



CHRISTMAS EVE

# Welcome.

All Souls, seeking to be a church not just for ourselves, exists to be a vibrant expression of who God is—gracious, present, hospitable.

Launched in 2010, we are a worshipping community rooted in the belief that the historic Christian gospel is true, compelling, and promises to change our lives powerfully, in the direction of freedom, wholeness, and hope.

We seek to embody and articulate this gospel of grace, bringing about spiritual, social, and cultural renewal in Seattle and, through it, the world.

As a church, we are part of that historical, counter-cultural community that Jesus started and continues to build, sustain, and perfect.

Anyone is welcome in worship, and we encourage you to come as you are. We understand that visiting a church for the first time can be intimidating. So it's our commitment to walk you through each component of the worship service so no one feels like an outsider. There will be no obscure, tribal language without explanation. No 'in-house' moments.

Our worship is structured, with liturgy and rich music that connects us to the church of old and those who've gone before us—we are deeply rooted in something much larger than ourselves or our own cultural moment. But worship should be accessible and enjoyable if it's to be meaningful.

You should always feel the freedom to participate actively in worship or to just listen and observe at your discretion. It is a time to process freely and safely the audacious claims of Jesus, and the inevitable tension between the beauty and scandal of the historic Christian gospel.

We haven't heard the gospel for what it really is if we don't find it at once horribly offensive and staggeringly beautiful. It is both heart-breaking and heart-mending.

So let us explore. *Let us worship.*



*All Souls*

# Exploring?

Do you have questions about the Christian faith?

Do you wrestle with intellectual barriers that make belief seem implausible, even irresponsible?

Do you struggle to reconcile a good God with a hurting world?

We recognize that belief is hard. That's why:

- We value questions, and the people who ask them
- We prize being a community where you can belong before you believe
- We assume, each Sunday, that there are people present who are not convinced
- We desire to talk *to* skeptics not *about* them
- You are welcome here...

So, be curious. Doubt. Ask. Explore.

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*cover illustration by Lori Bailey*

The best way to shorten winter is to prolong Christmas.

G.K. Chesterton

# Order of Worship

CHRISTMAS EVE / 24 JUNE 2019



*Please silence all devices for  
the duration of worship*

**Bold** text is read together by  
the congregation. Plain text is  
read by the leader. Responsive  
readings remind us that during  
corporate worship God speaks  
to his people and we respond  
together as a community.

*dim lights  
light table candles*

*Mary sings this song in  
response to the discovery  
that she will bear Jesus  
Christ in her womb: 'the  
Messiah' which in Hebrew  
means 'the one set apart by  
God to save.'*

*\*vesper simply means  
'evening' and this prayer has  
been used by Christians as a  
vesper or evening prayer  
since the 400s*

*In the Bible, God calls us to  
worship, because it is not our  
natural impulse to come to  
Him. But He calls, reminding  
us of His pursuing love, and  
we respond in gratitude.*

## welcome

*Our community often gathers in houses as a way to enjoy and to extend God's presence in the neighborhoods we call home and to offer God praise, as he graciously invites us to do. Tonight, we gather to sing, pray, encounter scripture, and to simply be together. We're glad you're here.*

## call to worship

*from Luke 1 Mary's Song 'The Magnificat'*

My soul magnifies the Lord  
My spirit rejoices in God  
My soul magnifies the Lord, my Savior (2x)

For he has done great things,  
For he has done great things for me. (2x)

*from Psalm 139*

If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light about me be night,"

**even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light with you.**

For you formed my inward parts;  
**you knitted me together in my mother's womb.  
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.  
Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.**

## prayer

*O Gracious Light 'Phos Hilaron'*

O gracious light,  
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven  
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!

**Now as we come to the setting of the sun,  
and our eyes behold the vesper\* light,  
we sing your praises O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,  
O Son of God, O Giver of life,  
and to be glorified through all the worlds.**

## hymn

## O Come, O Come Emmanuel

O come, O come Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here,  
Until the Son of God appear

*chorus:*

Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee O Israel

Oh, come, our Dayspring from on high  
And cheer us by thy drawing nigh  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
And death's dark shadows put to flight

*chorus*

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free  
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;  
From the depths of hell, thy people save  
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave

*chorus*

Oh come Desire of Nations, bind  
All peoples in one heart and mind;  
Bid envy, strife, and sorrow cease  
Fill all the world with heaven's peace

*chorus*

*words: unknown, 12th cent.  
trans. John M. Neale, 1851*

*music: Veni Emmanuel*

## first antiphon

## Jesus, the Wisdom of God

O Wisdom, O holy Word of God,  
you govern all creation with your strong yet tender care:  
Come and show your people the way to salvation.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect on the past day, month, or even this calendar year as it closes. What is an area of dis-order in yourself or in your life that you are trying to navigate and in which you long for God's wisdom? What does it mean in this situation that Jesus has come as the Christ and is coming again?*

## reading

Proverbs 8:12, 22-23

I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence. The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his deeds of old; I was formed long ages ago, at the very beginning, when the world came to be. When there were no watery depths, I was given birth.

John 1:1-5, 9

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

### WHAT IS AN ANTIPHON?

*Antiphon (an-tuh-fuhn) is a word that simply means "chant" or "phrase." For hundreds of Christmas Eves, Christians have used the following 7 antiphons to wonder at Jesus and to direct our longings to him. Each antiphon celebrates one of Christ's titles given to us in Scripture. You just sang one—O Come Emmanuel (Matthew 1:23). Allow these antiphons to be a way we reflect as Advent draws to a close and on who Jesus Christ really is.*

*Wisdom is skill at the art of living and by celebrating Jesus as the Wisdom of God, we celebrate that he as creator, knows best how to cooperate with the design of life. We also learn from Genesis that in the beginning there was chaos and God ordered the chaos and created goodness from it. Similarly, Jesus enters into the chaos of creation, and takes upon himself the chaos of life in order to re-create. We now celebrate that in Jesus, God has created a way for us through the chaos of life.*

## second antiphon

Jesus, the Lord

O Sacred Lord of ancient Israel,  
who showed yourself to Moses in the burning bush,  
who gave him the holy law on Sinai mountain:  
Come, stretch out your mighty hand to set us free.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect on the past day, month, or even this calendar year as it closes. In what way have you longed to be more free? What does it mean in this situation that Jesus has come as the Lord who sets and is coming again?*

## reading

Isaiah 33:22

For the Lord is our judge,  
the Lord is our lawgiver,  
the Lord is our king;  
it is he who will save us.

Acts 7:37-42

*Stephen speaks to a crowd about the human tendency to make false "lords" for ourselves:*

"Moses told the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your own people.' He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living words to pass on to us.

"But our ancestors refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. They told Aaron, 'Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don't know what has happened to him!' That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and reveled in what their own hands had made. But God turned away from them and gave them over to the worship of the sun, moon and stars.

Romans 8:2-4, 15-17

*Paul explains the unique freedom given by Jesus, the Lord who sets us free:*

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption..... We are heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

## hymn

### Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark the herald angels sing  
"Glory to the new born King  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled"

Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic host proclaim  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem"  
Hark the herald angels sing  
"Glory to the new born King"

Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ the everlasting Lord;  
Late in time behold him come,  
Offspring of the favored one.

Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see;  
hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as man with men to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel  
Hark the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King"

Hail! the heaven-born Prince of Peace.  
Hail the son of Righteousness  
Light and life to all He brings,  
risen with healing in His wings

Mild He lays His glory by,  
born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth,  
born to give them second birth  
Hark the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King"

words: Charles Wesley  
music: Felix Mendelssohn  
adapted by  
William H. Cummings

## third antiphon

### Jesus, the Green Shoot

O Flower of Jesse's stem,  
you have been raised up as a sign for all peoples;  
kings stand silent in your presence;  
the nations bow down in worship before you.  
Come, let nothing keep you from coming to our aid.

*This title and image for Jesus brings to mind a tree stump, assumed to be dead, with a green shoot of new and unexpected life emerging from it.*

## reflection

*Briefly reflect: In what way have you longed for a sign that new life would come in an impossible situation? What does it mean in this situation that Jesus has come as the Christ is now at work bringing about his Kingdom?*

## reading

### Isaiah 11:1-5 (The Message)

A green Shoot will sprout from Jesse's stump, from his roots a budding Branch. The life-giving Spirit of God will hover over him, the Spirit that brings wisdom and understanding, the Spirit that gives direction and builds strength, the Spirit that instills knowledge and Fear-of-God. Fear-of-God will be all his joy and delight. He won't judge by appearances, won't decide on the basis of hearsay. He'll judge the needy by what is right, render decisions on earth's poor with justice. His words will bring everyone to awed attention. A mere breath from his lips will topple the wicked. Each morning he'll pull on sturdy work clothes and boots, and build righteousness and faithfulness in the land.

## fourth antiphon

Jesus, the Key

O Come, Thou Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heav'nly home,  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
that we no more have cause to sigh.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect: In what way have you come up against your limitations, faced failure and weakness? What does it mean as you consider these situations that Jesus has come as the Christ, the one with the key to set loose the abundant resources of heaven? In what ways, as you reflect, has God freed you to participate in extending the resources and freedom of God's grace to others?*

## reading

Isaiah 22:22

I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

Revelation 3:7; 5:1-5

These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?" But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals."

Matthew 16:15-19

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

*In trusting Jesus, as God and the one God has set apart as Savior, Peter along with all those who share this trust in Christ, are joined to Christ as participants in heralding God's Kingdom.*



## hymn

## Joy to the World

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, 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.

words and music:  
Isaac Watts

## fifth antiphon

## Jesus, the Dayspring

O Come, Thou Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect: what have you discovered about who God is in the darkness you have faced this year?*

## reading

Revelation 22:16

I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star.

John 8:12

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Malachi 4:2

But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in its wings. You shall go out leaping like calves from the stall.

*Dayspring is an image that brings to mind the moment when the sun reaches over the horizon and brings the warmth of morning after the cold night. The image of Jesus as a Morning Star is also relevant— and the Morning Star promises the morning will come even as it shines brightest in the dark of night.*

## sixth antiphon

Jesus, the Cornerstone

O Come, Desire of the nations, bind  
in one the hearts of all mankind;  
bid every strife and quarrel cease  
and fill the world with heaven's peace.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect: who or what you have been loyal to this month, this year? Cornerstones set the "true angles" of a building— who or what have you been true to? How does Jesus' mercy— in what he has done, because of who he is— 're-set the angles' in your life?*

## reading

Isaiah 22:22

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.

Colossians 1:17

And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

## seventh antiphon

Jesus, God with us

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.

## reflection

*Briefly reflect: How has God been with you? How have you noticed his presence?*

## reading

Matthew 1:23

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel"  
(which means "God with us").

## hymn

Silent Night

Silent night! Holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright  
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child  
Holy Infant so tender and mild  
Sleep in heavenly peace (x2)

Silent night, Holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,  
With the dawn of Redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth (x2)

*light hand-held candles*

Silent night, Holy night,  
Shepherds quake, at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven above Heavenly,  
hosts sing Hallelujah.  
Christ the Savior is born (x2)

*words: Joseph Mohr  
words: Franz Gruber, 1818*

## benediction

*from Philippians 4:4-5*

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! The Lord is near.

Unless otherwise noted,  
all Scripture is taken from  
*The Holy Bible*, English  
Standard Version (ESV)  
or New International  
Version (NIV).



It is the smallest of all seeds,  
but when it has *grown* it is  
larger than all the other garden  
plants and becomes a tree, so  
that birds of the air come and  
make nests in its branches.

Matthew 13:32