

PREPARATION

Luke 1:68-79; Malachi 3:1-4 // A Worship Service for Advent

This worship gathering focuses on making room for Christ in all events of our life. Here are some materials to get you started creating your own worship service.

MAIN THEME: *How do we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ?*

CHOOSING MUSIC // FOR SINGING

- 🎵 **Light of the World** [Key of G]
Text and Music: Lauren Daigle, Paul Duncan, Paul Mabury
© 2013 Centricity Music, Paul Duncan Pub Designee, Sony-ATV Timber Publishing (SESAC)
- 🎵 **O Come O Come Emmanuel** [Key of E]
Public Domain
- 🎵 **Hope is Drawing** [Key of E]
Text and Music: Aaron Keyes, Johnny Parks, Matt Maher, and Michael Gungor
© 2010 spiritandsong.com, Thankyou Music, worshiptogether.com songs (Admin. by Capitol CMG Publishing)
- 🎵 **This I Believe (The Creed)** [Key of E]
Text and Music: Ben Fielding and Matt Crocker
© 2014 Hillsong Music Publishing

CREATING DRAMA // FOR HEARING

Try a video like “**The Waiting**” by Work of the People [www.theworkofthepeople.com] Let it serve as a way to encounter scripture and reflect on its themes.

Lectio divina is an ancient Christian practice that invites us to hear the scripture passage multiple times for the purpose of reflection. Use it this week to hear scripture. We’ve created a leader’s script using *Lectio divina* for Luke 1:68-79.

Leader Script // Luke 1:68-79 // Lectio Divina

To reflect on our scripture passage, we will use Lectio divina, an ancient Christian practice that invites us to hear the scripture passage multiple times for the purpose of reflection. As you prepare to hear the scripture passage, get into a comfortable position, close your eyes, and listen to the whole passage as a unit. I’ll leave a few moments of silence after each reading. On the second reading, begin to listen for a word or group of words that shimmer or draw you in. On the third reading, allow yourself to focus on a word or group of words, then begin to think about what God might be wanting to say to you through those group of words.

A reading from the gospel of Luke.

Close your eyes and listen to the passage and take in the passage as a whole unit. Begin to listen for a phrase or particular part of the passage that stands out to you.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us[a] from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Provide a few moments of silence, then say:

A reading from the gospel of Luke.

Begin to listen for a word or group of words that shimmer or draw you in.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
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whereby the sunrise shall visit us[a] from on high
to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Provide a few moments of silence, then say:

A reading from the gospel of Luke.

Allow yourself to focus on the word or words that stood out to you. Thank about what that might mean to you right now, in your present circumstance. What is God saying to you through them?

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
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to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Invite worshipers to share with their neighbor what God might be saying to them through the scripture passage. Conclude by singing a song that relates to the scripture passage.

FINDING ART // FOR SEEING

Find art that uses prominently the deep purple to further connect the themes of Advent to visual sign. We like these works by Julie Quinn.



LIVING WORSHIP // FOR DOING

School's about to end. Holiday schedules are almost in full swing. This week, encourage worshipers to use these schedule changes as a changes to set aside a time to serve a local mission with friends and family.

We think this is a great opportunity to work as a community of all ages. We're big advocates of that, and you'll understand why after you see Brad Griffin of the Fuller Youth Institute talk about that in the Green Room video that we produced. You can find it on our website.

MAKING SPACE // FOR WORSHIPPING

Deep purple and royal blue are colors of the Advent season. This week, have this color spread throughout the worship space.

WRITING POETRY// FOR PRAYING

As a way of praying, put worshipers in small groups and ask them to reflect on the question, "What are you preparing for?" After each person shares, invite them to write prayers asking God to keep them mindful of making room for Christ in their preparations. You might end this time by voicing a prayer of preparation such as this one from our friends in the Presbyterian Church.

Holy God, you send messengers of good news to prepare the way for your glorious realm. Anoint us with your Spirit to proclaim your Word so that all may repent and believe in you; through Jesus Christ, our way in the wilderness.

SAMPLE WORSHIP SERVICE

Preparation // Luke 1:68-79; Malachi 3:1-4 // A Worship Service for Advent

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

Use the song below to gather. Between the song and the Call to Worship, remind worshipers the significance of the Advent wreath and its role in worship this month. Then, light the second candle of the wreath.

GATHERING SONG

Wait for the Lord

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me.

All: **Then suddenly, the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple.** (Malachi 3:1)

Wait for the Lord (reprise)

SONGS OF PREPARATION

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

PRAYER OF PREPARATION

SONG OF HOPE

Hope is Dawning

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:68-79

Use our online resource to treat this scripture reading as a *lectio divina*. This will give worshipers the chance to hear the scripture and reflect on it.

MESSAGE

TIME OF RESPONSE

At the end of the message, put worshipers in small groups and ask them to reflect on the question, “What are you preparing for?” After each person shares, invite them to write prayers asking God to keep them mindful of making room for Christ in their preparations. End this time by voicing a prayer of preparation such as this one from the Presbyterian Church:

God, you send messengers of good news to prepare the way for your glorious realm. Anoint us with your Spirit to proclaim your Word so that all may repent and believe in you; through Jesus Christ, our way in the wilderness.

SONG OF BELIEF

This I Believe (The Creed)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

One: In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

One: We pray for all people in their daily life and work;

All: **For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.**

One: We pray for this community, the nation, and the world;

All: **For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

One: We pray for the just and proper use of your creation;

All: **For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

One: We pray for all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

All: **For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.**

One: We pray for the peace and unity of the Church of God;

All: **For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the truth.**

One: We pray for our pastors and staff;

All: **For all who serve God in the Church.**

One: We pray for the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence

One: Hear us, Lord;

All: For your mercy is great.

One: We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence

One: We will exalt you, O God our King;

All: And praise your Name for ever and ever.

Amen.

adapt. Episcopal Book of Common Prayer

SONG OF FAITH

This I Believe (The Creed) (chorus only)

BENEDICTION

One: May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)

All: Amen.