Closing Responses & Blessing

Go to bear witness to the God who confronts all barriers to good.

Go in peace and courage 1.

And Bless us and the people we meet along the way Father,

Son

and Holy Spirit.

Amen

Mary was a sight to see Livin down in Galilee Planned to marry Joseph in a week Mary had some baby news Joseph was a bit confused We were all a little puzzled too The Holy Spirit came while I was sleeping And I swear to God I've never told a lie So Mary grabbed her things and then She headed down to Bethlehem To give this baby thing a try Everybody come gather round There's a new boy in town He's gonna be hanging around for a while And if you ever want to come back again Just follow those three wise men So every year we can all say It's Christmas day Joseph was a carpenter One day he overheard Isaiah say there's gonna be a sign He stood up tall and took a breath In the down of Nazareth I'll take care of this child like he's mine The angels came to me while I was sleeping And I swear to God I've never told a lie So gather everyone tonight I wanna tell the Israelites That I can hear my baby boy cry Everybody come gather round There's a new boy in town He's gonna be hanging around for a while And if you ever want to come back again Just follow those three wise men So every year we can all say It's Christmas Day Everybody come gather round There's a new boy in town He's gonna be wearing a crown in a while And if you every want to come back again Just follow those three wise men So every year we can all say It's Christmas Day

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Christmas Day lyrics @ Mushroom Music Pty. Ltd., Mushroom Music Pty Ltd.

It's Christmas Day

Songwriters: Kasey Chambers

Source: Musixmatch

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Simple worship for the scattered Christian community

Luke 1: 26-38 Advent 4

Welcome

An opportunity to welcome people to the gathering

Lighting of Advent Candle

You are invited to arrange 5 candles for Advent and Christmas Day. This week we light the fourth candle.

The life of God is conceived in humankind See the fragile light being lit there.

Do not put it away because you cannot understand where it comes from or where it will take you. It lies in our hands and is held there in trusting vulnerability ¹.

Light the four candles.

Responses & Gathering Prayer

Let the world hold its breath,

for good is coming in all its vulnerable newness. Deep within our life a wonder is conceived, hidden in humanity's moments of faithfulness.

Look for it, for it is near.

Believe in it, for it is of god.

Be ready to nurture its life among us,

for it is a precious gift for all history.

Christmas is drawing close.

Thanks be to our God 1.

Amen.

Music for Reflection

Suggested song: Christmas Day

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzidsNHKWsc&list=OLAK5uy_kZ8XPi86MorByz0Aty4tF6aSja3MSt9qQ&index=12&t=0s

Christmas Day · Kasey Chambers Bittersweet ® 2014 Essence Group Pty Ltd Composer: Kasey Chambers

Passing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

You are invited to turn to those around you and offer them a word of greeting and peace.

The Word around the Bush

Luke 1: 26-38

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Message

From your Scattered Community Minister or another leader within your gathering.

Questions for conversation

- •I wonder what you have heard and thought from the Word today?
- •I wonder what you heard in the Word for our church?
- •What one action can you or your church take in response to the Word today?

Silence in Two Ways

Spend some time in silence sitting still (suggested 5 minutes). Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert.

- •You may like to say the prayer phrase "Mar-an-ath-a" (which means come Lord). Say this as four syllables. Do not try to think or imagine anything. If thoughts or distractions come simply return to saying the word.
- •Or you may like "sitting with God" a silent time in which we focus all our mind, heart and soul on the presence of God without trying to create it. Simply be still and open to God.

Prayers for Others

O God, sometimes when we pray for others and ourselves, we know that we are praying for what seems impossible to us.

If our prayers are limited by our human visions for the future, enlarge them with your grandeur of purpose. If they are limited by our lack of faith, expand our hearts and souls this day that we may dare to pray for nothing less than the coming of your reign in all the earth.

Silence

In the silence, our lives are touched by you, Jesus Christ

We will receive all that you offer to us, O God, all that inspires and opens us to the breath of your dreams.

In this spirit, we bring you our prayers for ourselves and others

The People pray

Break into our lives, O God.

Bring down your justice like rain upon the earth. Raise up, from within the depths of our lives love that will never let our neighbours go.

Cover us with healing grace and conceive in the centre of despair surprising freshness and energies for creative change.

Surround us with ideas which spring up like green shoots in concrete, defying dryness and challenging deathliness.

For you are our God and we will be your people. We would be those who never lay down the great hope of which we are called ¹. Amen.