



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

An Order of Service for Noonday – Advent/Christmas

Daily Prayer for all Seasons, pgs. 1, 9-10; 20, 28-30

St. Andrew's acknowledges that we are on the traditional lands of the Duwamish people. The Duwamish are still here, and continue to honor and bring to light their ancient heritage. We honor with gratitude the land itself and the Duwamish people.

Advent

The Christian calendar begins its new year not on January 1, but on the first Sunday of Advent — which is always four Sundays before Christmas (December 25) and the Sunday closest to St. Andrew's Day (November 30). Our word "Advent" derives from the Latin *Adventus*, which means "coming," and originally referred just to the coming of the feast of Christmas. But over time the season of Advent took on a double meaning. Today it refers both to the "first coming" of Jesus Christ in his birth at Christmas and to his "second coming" at the end of time.

It is important to remember that Advent is not just a season in which we recall an event of the past — Jesus' birth — but also a time in which we look to the present and the future. When will Jesus come again? When will we see the kingdom of God on earth, as it is in heaven? Of course no one knows. And so the more important questions are: What can we do as the Church, Christ's body here on earth, to welcome God's reign of justice and peace today? What can we do as individuals to reorder our lives in the light of God's love? What would it mean to live as a people who believe in Jesus as the Savior of all the earth and who expect him to come again at the fulfillment of time? Each Advent we turn to these questions anew (p. 1).

Perseverance and Renewal

Sext (Traditional hour: mid-day)

As we pause to feed our bodies in the middle of the day, we pause also to feed our souls by vowing again to live faithfully.

Opening Do not be afraid.
God is with us, always.

Prayer Shepherd of Israel, may Jesus, who is Emmanuel and son of Mary, be more than just a dream in our hearts. With the apostles, prophets, and saints, save us, restore us, and lead us in the way of grace and peace, that we may bear your promise into the world. **Amen.**

Praise *The Song of Mary* (Magnificat; Luke 1:46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,

my spirit rejoices in you, O God, my Savior,
for you have looked with favor on your servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed:
you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,
and holy is your Name.
You have mercy on those who fear you
from generation to generation.
You have shown strength with your arm
and scattered the proud in their conceit,
Casting down the mighty from their thrones
and lifting up the lowly.
You have filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
You have come to the help of your servant Israel,
for you have remembered your promise of mercy,
The promise made to our forebears,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Scripture When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. John 16: 21-22

or you may use a Scripture passage from the day

Meditation Ask yourself: Will this satisfy a woman satisfied to bear a child? Will this disturb the sleep of a woman near to giving birth? Wendell Berry

As we seek our own renewal, we look at others through the lens of compassion; how will this point of view affect our choices?

or you may use silence, a different meditation, or reflection on a saint

Prayers For our deepest and most holy longings we pray:
Renew us, O God.
For all who wander, who hunger, who thirst:
Renew us as people of service and compassion.

For this planet, our home:

Renew our will to be healers of creation.

For this and every nation:

**Renew in all people the will for good and
the longing for peace.**

For those whom we hold in our hearts:

*Here, the people may add particular intercessions
or thanksgivings.*

Bless these and all creation with your goodness,
and renew our trust in your love. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Prayer O God of Elizabeth and Mary, you visited your servants with news of the world's redemption in the coming of the Savior: Make our hearts leap with joy, and fill our mouths with songs of praise, that we may announce glad tidings of peace and welcome the Christ in our midst. **Amen.**

Going Out Do not be afraid.
God is with us, always.

Christmas

For the church, Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. We celebrate this birth not because Jesus was simply a "good man" but because we believe Jesus was — and is — both the human son of Mary and the divine Son of God. That makes Christmas a time to reflect on a mystery that the church calls the doctrine of the Incarnation. This important theological term comes from the Latin word *carne*, which means "flesh," and has to do with the divine taking on human flesh and coming among us in human form.

In one of his Christmas sermons Augustine, the fifth-century bishop of Hippo, described the mystery of the Incarnation this way: "Beloved, our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal creator of all things, today became our Savior by being born of a mother. Of his own will he was born for us today, in time, so that he could lead us to his Father's eternity. God became human like us so that we might become God. The Lord of the angels became one of us today so that we could eat the bread of angels" (p. 20).

Perseverance and Renewal

Sext (Traditional hour: mid-day)

As we pause to feed our bodies in the middle of the day, we pause also to feed our souls by vowing again to live faithfully.

Opening All life is interwoven.
All life is gift from God.

Prayer Giver of life and author of love: Be present at this hour as we pause to rest in your love. Fill us with the memory of your goodness, bless us with the grace of your light, and send us out again with renewed faithfulness to show your love to the world. **Amen.**

Praise Love Came Down at Christmas
(Music, if desired, may be found in The Hymnal 1982, #84.)

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas:
Star and angels gave the sign.
Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus,
But where for a sacred sign?
Love shall be our token;
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and neighbor,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Words (alt.): Christina Rossetti

Scripture But when the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. Titus 3: 4-5

or you may use a Scripture passage from the day

Meditation Grace is often portrayed as “washing away” the things that obscure the essential goodness of life. That light that was in the beginning still glows at the heart of life, but we do not see its full brilliance.... Grace is like a cleansing rain over the landscape of life, followed by a sunlight that restores our vision. J. Philip Newell

*Where do we need the grace of renewal right now?
How can we offer it to others?*

or you may use silence, a different meditation, or reflection on a saint

Prayers God our Savior,
Cleanse from our hearts all that impedes your love.
God our Savior,
Renew in us the desire to live in your grace.
God our Savior,
Fill us again with the will to persevere.
God our Savior, we bless your name and ask
your healing love:

*Here, the people may add particular thanksgivings
and intercessions.*

Give us ever-grateful hearts,
To share your love with all.
Hold all the earth in your goodness,
And make us ministers of your gospel.

Lord's Prayer

Prayer God of creation, through your great mercy you
renew us: Send us now back to the love and labor
of this day with joy and compassion in our hearts;
Through Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

Going Out All life is interwoven.
All life is a gift from God.

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Officiants: The Rev. Rich Weyls, Rector; The Rev. Danae Ashley, Associate Rector; or The Rev. Rebecca Kirkpatrick, Priest Associate for Children, Youth, and Families