



CHURCH @ HOME SERVICE ORDER

Sunday, 28 December 2025
First Sunday After Christmas



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

**Almighty and eternal God,
direct our actions according to your good pleasure.**

**Make us rich in good works,
in the name of your dear Son,
who lives and reigns
with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.**

Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

*People of God, come and worship the Lord who has been our help and shield –
the One who has not let sorrow have the final word.*

**For the Lord hears our cries, remembers his children,
and promises hope in place of tears.**

*In trials and testing, we do not lose heart, for Christ has walked the hard road
before us and guards us still.*

**We come to praise the God who delivers, who rescues from danger,
and who leads his people into resurrection life.**

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

GREETING ONE ANOTHER

TO SHEPHERDS AS THEY WATCHED BY NIGHT

**To shepherds as they watched by night
 appeared a host of angels bright.
You'll find a newborn child, they said;
 he's lying in a manger-bed,**

**Be joyful, then, that through God's Son
 God is with sinners now at one;
made like yourselves of flesh and blood,
 your brother is the eternal God.**

**What harm can sin and death then do?
 For God himself now lives with you.
Let hell and Satan burn with rage;
 Christ is your friend and you are safe.**

**Put all your trust in him and know
 that he will never let you go.
And when your enemies attack,
 be bold, for Christ will drive them back.**

Martin Luther 1483-1546
Tr David Schubert (1996, 1998),

LORD HAVE MERCY

(spoken)

*Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.*

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
 O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come and behold Him, born the king of angels:**

**O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
 O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

God of God, Light of light,
lo, He abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created:

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet You, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to You be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

C. Frederick Oakeley, John Francis Wade, William Henry Monk
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*The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and merciful God, you are our helper and deliverer, preserving your people in every trial. When sorrow rises and trouble surrounds us, turn our eyes to Jesus, who entered our danger and carried our suffering to bring us life. By your Holy Spirit, keep us steadfast in faith, trusting your promises until you bring us safely home; through Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

PSALM 124

*If the LORD had not been on our side –
let Israel say –
if the LORD had not been on our side
when people attacked us,
they would have swallowed us alive
when their anger flared against us;
the flood would have engulfed us,
the torrent would have swept over us,*

*the raging waters
would have swept us away.*

*Praise be to the LORD,
who has not let us be torn by their teeth.*

*We have escaped like a bird
from the fowler's snare;
the snare has been broken,
and we have escaped.*

*Our help is in the name of the LORD,
the Maker of heaven and earth.*

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

Amen.

BIBLE READING

Jeremiah 31:15-17: Rachel weeps for her children

This is what the Lord says: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.' This is what the Lord says: 'Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,' declares the Lord. 'They will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for your descendants,' declares the Lord. 'Your children will return to their own land.

*After the reading
This is the Word of the LORD.
Thanks be to God.*

1 Peter 4:12-19: Rejoice in sharing Christ's sufferings

Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment

to begin with God's household; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, 'If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?' So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

After the reading
This is the Word of the LORD.
Thanks be to God.

Matthew 2:13-23: Herod kills the children of Bethlehem

Before the reading
Glory be to You, O LORD.

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: 'Out of Egypt I called my son.' When Herod realised that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: 'A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.' After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead.' So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

After the reading
This is the gospel of the LORD.
Praise be to You, O Christ.

CHRISTMAS CREED

From heaven to the cradle, from the cradle to the cross,
Jesus, Son and Saviour, came to save the lost
Changing darkness into light, my sin into his grace,
Jesus, Lamb of offering, dying in my place.

I believe the Christmas story, I believe this ancient truth,
That a Father sent a holy Child to die for me and you.
I believe that He is living, I believe He rose again,
I believe that I'm forgiven, that I'll always live with Him.

From the grave he rose to heaven, from the heavens now he reigns,
Jesus, Lord and ruler, worthy of all praise.
Jesus, prince of peace and author of true love,
Jesus, my salvation, Lord of all above,
Jesus, you're the story,
Jesus, you're the truth,
Jesus, you are Christmas, and we live to worship you. Amen.

MARY'S CHILD

Born in the night Mary's Child
A long way from Your home; Coming in need
Mary's Child Born in a borrowed room

Clear shining light Mary's Child
Your face lights up our way; Light of the world
Mary's Child Dawn on our darkened day

Truth of our life Mary's Child
You tell us God is good; Prove it is true
Mary's Child Go to Your cross of wood.

Hope of the world Mary's Child
You're coming soon to reign; King of the earth
Mary's Child Walk in our streets again

Geoffrey Ainger

MESSAGE

At this point you may wish to watch the Sermon.

For Church YouTube Channel ([click here](#))

For LCA Worship Resources ([click here](#))

CONFESSiON OF SINS

Let us draw near to God our Father with a true heart to confess our sins, and ask Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

Almighty God, merciful Father, I, a poor helpless sinner, confess to You all my sins, and repent of all the evil I have done. I have deeply displeased You and deserve Your punishment in time and in eternity. But I am sorry for my sins, and I ask You, for the sake of the holy innocent sufferings and death of Your dear Son Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me. Amen.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us, and has given His only Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in His name He has given the right to become children of God, and has given them His Holy Spirit. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. Amen.

A CRY IN THE NIGHT

A cry in the night and a child is born;
A child in a stable, there isn't any room
A cry in the night, and God has made
our homelessness his home

A trial in the dark, the disciples run.
They bring him to Pilate, he stands there all alone.
A trial in the dark, and God has made
our homelessness his home.

A man on a cross, and the sun beats down;
Up there on the gallows he's got a thorny crown.
A man on a cross, and God has made
our homelessness his home.

**A voice in the dawn when the women came:
"You're looking for Jesus, don't seek him in a tomb".
A voice in the dawn, and God has made
our homelessness his home.**

Geoffrey Ainger
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OFFERING PRAYER

**Gracious God,
You have been our help and our protector,
and so we bring our gifts with grateful hearts.
In our sorrows you speak hope,
and in our trials you make us steadfast in Christ.
Use our offerings – and use us – to bring your comfort
and light to those who are in need. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

The word of the prophets has been fulfilled: the Lord has come to his temple. Let us pray to God who is here with us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

We thank you for your gift of people to the church. We thank you for those who teach the word of God, who work to serve and care for people, for everybody who serves in the church in any capacity, however small. We pray that through all these people the work of the church may continue.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We pray for all those people who live on the fringes of society, like the shepherds who worshipped Jesus. Keep us from prejudice; teach us to put aside our fears and discomforts and to open our hearts to all people, regardless of who they are or where they come from.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We pray for all the children of the church. Watch over them at all times so that they may grow in God's wisdom. We pray that you would give guidance to Christian parents so that they may have love and wisdom in caring for their children and teaching them to walk with you.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We pray for all people in situations of conflict or hostility. We pray for all those whose marriage is in difficulty or for families who are hurting in other ways. Bring them the true peace, which you alone can bring, so that they may continue to live with each other in the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We pray for congregations and churches who are struggling with conflict and division. Bring them closer together, heal hurts and bitterness, help them to forgive each other and work together again, reflecting the true unity they have in Christ.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

We pray for all those who live under the oppression of tyrannical leaders. Defend and protect them from every danger. Give the leaders of the world grace and mercy to govern wisely and fairly.

Lord in your mercy: **hear our prayer**

Father, continue to walk with us and give us guidance and direction as we face the challenges and joys you are preparing for us in the year ahead. In everything we do, keep us faithful to you with our eyes fixed on Christ Jesus our Lord. For he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father 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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are Yours
now and forever. Amen.**

BLESSING TO SHARE

May the Lord, who is always on our side, keep you safe and strong.

May the Lord, who is always on our side, keep you safe and strong.

May God turn your tears into hope and give you courage for the days ahead.

May God turn your tears into hope and give you courage for the days ahead.

May Jesus hold you firm when life is hard, helping you to trust him.

May Jesus hold you firm when life is hard, helping you to trust him. Amen.

LORD, TAKE MY HAND

Lord, take my hand and lead me
along life's way;
protect and guide and feed me
from day to day.

Without Your care and favour
I go astray;
so take my hand, O Saviour,
and lead the way.

Lord, take my heart and hide it
within Your grace;
through pain and pleasure guide it
to be at peace.

Hold close Your child, dear Saviour,
and stay with me,
and help me trust whenever
I cannot see.

For when it seems You're hiding
Your saving might,
still You are safely guiding
me through the night.

So take my hand and lead me
along life's way;
protect and guide and feed me
to endless day.

Julie Hausmann 1825-1901 (1862) Tr composite, revised David Schubert (1988, 1997)
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