

FAMILY WORSHIP FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

The following is a time of worship especially designed for families to do together on Christmas morning. This is a terrific way for families to celebrate the birth of our Savior and remember the wonderful gift that makes Christmas a reality. The purpose of this guide is to carve out a time on Christmas Day so that the family may worship Christ the King. For instance, you may use it as the family is gathered around the breakfast table; before or after presents are opened; when you gather together with other family members; or even before retiring to bed for the evening. Make sure to print enough copies so that everyone can participate. As part of the celebration we have provided a candle kit so you can make a Christmas worship candle. Simple directions. Let your kids decorate the pail. Encourage them to use themes, images, words, and ideas that picture the true meaning of Christmas. Then fill the bottom with sand, put the candle in, and light. Use the candle as a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world.



To God be the glory alone!

Opening prayer - From the Valley of Vision, Puritan Prayers

“Herein is power;
when Deity and humanity were infinitely apart
He united them in indissoluble unity,
the uncreated and the created,

Herein is wisdom;
when I was undone, with no will to return to Him,

and no intellect to devise recovery,
He came, God-incarnate, to save me to the uttermost,

as a man to die my death,
to shed satisfying blood on my behalf,
to work out a perfect righteousness me.
O God, take me in spirit to the watchful shepherds,
and enlarge my mind;

let me hear good tidings of great joy,
and hearing, believe, rejoice, praise,
adore...

Place me with ox, ass, camel, goat,
to look with them upon my Redeemer's face,
and in Him account myself delivered from sin."i
--a Puritan prayer

RESPONSIVE READING

from Isaiah 9:2-7

Father/husband: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

Family: You have multiplied the nation; You have increased its joy; they rejoice before You as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

Father/husband: For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

Family: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Father/husband: Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will do this.

Carol - O Come All Ye Faithful (sing together)

Words: John Francis Wade, c.1710-1786

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;

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning:
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, late in flesh appearing!

*O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

Scripture - Micah 5:2-5 (ESV)

*This passage was written about 700-800 years before Jesus was born predicting the location of Jesus' birth and the beauty of his ministry.

2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

5 And he shall be their peace. When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men;

Carol - O Little Town of Bethlehem

Words: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

O holy child of Bethlehem! descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Immanuel

RESPONSIVE READING

Mother/Wife: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them,

Family: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Mother/wife: And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

Family: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

PRAYER - The Mystery of the Incarnation

(adapted from *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, 8.2)

O Lord,
We praise You, the Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being the eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father. When the fullness of time was come, You took upon Yourself human nature, with our essential

properties and common weaknesses, yet You knew no sin. You were conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the virgin Mary. The two natures— God and man—were perfect, whole, and distinct. They were inseparably joined together in one person, without fusion or combination. You are very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator, only Savior, and only Redeemer— Christ Jesus our Lord.
Amen! Amen!

Carol - Joy to the World

Words: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

Joy to the World! The Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
*And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.*

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns:
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
*Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
*Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found!*

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
*And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.*