

# **Morning Prayer for Celtic Advent 2024**

with centering prayer / contemplative sit.

## **THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY**

*A candle is lit. An invocation of a commemoration, memorial or feast may be noted.*

*Bell x 3*

### **Gathering Words**

O God, open our lips. **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Glory to you Source of All being, Eternal Word and Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the Beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.**

### **Gratitude**

Night has passed and the day lies open before. Let us pray with one heart and mind...

*a brief silence is kept.*

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day, so may the light of your presence, O God, set our hearts on fire with love for you.

*In silence, or aloud, we name that for which we are grateful this morning.*

### **Confession and Assurance**

We human beings have sinned against God, each other and creation.

Let us ask for forgiveness... We take a moment to offer up what we have done or left undone individually or collectively - to God's unceasing grace and mercy...

*Silence is kept for confession. An assurance of grace or absolution is offered.*

## **THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

### **The Psalm**

*The psalm of the day is said or chanted from the psalter.*

...Glory to You, Source of all being, eternal Word and Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

**The Reading** *A reading of the day is read aloud – usually the appointed gospel.*

### **The Contemplative Sit**

#### **The Principles of Centering Prayer**

1. Choose a sacred word or a sacred breath as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
2. Sitting comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly and silently introduce the sacred word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
3. When engaged with your thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the sacred word. Thoughts include body sensations, feelings, images, and reflections.
4. At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.

*The 20-minute silence begins and ends with a bell. At the end we may bow toward each other.*

## **The Canticle: Hannah's Song**

*We may chant or speak Hannah's Song together.*

- 1 My heart exults in the Lord; ♦  
my strength is exalted in my God.
  - 2 My mouth derides my enemies, ♦  
because I rejoice in your salvation.
  - 3 There is no Holy One like you, O Lord, ♦  
nor any Rock like you, our God.
  - 4 For you are a God of knowledge ♦  
and by you our actions are weighed.
  - 5 The bows of the mighty are broken, ♦  
but the feeble gird on strength.
  - 6 Those who were full now hire themselves out for bread, ♦  
but those who were hungry are well fed.
  - 7 The barren woman has borne sevenfold, ♦  
but she who has many children is forlorn.
  - 8 Both the poor and the rich are of your making; ♦  
you bring low and you also exalt.
  - 9 You raise up the poor from the dust, ♦  
and lift the needy from the ash heap.
  - 10 You make them sit with the rulers ♦  
and inherit a place of honour.
  - 11 For the pillars of the earth are yours ♦  
and on them you have set the world. Church of England, Canticles.
- GP: Glory to You Source of All Being / Eternal Word and Holy Spirit ♦  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be / world without end, Amen.

## **Affirmation of Faith**

Let us affirm our faith as we say, together

**We are not alone,**

**we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**

**who has created and is creating,**

**who has come in Jesus,**

**the Word made flesh,**

**to reconcile and make new,**

**who works in us and others**

**by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the Church:**

**to celebrate God's presence,**

**to live with respect in Creation,**

**to love and serve others,**

**to seek justice and resist evil,**

**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,**

**our judge and our hope.**

**In life, in death, in life beyond death,**

**God is with us.**

**We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.**A New Creed, UCC

Or

**A) We offer praise to Jesus,  
a Palestinian Jew,  
born to a woman in poverty  
in a time of social upheaval  
and political oppression.  
Jesus knew human joy and sorrow.  
So filled with the Holy Spirit was he  
that in him people experienced the  
presence of God among them.  
We sing praise to God incarnate.  
Jesus announced the coming of God's  
reign—a commonwealth not of domination  
but of peace, justice, and reconciliation.  
Jesus healed the sick and fed the hungry.  
Jesus forgave sins and freed those held  
captive by all manner of demonic powers.  
He crossed barriers of race, class, culture,  
and gender. He preached and practised  
unconditional love—love of God, love of  
neighbour, love of friend, love of enemy—  
and he commanded his followers to love  
one another as he had loved them.  
Because his witness to love was  
threatening, those exercising power sought  
to silence Jesus.  
He suffered abandonment and betrayal,**

**state-sanctioned torture and execution.  
Jesus was crucified.  
But death was not the last word.  
God raised Jesus from death,  
turning sorrow into joy, despair into hope.  
We sing of Jesus raised from the dead.  
We sing hallelujah.  
By becoming flesh in Jesus, God makes all  
things new.  
B) In Jesus' life, teaching, and self-offering,  
God empowers us to live in love.  
In Jesus' crucifixion, God bears the sin,  
grief, and suffering of the world.  
In Jesus' resurrection, God overcomes  
death. Nothing separates us from the love  
of God. The Risen Christ lives today,  
present to us and the source of our hope.  
In response to who Jesus was  
and to all he did and taught,  
to his life, death, and resurrection,  
and to his continuing presence with us  
through the Spirit, we celebrate him as the  
Word made flesh, the one in whom God and  
humanity are perfectly joined, the  
transformation of our lives, the Christ.**

Excerpt from Song of Faith, alt. UCC

## THE PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

### **Our Prayers**

Sentence: "O Lord, you will hear the desire of the meek; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice for the orphan and the oppressed, so that those from earth may strike terror no more." (Psalm 10)

Let us offer our prayers to God with one heart and one mind.

*Intercessions may be offered in silence or aloud.*

...May the Divine Assistance be with our absent companions [*names may be offered*]...and all those we keep in our hearts this day and always...

### **Collecting Prayers**

*This prayer or another collect / collect of the day may be said:*

Long-Expected Jesus, the day of our redemption is drawing near! Your holy Advent weaves past, present, and future together in a timeless tapestry of hope, of gracious promises made and fulfilled. We remember your faithfulness to your people, O God, and we are encouraged. As we worship, keep us alert to your reign and watchful in prayer. We anticipate the future, longing to be more completely in your presence as we await your glorious return. Holy Spirit, lead us in your steadfast love; we humbly place our trust in YOU. **Amen.** The United Church of Canada / Advent Unwrapped 2024, alt.

## **Other Collects (ACC)**

**Advent I** God of justice and peace, from the heavens you rain down mercy and kindness. Raise our heads in expectation, so that we may yearn for the coming day of the Lord and stand without blame before your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.** Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

**Advent II** God of timeless grace, you fill us with joyful expectation: make us ready for the message that prepares the way, so that with uprightness of heart and holy joy we may eagerly await the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.** Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

**Advent III** God who winnows the wheat from the chaff: let the fire of your Spirit purge us of greed and deceit, so that, purified, we may find our peace in you and you may delight in us. Grant this through him whose coming is certain and whose day draws near, Jesus, the Lord of the harvest. **Amen.** Opening Prayers (1997) alt.

**Advent IV** O God of Elizabeth and Mary, you visited your servants with news of the world's redemption in the coming of the Lord. May our hearts leap with joy and our mouths be filled with songs of praise to welcome the Christ in our midst. **Amen.** Revised Common Lectionary Prayers (2002) alt.

## **The Lord's Prayer**

..Rejoicing in God's new creation  
and gathering our prayers and praises into one  
in a language, paraphrase or translation of our choosing  
let us pray as our Saviour taught us,  
**Our Father (or Source, or Maker, or Parent) in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## **THE SENDING FORTH OF THE COMMUNITY**

### **The Dismissal**

We are sent from this place in expectant hope, to watch and wait for the coming of Christ.

*[chanted]* Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**

*Bell x 3*