

OPENING SONG

Leader: The Angels of God guard us through the night.

People: and quieten the powers of darkness.

Leader: The Spirit of God be our guide

People: to lead us to peace and to glory.

Leader: It is but lost labor that we haste to rise up early,
and so late take rest, and eat the bread of anxiety.
For those beloved of God are given gifts even while they sleep.

Silence

Leader: My sisters and brothers, our help is in the name of the eternal God,

People: who is making the heavens and the earth.

Leader: Dear God,
thank you for all that is good,
for our creation and for our humanity,
for the stewardship you have given us of this planet earth,
for the gifts of life and of one another,
for your love which is unbounded and eternal.

O thou, most holy and beloved,
my Companion, my Guide upon the way,
my bright evening star.

We repent the wrongs we have done:

Silence

Leader: We have wounded your love.

People: O God, heal us.

Leader: We stumble in the darkness.

People: Light of the world transfigure us.

Leader: We forget that we are your home.

People: Spirit of God, dwell in us.

Leader: Eternal Spirit, living God,
in whom we live and move and have our being,
all that we are, have been, and shall be is known to you,
to the very secret of our hearts
and all that rises to trouble us.
Living flame burn into us,
cleansing wind, blow through us,
fountain of water, well up within us,
that we may love and praise in deed and in truth.

INVOCATION

Leader: Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips

People: that our mouths may proclaim your praise.

Leader: Let us worship the God of love.

People: Amen. Amen.

Psalm: An Advent Poem *by Mary Oliver*

Leader: Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice – it is the season of their
many children.

**People: What shall I do? And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances – but it the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do?**

Leader: And the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat holds the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door.

**People: And I still believe you will come, Lord;
you will, when I speak to the fox,
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
that I am really speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.**

A READING FROM THE PROPHET ISAIAH

**Reader: That you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the
mountains would quake at your presence – as when fire kindles
brushwood and the fire causes water to boil – to make your name known
to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down,
the mountains quaked at your presence. From ages past no one has
heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who
works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right,
those who remember you in your ways**

HYMN: A PRAYER BY DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Leader: God of the day and of the night, in me there is darkness, but with you there is light. I am alone, but you will not leave me. I am weak, but you will come to my help. I am restless, but you are my peace. I am in haste, but you are the God of infinite patience. I am confused and lost, but you but you are eternal wisdom and you direct my path; now and forever.

People: Amen.

Leader: Into your hands, O God, I commend my spirit,

People: For you have redeemed me, O God of truth and love.

Leader: Keep me, O God, as the apple of Your eye;

People: hide me under the shadow of your wings.

ANTIPHON

**People: Preserve us, O God, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ,
and asleep may rest in your peace.**

SONG OF SIMEON

**People: Praise be to God, I have lived to see this day.
God's promise is fulfilled, and my duty done.**

**At last you have given me peace,
for I have seen with my own eyes
the salvation you have prepared for all nations -
a light to the world in its darkness,
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory be to God, sustaining, redeeming, sanctifying,
as in the beginning, so now, and forever.
Amen.**

Leader: God, have mercy.

People: Christ, have mercy.

Leader: God, have mercy.

THE PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT

**People: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Mother and Father of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,
now and forever. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader invites the people to offer their own prayers in the chat box or silently at home.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING PRAYER

Leader: Spirit of truth:
Guide us into all the truth;
Consume the lies that shroud the world in hate;
Pray in us with sighs too deep for words;
And let the victim's voice ring out with hope for a new world;
Through Jesus, the Christ, who goes to the right hand of God.

People: Amen

The leader and people pray responsively.

Leader: I will lie down in peace and take my rest,

People: for it is in God alone that I dwell unafraid.

Leader: Let us bless the Earth-maker, the Pain-bearer, the Life-giver,

People: let us praise and exalt God above all for ever.

Leader: May God's name be praised beyond the furthest star,

People: glorified and exalted above all for ever.

The leader selects and starts one of the following three prayers:

PRAYER 1

Leader: Be present, Spirit of God,

**People: within us, your dwelling place and home,
that this house may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life. Amen**

PRAYER 2

Leader: God our Creator, our center, our friend,

**People: we thank you for our good life,
for those who are dear to us,
for our dead, and for all who have helped and influenced us.
We thank you for the measure of freedom we have,
and the extent to which we control our lives;
and most of all we thank you for the faith that is in us,
for our awareness of you and our hope in you.
Keep us, we pray you, thankful and hopeful
and useful until our lives shall end.
Amen.**

PRAYER 3

Leader: Lord, it is night.

People: The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;

what has not been done has not been done;

let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives

rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,

all dear to us,

and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,

new joys,

new possibilities.

In your name we pray. Amen.

SENTENCE OF THE DAY

Leader: The blessing of God, the eternal goodwill of God, the shalom of God, the wildness and the warmth of God, be among us and between us, now and always.

CLOSING SONG: WE REMEMBER

We remember how you loved us to your death

and still we celebrate, for you are with us here;

and we believe that we will see you when you come

to your glory, Lord.

We remember, we celebrate, we believe.

Leader: The divine Spirit dwells in us.

People: Thanks be to God.

To all attending: Please unmute your sound and say “farewell” or “goodnight” or “peace” to those who have worshipped with you this evening. Then, go in peace.