

WESLEY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

SPRING SEMESTER 2021

WORSHIP RESOURCES

Gathered for PW316:

LITURGICS: ECOLOGY + WORSHIP

REV. DR. JOSEPH BUSH, INSTRUCTOR



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS RESOURCES

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Worship Resources for Early Advent

Ecumenical Prayers for early Advent

First Sunday of Advent (Year C)

Jer 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thes 3:9-13; Luke 21:25-36

God of Advent, as we enter the season of rest for our land, we await the coming of the righteous Branch of David, who promises to bring justice to our land and to all creatures. May our footprints upon the earth be small and light, a worthy legacy for future generations.

Second Sunday of Advent (Year C)

Malachi 3:1-4 or Baruch 5:1-9; Luke 1:68-79; Phil 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6

God of the wilderness, all the wild areas of the earth cry out for restoration and preservation. May we be mindful of the creatures of the deserts, the oceans and the forests, that the habitat you have given them will survive and prosper, so that they may live in abundance and in peace with all of their neighbors.

by Dennis Ormseth

Source: <http://www.letallcreationpraise.org/about-us>

Economy for our Common Home: An Advent Reflection Guide on Laudato Si'

The weeks of Advent are about waiting, preparing, and anticipating the coming of Christ in our lives. But how shall we wait? We give thanks, we pray, and we open our hearts to the cry of the earth and the poor.

Advent Readings: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalms 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14; 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2; Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26)

Creator God, we can choose to live differently! Inspire us as we make choices so that we will recognize the impact our lives have on our environment and our human family around the globe.

We pray to the Lord: Lord, help to reclaim the future!

Loving God, we can reclaim the future! Encourage us to be people of hope as we look forwards in faith, knowing that we can build a world of justice and peace.

We pray to the Lord: Lord, help to reclaim the future!

Brilliant God, we can choose to live in a way that creates a better world for everyone. Help us to know that our individual actions are made in solidarity with our sisters and brothers. We pray to the Lord: Lord, help to reclaim the future!

Wonderful God, you invite us to live simply, to live sustainably, and to live in solidarity with the poor. So help us to respond to that invitation with conviction and generosity. We pray to the Lord: Lord, help to reclaim the future!

<https://maryknollogc.org/resources/economy-our-common-home-advent-reflection-guide-laudato-si>

Centering Words and Opening Hymn

The earth is at the same time mother.

She is mother of all that is natural, mother of all that is human;
she is the mother of all, for contained in her are the seeds of all.

The earth of humankind contains all moistness,
all verdancy, all germinating power.

It is in so many ways fruitful.

All creation comes from it.

Yet it forms not only the basic raw material for humankind,
but also the substance of the incarnation of God's Son.

—Hildegard of Bingen

* * *

"People Look East"

by Eleanor Farjeon

1. People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

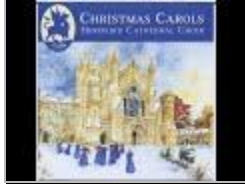
2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

*3. Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.

4. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

5. Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

**often omitted from hymnals and choral arrangements.*



[Watch Video](#)

People Look East

Duration: 2:06

User: n/a - **Added:** 11/8/14

YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mvKfnu5zIY0>

Act of Dedication of the Human Race to Jesus Christ the King



Most sweet Jesus,
Redeemer of the human race,

look down upon us humbly prostrate before you.
 We are yours, and yours we wish to be;
 but to be more surely united with you,
 behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today
 to your Most Sacred Heart.
 Many indeed have never known you;
 many, too, despising your precepts, have rejected you.
 Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus,
 and draw them to your Sacred Heart.
 Be King, O Lord,
 not only of the faithful who have never forsaken you,
 but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned you;
 grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house,
 lest they die of wretchedness and hunger.
 Be King of those who are deceived by erroneous opinions,
 or whom discord keeps aloof,
 and call them back
 to the harbor of truth and the unity of faith,
 so that soon there may be
 but one flock and one Shepherd.
 Grant, O Lord, to your Church assurance
 of freedom and immunity from harm;
 give tranquility of order to all nations;
 make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry:
 Praise to the divine Heart that wrought our salvation;
 to it be glory and honor for ever. **Amen.**

Prayer Source: *Enchiridion of Indulgences*, June 29, 1968

I could not find an author but it does appear to be an old prayer and discussed in many revisions of book of indulgences. It is also known as the "*Iesu dulcissime, Redemptor*"

Here are some references:

<https://prayerist.com/ctksunday.html>

then click the prayer..

<https://prayerist.com/ctkprayers.html>

https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/3189/documents/2018/4/Indulgences_v2.pdf

Here is a Gregorian Chant of it in Latin..

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUXNPcPIhJU>

Advent/Creation-Themed Holy Communion Liturgy

CALL TO WORSHIP:

Leader: Come and look, Children of God!

People: We are here, waiting! Balanced on the brink of Advent.

Leader: Come and look for God through the windows of this sanctuary;
People: In morning sky, in winter light and bare tree branches.
 Leader: Come and look for God through the windows of one another:
People: In faces reflecting holy love, fellow branches of our sacred family tree.
 Leader: Come and look for God, through the windows of our worship:
People: In the nourishment of word and harmony, bread and cup.
 Leader: Open our eyes, Holy One, to the wonders of your creation.
 Prepare our hearts for what is to come!

SCRIPTURE READING

SERMON

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

INVITATION

Pastor: Let us gather around the table to remember our spiritual roots in Christ, and to tap into the strong sap of the Holy Spirit. We have been waiting, O God, for this meal, as we wait for so much.

People: We come to the joyful feast hungry for blessing and thirsting for peace – peace across our planet, in our homes, in our churches and in our hearts, struggling to be patient, we wait.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Pastor: Author of creation, we are a mere piece in nature's puzzle, but we act as if it is ours for the taking. If we listen, we can hear your creation groaning in agony and crisis. If we look, we can see the dire effects of our carbon addictions and deforestation. If we search, we find heaps of our toxic waste bring dumped among the world's poor. Through our sins, daily and systemic, we estrange ourselves from you and the rest of creation.

People: O God of all mercy, your gracious gifts demand a responsibility that we all too often neglect. We confess that we have held you at a distance, resisting and ignoring your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in this world you have created. We use your beautiful world for our selfish gain, and forget to see you in it. We throw creation away day after day. We repent of the evils and oppressions we participate in knowingly, half-knowingly and unknowingly. Holy One, forgive us.

Pastor: With open hearts, we give over to you our own confessions in a time of silent prayer.

Gracious God, forgive, restore, and strengthen us through Jesus Christ. Guide us by your creative spirit into more faithful lives of grace, solidarity, and commitment to love and justice.

COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: God of magnificent glory, who summons galaxies into being, we praise you. We are amazed by the diversity of this planet: its vast oceans, lush forests, snow-capped mountains. We give you thanks for all our gifts, for all that gives us life and love and hope.

God of mystery and promise, open us up to welcome this Advent as a season of expectant waiting for the one who is to come. O Root of Jesse, you stand as a sign for humankind; a sign of hope, of birth and rebirth. As we wait to taste this food, made of the earth's simple elements, we remember Jesus. Through this meal, may Christ give us the hope and courage we need to live into the new heaven and new earth that is already being born all around us.

Now let us join our voices with the wind and the streams, the plants and animals, the living and the dead, and the Angels, who waited patiently to sing the good news of Jesus's birth, singing together ... SANCTUS

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Pastor: now, Oh God, we bring you our prayers of thanks and joy. (Intercessions)

This season we thank you for the promise of Jesus Christ, The once and future Savior of us and all the world, from the Spirit's love and a woman's body and blood. We remember Jesus who laughed and wept, who touched lepers and washed feet. We remember Christ who lives on in all of all who courageously and faithfully bring forth the light of your love in earth's darkest places. As Christ is our light to you, may we be lights to others illuminating the path toward communion with you, the Holy Spirit, and Jesus.

We thank you for Jesus, that he spoke freely of the need for justice, and that his hands moved freely to bring healing to the sick and welcome to the outcast. Our world still needs these gifts, and so we lift to you now our prayers for those in need today. (Intercessions)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Gracious God, sometimes we are so busy waiting that we miss being present now. Be present here, loving God. Bless this bread and fruit of the vine, that we may be united with Christ and with one another. Nourish and enliven us through this sacred meal, that we may continue faithful in all things. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *Please stand*

Pastor: Let us give thanks.

ALL: We thank you, God, for inviting us to share this sacred meal in the fellowship of this community. Thank you for nourishing us in the body and spirit, bread and drink, silence and bell song. Unfold us in a wonderstruck and responsible love for your creation in all its fullness. Send us forth this Advent to grow in patience and attention, bursting with anticipation for your peace in our world. Grow in us seeds and shoots of hope as we wait for God to draw near in our Savior Jesus, in whose name we humbly pray. Amen.

Church of the Redeemer, U.C.C., New Haven, CT Rev. Dr. Rochelle Stackhouse, Sr.
<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/30343976/advent-creation-themed-liturgy-for-holy-communion>

Earth Care Devotional Prayer

2014 Advent Devotional Presbyterians for Earth Care

“Teacher I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said, “Foxes have holes and the bird of the air have nests but the HUMAN ONE has no place to lay his head.” (Matthew 8:20)

Creator God, forgive us our daily greed that has destroyed your creation, the very land beneath our feet. Help us to take off our shoes and realize that we are standing on your Holy Ground and before you. Help us to see that all Creation is yearning to teach us its ways. Open our eyes, our hearts and light our way this Advent that we no longer will stumble in darkness but will be liberated by the light of all Creation. In Christ’s Name we pray. Amen.

By Richard Krajewski and Kristina Peterson, Pastors of Bayou Blue Presbyterian Church (LA)
https://presbyearthcare.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2014_Advent_Devotional_andbios.pdf

Ave Maria, Hail Mary

Español:

Dios te salve, María.

Llena eres de gracia:

El Señor es contigo.

Bendita tú eres entre todas las mujeres.

Y bendito es el fruto de tu vientre:

Jesús.

Santa María, Madre de Dios,

ruega por nosotros pecadores,

ahora y en la hora de nuestra muerte.

Amén.

Source: <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/prayer.php?p=300>



Ave Maria - Hail Mary HD

Duration: 1:35

User: n/a - **Added:** 5/12/16

YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wlXRys20RH8>

English:

Hail Mary,
Full of Grace,
The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary,
Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now,
and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Source: <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/hail-mary-348>

Early Advent Prayer

A Prayer for All Creation

Creator God, as we prepare for the coming of Your Son, we give thanks for the gift of creation.

We give thanks for its beauty and the joy the beauty brings us.

We give thanks for light that shines in the darkness, for the stars and the sun, for the air we breathe and the plants and animals that you have created, for earth and water, and for the daily sustenance we draw from them.

Inspire us to see You, Creator, through all that You have created—all that you look upon as very good.

Help us to care for creation as You instructed us.

Help us be stewards of its abundant life.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Advent Prayer Resources - The Global Catholic Climate Movement
For God's creation, the poor and future generations
The Global Catholic Climate Movement
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wHGHLaYF0500Yr01s7qj2yKfPwN5aCv8/view>

Prayer of Confession

We confess, Gracious God, that we have not always turned to you for guidance. At times, we have allowed the world's time to dominate your time. Forgive us for our sins of hurriedness, carelessness, and impatience. Forgive us when we have slumbered instead of remaining alert, waiting and watching for you. In this season of waiting, we await a Savior but often forget that we are careless in your creation. Forgive us for not maintaining what you have given to us. Forgive us for allowing the world's fears to become our fears. Shine upon us this Advent season so that we may be restored unto you. Guide us into your time. As we call upon your name, hear our prayers and give us life. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Adapted from: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/adventchristmas-liturgies-year-c>

Worship Resources for Late Advent

Prayer for third Sunday in Advent year A (Original)

Gracious and loving God,
on this tree-splitting morning,
we long for the scintillating sun.
in the midst of the bitter cold,
remind us once again of your promise:

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing”

Creator and redeemer God,
on this third Sunday of Advent we are superficially uncomfortable.
break into our hearts and instill in us a deep-seated discomfort;
towards evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.
Employ us to remind our communities of your promise:

“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you”

God of hope,
in this season when the sun sets early,
and only a smattering of grass shoots are visible through the snow,
help us to realize that the snow will melt away, so that we can act accordingly
realizing that You O God who made heaven, earth, sea, and everything in them;
will make good on the promise conveyed by the psalmist:

“The LORD will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the LORD!”

Amen.

Author: Lawrence Rebelo

The World Waits

The World Waits

God of grace, thank you for this season of waiting.
Thank you for the beauty of the sleeping earth

waiting for spring's new life.
 Thank you for the joy of children
 waiting for the excitement of gift giving.
 Thank you for the gift of familiar carols,
 whose joyful music touches waiting hearts.
 Thank you for far-flung family and friends
 that we can't wait to see this season.
 Thank you for the gift of Jesus Christ;
 we have been waiting for a Saviour.
 We pray for all who are waiting this morning;
 people who are waiting for an end to violence
 because they have known too much war;
 people who are waiting for healing
 because they live with sickness and pain;
 people who are waiting for good news
 because they are weighed down with sorrow.
 We pray for all of the earth that is waiting--
 creatures who are waiting for protection
 because their environment has been destroyed;
 waterways that are waiting for renewal
 because they have been contaminated;
 lands that are waiting to be redeemed from pollution
 because we have forgotten that God called the land good.
 Throughout the world, in and on and under it,
 waiting happens, waiting grows and gathers,
 the earth is pregnant waiting for redemption.
 In eager expectation we wait for the revelation of the Son of God.
 "How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
 So God imparts to human hearts, the blessings of his heaven,
 no ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
 where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Lord enters in."*

**Philip Brooks, "O Little Town of Bethlehem"*

— written by Carol Penner, and posted on her wonderful **Leading in Worship** blog.
<https://re-worship.blogspot.com/2011/11/advent-prayer-world-waits.html>

Advent Prayer

Winter is coming, Lord Jesus. The sky is dark by suppertime, and it is colder every day. We wait for you, Light of the World, to warm our hearts with your joy.

We respond... COME, LORD JESUS

The trees outside have lost their leaves. But the pine and spruce will always have their green needles. Green is the color of life and hope. We wait for you, Prince of Peace, to bring new life and hope to our world.

We respond...COME, LORD JESUS

Our days begin early and end when we sleep. But your love, O Lord has no beginning or end. We wait for you, Emmanuel, to show us the Father's, everlasting love.

We respond...COME, LORD JESUS

We live in warm homes and fall asleep under blankets and sheets. Lord Jesus, you came to us as a baby, born in a chilly stable. The heat from animals, a bed of straw, and rags kept you warm. Son of God and Son of Mary, help us to welcome you in the poor and hungry.

We respond... COME, LORD JESUS

<http://rccdsb.edu.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/26/2010/06/AdventPrayerService.pdf>

Prayer/Song for 3rd Advent year A

Let us Pray,

O Gracious God, who has opened your hand and filled all things living with plenteousness: Bless the lands and waters, and multiply the harvests of the world; let your Spirit go forth, that it may renew the face of the earth; show your loving-kindness, that our land may give her increase; and save us from selfish use of what you give, that life everywhere may give you thanks; through Christ our Lord. Amen

Adapted from The Episcopal Church. *The Book Of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church: Together with the Psalter or Psalms of David According to the Use of the Episcopal Church*. New York: Seabury Press, 1979. page 828 <https://bcponline.org/>



Song: The Desert Shall Rejoice

Duration: 2:31

User: n/a - **Added:** 11/15/14

YouTube URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsyBR7Ehv48>

Lyrics

1 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:

It shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with praise and singing.

2 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:
For the ears of the deaf shall hear
and the blind, their eyes be opened.

3 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:
For the tongue of the mute shall sing
and the lame will dance with gladness.

4 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:
For the ground will become a pool
and the dry land springs of water.

5 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:
as the ransomed return to God
and come singing back to Zion.

6 The desert shall rejoice
and blossom as a rose:
unto Zion we come with joy,
for our God has come to save us.

www.hymnary.org/hymn/WLP1997/722

Text: The desert shall rejoice

Author: Gracia Grindal (b. 1943)

Tune: STERLING

Composer: Joy F. Patterson (b. 1931)

Come Darkness, Come Light - a Song for Christmas

A lovely song, describing the fact that the gift of the Saviour is for the whole world:
https://youtu.be/Fo_iBwG_L3A

[Verse 1]

Come darkness, come light
Come new star, shining bright
Come love to this world tonight
Alleluia

[Verse 2]

Come broken, come whole
Come wounded in your soul
Come anyway that you know
Alleluia

[Chorus]

There's a humble stable and a light within
There's an angel hovering and three wise men
Today a baby's born in Bethlehem
Alleluia

[Verse 3]

Come doubting, come sure
Come fearful to this door
Come see what love is for
Alleluia

[Verse 4]

Come running, come walking slow
Come weary on your broken road
Come see Him and shed your heavy load
Alleluia

[Chorus]

[Verse 5]

Come darkness, come light
Come new star shining bright
Come love to this world tonight
Alleluia

[Verse 6]

Come darkness, come light
Come new star shining bright
Come love to this world tonight
Alleluia

[Outro]

There's a humble stable
Alleluia
And a light within
Alleluia
Today a baby's born
Alleluia

Author: Mary Chapin Carpenter

A Prayer for Advent (Inspired by Lectionary Texts for the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Year A)

A Prayer for Advent (*Isaiah 35, Luke 1, James 5*)

Wondrous God,
 you refresh and inspire even deserts to rejoice and blossom.
 In this season of anticipation, strengthen our hearts, Mighty One.
 We confess that we are prone to rush
 ahead of your natural rhythms, O God.
 And oh, how many the sins we commit for lack of patience!
 Grant us the wisdom to be patient,
 like the wise farmer who waits for the late rains.
 Help us to trust in your timing and your promise,
 as we envision waters breaking forth in the wilderness,
 streams of nourishment in the desert,
 and springs of water rising from thirsty ground.
 Amen.

Author: Aaron Miller

"Common Prayer" - Advent, Gardens, Women

The following are selections from Shane Claiborne, Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove, and Enuma Okoro's *Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals* (Zondervan, 2010). It is a great progressive Christian resource and I wanted to pull out some of its Advent texts and prayers for Gardens and women.

"Note on Advent" (Pg. 50) - Good as intro of sharing for all ages

A Note on Advent

Advent, meaning "the coming," is a time when we wait expectantly. Christians began to celebrate it as a season during the fourth and fifth centuries. Like Mary, we celebrate the coming of the Christ child, what God has already done. And we wait in expectation of the full coming of God's reign on earth and for the return of Christ, what God will yet do. But this waiting is not a passive waiting. It is an active waiting. As any expectant mother knows, this waiting also involves preparation, exercise, nutrition, care, prayer, work; and birth involves pain, blood, tears, joy, release, community. It is called labor for a reason. Likewise, we are in a world pregnant with hope, and we live in the expectation of the coming of God's kingdom on earth. As we wait, we also work, cry, pray, ache; we are the midwives of another world.

Just as red, white, and blue have meaning in the world (as in "These colors don't run"), colors also have meaning in the church (though a different sort of meaning, needless to say).

Advent is often marked with purple, signifying royalty; in earlier times, purple often marked the coming of a king or Caesar. (Often, members of the royal family were the only people allowed to wear it.) Many Christians celebrate advent by lighting a purple candle each week for the four weeks leading up to Christmas, and then lighting a "Christ candle" (usually white or red) on Christmas Eve.

As you will note in the morning prayers, many Christians also remember St. Nicholas, who was a faithful man of God before he was a cultural icon. Today, the season between Thanksgiving and Christmas that many of us recognize as Advent is the biggest frenzy of retail spending. More than half of it, hundreds of billions of dollars a year, is spent as we celebrate the birth of the homeless Son of God in that stinky manger. (And he got only three measly presents. One of them was myrrh. What baby wants myrrh?) Hundreds of Christian congregations are now rethinking the Advent season as a time for compassion rather than consumption. (Check out www.adventconspiracy.org.)

Dec. 2 Liturgy

 December 2

In 1980 Maura Clarke, Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel, and Jean Donovan were murdered by officers of the Salvadoran military. Missionaries serving among the poor during El Salvador's civil war, these women knew, as Ita Ford said the night before she died, that "one who is committed to the poor must risk the same fate as the poor." Their deaths affected the North American church deeply, galvanizing opposition to US support for the Salvadoran government's repression of its people.

O Lord, let my soul rise up to meet you
as the day rises to meet the sun.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Come, let us bow down and bend the knee : let us kneel before the LORD our
Maker.

Song "Were You There?"

O Lord, listen to the song : of your saints who cry, "How long?"

Psalms 12:1-5

Help me, LORD, for there is no godly one left : the faithful have vanished
from among us.

Everyone speaks falsely with his neighbor : with a smooth tongue they
speak from a double heart.

Oh, that the LORD would cut off all smooth tongues : and close the lips that
utter proud boasts!

Those who say, "With our tongue will we prevail : our lips are our own; who
is lord over us?"

"Because the needy are oppressed, and the poor cry out in misery : I will rise
up," says the LORD, "and give them the help they long for."

O Lord, listen to the song : of your saints who cry, "How long?"

Isaiah 1:10-20 Luke 20:9-18

O Lord, listen to the song : of your saints who cry, "How long?"

Ita Ford wrote, "The reasons why so many people are being killed are quite
complicated, yet there are some clear, simple strands. One is that people have
found a meaning to live, to sacrifice, struggle, and even die. And whether their
life spans sixteen years, sixty, or ninety, for them their life has had a purpose.
In many ways, they are fortunate people."

Prayers for Others

Morning Prayer 51

Our Father

Lord, it was not enough for you to care for the poor. You chose to become
one of them by descending as you did. Keep us free from fear and selfish
preoccupations that we may walk as you walked among the poor, sick, and
dying in body and spirit. Amen.

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you : wherever he may send you;
may he guide you through the wilderness : protect you through the storm;
may he bring you home rejoicing : at the wonders he has shown you;
may he bring you home rejoicing : once again into our doors.

"Blessing of the Land or a Garden", followed by "A Litany to Honor Women" and "Sanctus"
(Pg. 561-563)

Blessing of the Land or a Garden

God of the Universe,
you made the heavens and the earth,
so we do not call our home merely "planet earth."
We call it your creation, a divine mystery,
a gift from your most blessed hand.
The world itself is your miracle.
Bread and vegetables from earth are thus also from heaven.
Help us to see in our daily bread your presence.

Upon this garden
may your stars rain down their blessed dust.

May you send rain and sunshine upon our garden and us.
Grant us the humility to touch the humus,
that we might become more human,
that we might mend our rift from your creation,
that we might then know the sacredness of the gift of life,
that we might truly experience life from your hand.
For you planted humanity in a garden
and began our resurrection in a garden.
Our blessed memory and hope lie in a garden.

Thanks be to God,
who made the world teeming with variety,
of things on the earth, above the earth, and under the earth.
Thanks be to God
for the many kinds of plants, trees, and fruits
that we celebrate.
For the centipedes, ants, and worms,
for the mice, marmots, and bats,
for the cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers,
we rejoice
that we find ourselves eclipsed by the magnitude
of generosity and mystery.
Thanks be to God.

A Litany to Honor Women

We walk in the company of the women who have gone before, mothers
of the faith both named and unnamed,
testifying with ferocity and faith to the Spirit of wisdom and healing.
They are the judges, the prophets, the martyrs, the warriors, poets, lovers,
and saints
who are near to us in the shadow of awareness, in the crevices of memory,
in the landscape of our dreams.

We walk in the company of Deborah,
who judged the Israelites with authority and strength.

We walk in the company of Esther,
who used her position as queen to ensure the welfare of her people.

We walk in the company of you whose names have been lost and silenced,
who kept and cradled the wisdom of the ages.

We walk in the company of the woman with the flow of blood,
who audaciously sought her healing and release.

We walk in the company of Mary Magdalene,
who wept at the empty tomb until the risen Christ appeared.

We walk in the company of Phoebe,
who led an early church in the empire of Rome.

We walk in the company of Perpetua of Carthage,
whose witness in the third century led to her martyrdom.

We walk in the company of St. Christina the Astonishing,
who resisted death with persistence and wonder.

We walk in the company of Julian of Norwich,
who wed imagination and theology, proclaiming, "All shall be well."

We walk in the company of Sojourner Truth,
who stood against oppression, righteously declaring in 1852, "Ain't I a
woman!"

We walk in the company of the Argentine mothers of the Plaza de Mayo,
who turned their grief to strength, standing together to remember "the
disappeared" children of war with a holy indignation.

We walk in the company of Alice Walker,
who named the lavender hue of womanish strength.

We walk in the company of you mothers of the faith,
who teach us to resist evil with boldness, to lead with wisdom, and to heal.

Amen.

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Late Advent - Prayer A Prayer of Thanks for the Creator

Creator God, we give thanks for You—for your coming among us, and among all that you have created. Thank You for the magnanimous gift of creation itself, which heralded the birth of Your Son, and to which You joined in the water, minerals, and living flesh of Jesus Christ. Thank You for every aspect of creation, as every bit of its goodness and order reveals You.

Thank You for the love that You manifest in creation. Pope Francis has said that "creation is of the order of love." We thank You for the gift of Your love beyond measure, and we thank You for bestowing on us the gift to love in return.

Thank You for the sustenance, strength, and peace that Your creation gives us.

Thank You for our place within the fabric You have woven.

Thank You for the unique gifts bestowed on each of us, and especially for the gifts of resilience and beauty in our poorest sisters and brothers.

We ask that You increase our capacity to love, that You give us the resolve to love in deeds and not simply in words.

We pray this through the newborn Christ, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Advent Prayer Resources - The Global Catholic Climate Movement For God's creation, the poor and future generations The Global Catholic Climate Movement

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wHGHLaYF0500Yr01s7qj2yKfPwN5aCv8/view>

Be still

Preface: When I read this prayer, I immediately had an image in my mind of worship along the side of Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park. I imagine one of the best places to listen is in nature away from the hustle of the city life. While this prayer may not be specifically geared towards ecology, I feel the setting would help push the listeners towards ecology.

Be still ... Hark! ... Pay close attention ... Listen ... Quiet us, Lord, that we might be able to hear, over the noise of our busy lives, beyond the clutter of our Christmas preparations; Help us to become still, even for a moment, that we might hear the herald of your angel voices: "Glory!" ... "Peace on Earth" ... "Mercy" ... "Reconciliation" ... "Joy!" ... "Christ is born." The message of the ages still rings out for those willing to listen. This is our desire. Open us that we might hear. Today ... Now. We pray this in the name of the One who was born where he was welcomed: a garage out back. Come, Jesus, into our home. Welcome! Amen.

Source: <https://rockhay.tripod.com/worship/prayers-etc/advent.htm>

Worship Resources for Christmas

Joy of Discovery (Prayer)

Joy of Discovery

The joy of discovery
that moment
when hope and expectation
were gloriously met
by the illumination of one bright star.
We cannot imagine
what words were spoken by visitors
or if first impressions
left them somewhat confused.

Messiah, Savior, a King
born in the barest of palaces.
Yet they saw and fell down
on their knees in adoration.
Lord, they saw you and knew
whom they had met.
As we meet around crib
candle or advent wreath
draw us into that stable
in our imagination.

In the quiet moments of prayer
this Christmas, that brief oasis
from the bustle of the world
bring alive to us
the smell of the hay
the sound of the animals
the cry of a baby.

Draw us close to our Savior
Messiah and King as we bring
not Gold, Myrrh or Frankincense
but the gift of our lives
the only offering we can bring.

- Found on: *Contemporary and traditional prayers for Christmas*, www.faithandworship.com

Call to Worship

When we wait in the night

in the hush that only stars can hold
 as they bend towards the coming of the light;
 when we wait in the night
 labouring with anticipation
 of what midnight shall bring;
 when we wait in the night
 listening to the cadence of minutes
 beat in rhythm with the birth of hope;
 may we hold our collective breaths
 with the angelic host
 as they clutch their restless alleluias,
 for God is on the way:
 the mother is labouring
 the father pacing
 the stable readying
 the word is waiting
 the light is sliding
 and the promise is breaking through
 When we wait in the longing for midnight
 in expectation of Good News
 may we choose to wait together
 and find we have moved to the edge of justice
 for in such anticipation
 is the only place
 for the Word to be born among us.

~ written by Reverend Roddy Hamilton and posted on the Church of Scotland's **Starters for Sunday** website. <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

Closing Blessing - A Gaelic Blessing
 Deep peace of the running wave to you.
 Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
 Deep peace of the quiet earth to you.
 Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
 Deep peace of the gentle night to you.
 Moon and stars pour their healing light on you.
 Deep peace of Christ,
 of Christ the light of the world to you.
 Deep peace of Christ to you.

May God who established the dance of creation;
 who transforms chaos to order,
 lead us and empower us to transform our lives
 the witness of the Church
 and the governments of nations

so that all might preserve and reflect
the glory of God revealed in creation;
and the blessing of God almighty the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/9-prayers-leeds-diocese.pdf>

Joy! An Irish Christmas

So, this is hands down my favorite Christmas album. If this music doesn't make you come alive, check your pulse!

I have to share the opener ("God Rest Ye/The Star Of Munster") because it's just incredible. I encourage you to engage in some form of frenetic dance as you listen.



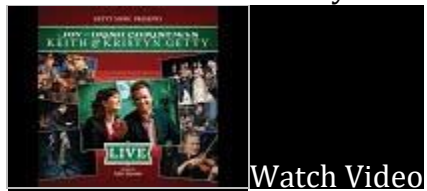
[Watch Video](#)

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen/The Star Of Munster (Medley/Live)

Duration: 4:23

User: n/a - **Added:** 7/28/18

The poetry of this second piece ("Joy Has Dawned") has more ecological significance. As a hymn, this piece also lends itself well to congregational singing. I have incorporated it in worship for Christmas Eve/Christmastide for several years now. I have attached sheet music for those who may be interested, and I included the lyrics below for our discussion.



[Watch Video](#)

Joy Has Dawned/Angels We Have Heard On High (Medley/Live)

Duration: 4:59

User: n/a - **Added:** 7/28/18

1. Joy has dawned upon the world,
Promised from creation:
God's salvation now unfurled,
Hope for every nation.
Not with fanfares from above,
Not with scenes of glory.
But a humble gift of love:
Jesus born of Mary.

2. Sounds of wonder fill the sky
 With the songs of angels,
 As the mighty Prince of Life
 Shelters in a stable.
 Hands that set each star in place,
 Shaped the earth in darkness,
 Cling now to a mother's breast,
 Vulnerable and helpless.

3. Shepherds bow before the Lamb,
 Gazing at the glory;
 Gifts of men from distant lands
 Prophecy the story.
 Gold, a King is born today,
 Incense, God is with us,
 Myrrh, His death will make a way,
 And by His blood He'll win us.

4. Son of Adam, Son of heaven,
 Given as a ransom,
 Reconciling God and man,
 Christ our mighty Champion.
 What a Saviour, what a Friend,
 What a glorious mystery:
 Once a babe in Bethlehem,
 Now the Lord of history.

 [Joy Has Dawned \(Lead Sheets\).pdf](#) (346.799 KB)

Ode to Evergreen

Inspired by last week's references to evergreens, and our continued effort at writing liturgy ourselves, I thought of a poem I wrote for my wife early in our relationship. It's about a winter hike we went on in Fort Chaplain, in Anacostia D.C. The hike was in early January, so in the Christmas season, but I wasn't really thinking of it as a Christmas poem until I read it over with this class in mind. No mention of Christ per se, but as a new parent, I think this year about Joseph and Mary caring for the Christ child, and looking for solace in the wilderness so that he could be born, and still needing to be secretive to avoid Herod afterward. The love is there!

Ode to Evergreen

By Matthias Everhope

The cold snow beneath my feet feels like a woolen blanket
 Again perplexed, I am beholden to the mystery of a green leaf in Winter
 A whole bush of them

A little tree as verdant as under any Summer sun
 Standing resolute in this naked white forest

Tender to the touch
 "How are you?"
 Asked both as salutation and in honest marvel
 My wonder goes unanswered, but for a gentle breath of wind
 A subtle and welcome response

My soul is thankful
 We keep walking, along the paths of morning mice, rabbits, birds
 Down a log, over, upon another
 Many a home beneath, within
 Tread carefully here human, you are surrounded

Upon the ridge, lookout
 No path yet in sight, and many ways of wandering
 Fort Chaplain, say a prayer for us
 Lead us into the arms of your local angels
 Where we will kneel with them in the naves of this rustic parish

We come upon a rustling in the lowland
 Stop, crouch, be still
 The hollow sings soft and sweet from the tiny chords of thrushes
 Dinner scouts scurry in crosses, homemakers huddle in the bush
 We catch the peering eye of a local matriarch and nod in tribute

As we move on deftly, I take her hand
 In her pulse I feel her heart
 A thriving source, flowing warmly from palm to palm
 May the life in this grasp age with the pines
 Healthy, strong, and evergreen

Call to Worship for Christmas

From the very beginning was
 Your Word
 Which spoke this world into being
Your Word
Which thunders from the skies
 Your Word
 Which flows like mountain streams
Your Word
Which whispers in morning breeze
 Your Word

Revealed through kings and prophets

Your Word

Revealed through Angels' praise

Your Word

Revealed in humble service

Your Word

Revealed through a tiny child

Your Word

Alive from the beginning of all things

And to eternity.

Shout for joy

the whole earth,

and everything within.

Rejoice!

For Light has come into the world

The mountains sing,

the seas resound

to the praise of your name.

Salvation

once promised is here on earth

The angels' song

rings in the air,

a child has been born.

Hallelujah!

The Saviour of the world is here

Note: I added formatting to create a Call to Worship from prayers by John Birch.

Traditional and New Prayers for Advent and Christmas A selection of contemporary, traditional and ancient prayers for the seasons of Advent and Christmas John Birch
https://www.faithandworship.com/prayers_Christmas.htm#gsc.tab=0

Different Post Christmas Worship Elements

A prayer and a hymn:

About The Light Prayer

It's always been about the light with you,
 hasn't it, Jesus?

Magi, braving distance and desert to find you,
 and bewildered shepherds, compelled by an angel's invitation,
 allowed light to be their guide,

And it is still the light that calls us to you;
 the light of beauty that whispers its truth

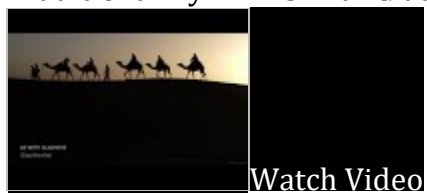
in surprising ways and places;
 the light of compassion that kneels,
 and washes road-soiled, life-battered feet;
 the light of joy that glows
 even in the darkness of grief and suffering;
 the light that seeks to shine within us,
 and through us into the dark corners of our world.
 It's always been about the light with you, Jesus;
 and it's always about the light for us.
 Please lead us, now and always, out of darkness
 and into your marvelous light.

Amen.

~ John van de Laar, posted on *Sacredise.com*.

<http://www.sacredise.com/>

Traditional Hymn: As with Gladness Men of Old



As with gladness men of old (Version 1)

Duration: 3:20

User: n/a - **Added:** 11/20/20

As with gladness, men of old
 Did the guiding star behold
 As with joy they hailed its light
 Leading onward, beaming bright
 So, most glorious Lord, may we
 Evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped
 To that lowly manger bed
 There to bend the knee before
 Him Whom Heaven and earth adore;
 So may we with willing feet
 Ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
 At that manger rude and bare;
 So may we with holy joy,
 Pure and free from sin's alloy,
 All our costliest treasures bring,
 Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day
 Keep us in the narrow way;
 And, when earthly things are past,
 Bring our ransomed souls at last
 Where they need no star to guide,
 Where no clouds Thy glory hide.

Prayer - A form of intercession:

Christ, for whom there was no room in the inn,
 give courage to all who are homeless;
 in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Christ, who fled into Egypt,
 give comfort to all refugees;
 in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Christ, who fasted in the desert,
 give relief to all who are starving;
 in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Christ, who hung in agony on the cross,
 give strength to all who suffer;
 in your mercy

hear our prayer.

Lord of the Church

hear our prayer,

**and make us one in heart and mind
 to serve you with joy for ever. Amen.**

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/topical-prayers/prayers-christmas>

The Sheltering Tree

Hey! Learn to hear my feeble voice.
 At the center of the sacred hoop
 You have said that I should make the tree to bloom.

With tears running, O Great Spirit, my Grandfather,
 With running eyes I must say
 The tree has never bloomed

Here I stand, and the tree is withered.
 Again, I recall the great vision you gave me.

It may be that some little root of the sacred tree still lives.
Nourish it then
That it may leaf
And bloom
And fill with singing birds!

Hear me, that the people may once again
Find the good road
And the shielding tree.

- *Black Elk*

Source: <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/sustainability-prayers>