: The Word of God was made flesh, and dwells among us. Thanks be to God for a love like that, a love forever in pursuit of you and me.

Reader B: Two steps forward. No steps back. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

The angels appeared to broken and flawed people so many years ago, to shepherds, a carpenter, and an ordinary teenage girl.

They were ordinary people like you and me who made mistakes and were in need of God's good grace. Fortunately for them and for us, the good news of the Gospel is for the broken and the trying.

Family of God, join your voices with mine in this communal prayer of confession, as we open ourselves to receive God's grace. Let us pray:

PRAYER FOR DEDICATION AFTER THE OFFERING

Source of Love—

They gave you gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Gold, because gold is for Kings.

Frankincense, because frankincense was a scent for the gods.

And myrrh, because even though you were divine, you were also human, and myrrh was the oil of death.

We do not have gold, frankincense or myrrh here tonight, so today we give you our time, our hearts, our talents, and our money. We give you what we can. We give our praise, and our promise to try and be the best people we can be, and still you deserve so much more.

So we pray—

Take these gifts, use them for your good, and mold in us more generous hearts.

Gratefully we pray, Amen.

COMMUNION LITURGY

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

God has always been in the habit of taking ordinary things and turning them into extraordinary testaments of God's love.

First it was a teenage girl who became God's mother, and a manger that became God's bed.

Then there were shepherds in the field who became the first believers, and stars in the sky that became the first church steeples.

God has always been in the business of taking ordinary things and making them extraordinary reminders of God's love.

Tonight, we come to this ordinary table with ordinary bread and cup, trusting that God will be here, for God has always been here.

So come.

Come with your heart on your sleeve.

Come with your hopes and your fears, your dreams and your prayers.

Come with your doubt and your anger, your joy and your faith.

Come—bringing all of who you are.

For God was there in the beginning of creation. God was there that silent night so many years ago, and God is here with us now.

You are in the presence of a love that knows no limits and cannot help but to draw near.

So come. This meal is for you.