



CENTRAL  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

ORDER OF WORSHIP

# PREPARATION

**December 1, 2024**  
**First Sunday of Advent**

## WORDS FOR REFLECTION

“It is not enough to ‘proclaim Jesus.’ For there are many different Jesuses being presented today. According to the New Testament gospel, however, he is historical (he really lived, died, rose, and ascended in the arena of history), theological (his life, death, resurrection, and ascension all having saving significance), and contemporary (he lives and reigns to bestow salvation on those who respond to him). Thus the apostles told the same story of Jesus at three levels—as historical event (witnessed by their own eyes), as having theological significance (interpreted by the Scriptures), and as contemporary message (confronting men and women with the necessity of decision). We have the same responsibility today to tell the story of Jesus as fact, doctrine, and gospel.”

—N.T. WRIGHT

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came among us in great humility; that on the last day, when he comes again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

## THE COMMON LECTIONARY READINGS

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33:14-16

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

## PRELUDE

### Instrumental Prelude

*Caroline Drexler*

### Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Cecil F. Alexander

Lo! he comes with clouds descending,  
Once for favored sinners slain;  
Thousand, thousand saints attending  
Swell the triumph of his train.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
God appears on earth to reign.

Ev'ry eye shall now behold him,  
Robed in dreadful majesty;  
Those who set at naught and sold him,  
Pierced, and nailed him to the tree,  
Deeply wailing, deeply wailing,  
Shall the true Messiah see.

Ev'ry island, sea, and mountain,  
Heav'n and earth, shall flee away;  
All who hate him must, confounded,  
Hear the trump proclaim the day:  
Come to judgment! Come to judgment!  
Come to judgment, come away!

Now Redemption, long expected,  
See in solemn pomp appear!  
All his saints, by man rejected,  
Now shall meet him in the air.  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
See the day of God appear!

Yea, amen! let all adore thee,  
High on thine eternal throne;  
Savior, take the pow'r and glory,  
Claim the kingdom for thine own.  
O come quickly, O come quickly;  
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come.

## **HYMN**

### **O Come, O Come Emmanuel**

Traditional English

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel.  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

## **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**

# CALL TO WORSHIP

## Isaiah 2:1-5

**LEADER** It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say:

**PEOPLE** **“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”**

**LEADER** For out of Zion shall go the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples;

**PEOPLE** **And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD.**

# HYMN

## O Come, O Come Emmanuel (continued)

Traditional English

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
Our spirits by Thine advent here;  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,  
And order all things far and nigh;  
To us the path of knowledge show,  
And cause us in her ways to go.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind  
All peoples in one heart and mind.  
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;  
Fill the whole world with Heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel.

## **PRAYER OF PREPARATION**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, 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.

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Lord, have mercy on us. We are not ready for your coming. We live in sin, as though there were no justice. We live in fear, as though there were no grace. Forgive us, Lord. Show us your mercy and steadfast love. Lead us in your truth, and teach us your paths, for you are the God of our salvation. Amen.

## **SILENT CONFESSION**



# WORDS OF ASSURANCE

## Isaiah 40:1

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Tell her that her sad days are gone and her sins are pardoned.

LEADER        Hear and receive the good news of the gospel:  
                  in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

ALL            **Thanks be to God!**

## PASSING OF THE PEACE

LEADER        The peace of the Lord be with you always.

ALL            **And also with you.**

# HYMN

## Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Traditional French Carol

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly-minded,  
For with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
Our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
As of old on earth he stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
In the body and the blood;  
He will give to all the faithful  
His own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven  
Spreads its vanguard on the way,  
As the Light of light descendeth  
From the realms of endless day,  
That the powers of hell may vanish  
As the darkness clears away.

# PROFESSION OF FAITH

## 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.

## PRAYER WITH CHILDREN

*All preschool and elementary age children are invited to the front of the church and will be dismissed to Children's Church with their teachers where they will read, sing, learn, and play in an environment suited to their language and style. Alternatively, children are always welcome to remain in the sanctuary to worship alongside the adults for the duration of the service.*

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*We regularly pray for needs in our congregation, our neighborhood and city, and the world. Please submit prayer requests to [centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest](https://centralchurchnyc.org/prayerrequest).*

## OFFERING

*If you are our guest today, please feel no obligation to give. For members and regular attenders of Central, give generously as you are able. We give because all we have has been graciously given to us by God. Our offerings express our joyful dependence upon God and our commitment to join God in his work of renewal.*

*You can give online by texting **centralchurchnyc** to **833-737-6262** or visiting [centralchurchnyc.org/give](https://centralchurchnyc.org/give).*

# OFFERTORY

## Come For Us

Cameron Keith · David Zimmer · Jon Althoff · Lacy Hudson

You made us sinless, reflecting Your image.  
All that we needed You gave us in Eden.  
We went astray. Death was the wage we earned.

Under the law You had given to bless us,  
We were enslaved and increasingly restless.  
When will You come? Lord, how we ache for You.

*Sent from heaven our Messiah,  
Lord, hear our prayer and come for us.*

Born of a virgin, You came in our likeness,  
Loving the sinner in mercy and kindness,  
Dying our death, giving us life again.

Now You have made us Your sons and Your daughters.  
Knowing Your goodness, we call You our Father.  
All that we need, given in Jesus.

*Sent from heaven, our Messiah,  
You heard our prayer and came for us.*

By Your Spirit we cry out.  
Abba Father, hear us now.

*Come from heaven, our Messiah,  
Lord, hear our prayer and come for us.*

# THE DOXOLOGY

Old Hundredth LM

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.  
Amen.

## SCRIPTURE READING

### Mark 1:1-11

The passage can be found on page 836 of the pew Bible.

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

<sup>2</sup>As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,  
who will prepare your way,

<sup>3</sup>the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,’”

<sup>4</sup>John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

## SERMON

### *How Not to Be a Heretic* | How Not to Be an Adoptionist

Rev. Andrew Smith

# THE THANKSGIVING

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

LEADER It is indeed right, our duty and joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Lord, holy Father, Almighty and Everlasting God.

## PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

We do not presume to come to this, your Table, O Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but solely in your great mercy. We are not worthy to gather up the crumbs under your Table, but you are the same Lord who always delights in showing mercy. Grant us, therefore gracious Lord, that we who now receive these gifts of bread and wine, according to our Savior's Word, may share in the body and blood of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, that we may dwell in him forever and he in us. Amen.

## WORDS OF INSTITUTION



# CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

## **Prayer for Those Searching for Truth**

Lord Jesus Christ, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

## **Prayer of Belief**

Lord Jesus Christ, I acknowledge that you are so holy and I am so sinful that you had to die for me. Yet you are so merciful and I am so loved that you were willing to die for me. I confess that I have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed by what I have done and by what I have failed to do. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

## **Prayer of Commitment**

Lord Jesus, I know that if I do not love you with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength, I shall love something else with all my heart and mind and soul and strength. Grant that by loving you first I may be liberated from all lesser loves and loyalties and have you as my first love, my chief good, and my final joy. Amen.

*Communion is served with wine and gluten-free bread.  
Individually wrapped wafers and grape juice are available at  
each station.*

# COMMUNION HYMN

## O Come All Ye Faithful (His Name Shall Be)

Passion Music

O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant.  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem.  
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels.  
*O come let us adore Him,*  
*O come let us adore Him,*  
*O come let us adore Him,*  
*Christ the Lord.*

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation.  
Sing all ye citizens of heav'n above.  
Glory to God, glory in the highest. *Chorus*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning.  
Jesus to Thee be all glory giv'n.  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing. *Chorus*

His name shall be wonderful, Counselor.  
His name shall be everlasting Father.  
His name shall be Prince of Peace, mighty God.  
His name shall be Emmanuel.

*We'll praise Your name forever.*  
*We'll praise Your name forever.*  
*We'll praise Your name forever.*  
*Christ, the Lord!*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors,  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever,  
Amen.

## BENEDICTION

*We begin our worship with God's gracious invitation, and we conclude with God's blessing, his good Word. It is appropriate to look up and open our palms as we receive the Benediction to symbolize how Jesus Christ lifts our heads and to demonstrate our eagerness to receive God's blessing.*

## DISMISSAL

LEADER            Let us go forth to serve the world as those who  
                         love our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

ALL                **Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

*Members of our prayer team will be available immediately following the service at the front of the sanctuary to pray confidentially for you about any need or concern you might have. We encourage you to avail yourself of this opportunity to receive prayer. ☺*