



Resource Centre

From our Churches

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Into The Manger and Beyond: Five Faces of Christ

We found that participants require 1 week's notice in order to properly prepare for these services. It was also intended for use with the Amplified Bible [2 copies required], but can be used with the version of the participants' choice.

All symbols were left in place from week to week [except for used candle] to finally form a complete display.

The material focuses on five "faces" of Christ and is intended for use on four Sundays and Christmas day, or five Sundays. Each display should be assembled by participants as they read.

Material List

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1 st Sunday: | multi-colored cloth
NEW white candle in holder
Matches |
| 2 nd Sunday: | rough, brown or dull colored cloth
piece of gold foil or garland tied to small bundle of straw
NEW white candle in holder
Matches |
| 3 rd Sunday: | towel and basin
NEW white candle
Matches |
| 4 th Sunday: | red cloth
crown of thorns [small grapevine wreath]
NEW white candle in holder
Matches |
| 5 th Sunday: | pure white cloth
gold crown
NEW white candle in holder
Matches |

First Advent

- Reader 1: Today, let us focus on “the Creator Christ.”
- Reader 2: We are reading from John 1:1-5, and Rev. 19:13, 16
- Reader 1: Reads from John 1:1 [*Reader 2 loudly reads the words in brackets except for Bible references*].
- Reader 2: Reads from Rev. 19:13
- Reader 1: Reads from John 1:2, 3, 4
- Reader 2: Reads from Rev. 19: 16 [*Reads 1 loudly reads words in brackets*]
- Reader 1: Reads from John 1:5

Display

- Reader 2: This multi-coloured cloth symbolizes the great diversity in creation and helps us to focus on the Creator.
- Reader 1: This pure white candle symbolizes the purity and holiness of Jesus, and reminds us that He is Lord of lords.
- Reader 2: This flame gives light and reminds us of the words “Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good...”

Prayer

Jesus, we stand in awe in the face of your creative power, and we acknowledge that we, ourselves are not only your greatest creation, because we are made in your image, but possibly also your greatest disappointment, because we, out of all you have made, grieve you over and over. And yet Lord, You continue to love us. We thank you for your special care for us, and we pray that, during this special season, and beyond, our thoughts, our attitudes and our actions will be pleasing in your sight. In your Name we pray. Amen.

Hymn #46 HWB *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*

Second Advent

- Reader 1: Today, we will focus on “The Humble Christ”.
- Reader 2: We are reading from Isaiah 7:14, Luke 2:8-12, and Philippians 2:5-8 in the Amplified bible.
- Reader 1: Reads from Luke 2:8, 9, 10 [*Reader 2 loudly pronounces words in brackets except Bible reference*]
- Reader 2: Reads from Isaiah 7:14

Reader 1: Reads from Luke 2:11, 12 [*Reader 2 loudly pronounces words in brackets*]

Reader 2: Reads from Philippians 2:5-8 [*Reader 1 loudly pronounces words in brackets*]

Display

Reader 1: This rough, brown cloth symbolizes Jesus' lowly birth, and reminds us that He *chose* to humble Himself for our sakes.

Reader 2: This piece of gold among the straw symbolizes Jesus' glory in heaven and reminds us of all that He left behind for our sakes.

Reader 1: This pure white candle symbolizes the purity and holiness of Jesus and reminds us that He is the Lord of lords.

Reader 2: This flame is small, and reminds us of that tiny light which began to shine in that manger so long ago.

Prayer

Jesus, we praise you and thank you for the unselfish emptying of yourself for our sakes. We acknowledge that we are not worthy on our own merit to even approach your humble bed, but Lord, by your unending grace, you have made us joint heirs with you in your Kingdom by our acceptance of salvation. Jesus, we can't begin to understand, but we thank you and give you all the glory and praise. Amen.

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Third Advent

Reader 1: Today, we will turn our eyes upon "the Serving Christ".

Reader 2: We are reading from John 13:3-5, 12-15 in the Amplified Bible.

Reader 1: Reads from John 13:3, 4 [*Reader 2 loudly reads words in brackets except for bible reference*]

Reader 2: Reads from John 13:5 [*Reader 1 loudly reads words in brackets*]

Reader 1: Reads from John 13:12-15 [*Reader 2 loudly reads words in brackets*]

Display

Reader 2: This towel and basin represent the tools Jesus used to teach His disciples to serve and honor one another, and reminds us that if the very King of Heaven lowered Himself into humble servitude, then how much more should we strive to serve others.

Reader 1: This pure white candle symbolizes the purity and holiness of Jesus and reminds us that He is Lord of lords.

Reader 2: This flame is the light of that first lesson in humble servitude that is passed on when we serve another in the spirit and love of Jesus.

Prayer

Jesus, so often, we consider ourselves first. So often we make excuses and say things like “why me?”, “It’s not my job”, or “I’m too busy”, and sometimes, what we really mean is “I’m above doing that”. Lord, forgive us our neglect and our haughtiness. Help us to be willing, cheerful servants to one another and to our community and to do all that we do as unto You. We pray in your precious Name. Amen.

Hymn #449 HWB *Jesus Took a Towel*

Fourth Advent

Reader 1: This Sunday we will focus on “the Suffering Christ”.

Reader 2: We are reading from Matthew 26:37-39, 42 and Matthew 27:27-31, 45, 46, 50 Amplified Bible

Reader 1: Reads from Matthew 26:37-39

Reader 2: Reads from Matthew 27:27-28

Reader 1: Repeats prayer of V. 39 [*emphatically*]

Reader 2: Reads Matthew 27:29, 30 [*emphasis on words in brackets*]

Reader 1: Reads Matthew 26:42

Reader 2: Reads Matthew 27:31

Reader 1: Repeats prayer of V. 39 [*more emphatically*]

Reader 2: Reads Matthew 27:45, 46

Reader 1: Repeats prayer of V. 42 [*softly*]

Reader 2: Reads Matthew 27:50

Display

Reader 1: This red cloth represents the blood of Jesus which was shed for the atonement of our sins, and reminds us that we can be made clean, because the debt has been paid.

Reader 2: This crown of thorns represents the one so painfully worn by Jesus and reminds us of our part in causing His suffering.

Reader 1: This pure white candle symbolizes the purity and holiness of Jesus and reminds us that He’s the Lord of lords.

Reader 2: This flame is burning hot, and reminds us of the searing pain that Jesus endured for our sakes.

Prayer

Jesus, we can't begin to repay the debt we owe you. During this Christmas Season, please help us to see beyond the manger to the cross, and let our celebrations reflect our gratitude. In Your Name we pray. Amen.

Hymn #252 HWB *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*

Christmas Day

Reader 1: Today, we will focus our attention on the culmination of all that has gone before: "the Victorious Christ".

Reader 2: We are reading from Philippians 2:9-11 and Revelations 1:7, 17, 18 in the Amplified Bible.

Reader 1: Reads from Philippians 2:9-11 [*Reader 2 loudly reads words in square brackets*]

Reader 2: Reads from Revelations 1:7

Reader 1: Repeats first part of Philippians 2:9

Reader 2: Reads from Revelations 1:17, 18

Reader 1: Repeats last part of V. 9 along with Philippians 2:10, 11

Display

Reader 2: This white cloth symbolizes the clouds: "Lo, He is coming with the clouds..." Revelations 1:7a, and reminds us to look up to Jesus always and often, and to look forward to His coming again.

Reader 1: This golden crown represents the Kingship of Jesus and reminds us to bow down before Him always and often, and to confess Him as our Lord.

Reader 2: This pure white candle symbolizes the purity and holiness of Jesus and reminds us that He is Lord of lords.

Reader 1: This flame burns brightly, yet dims by comparison to the Glory and splendor of the Exalted Christ, whose Kingdom has no end.

Prayer

Jesus, Name above all Names, we acknowledge You now and forever as King of kings and Lord of Lords. We pray that these Christmas celebrations glorify You and are a means of drawing others to You so that they can be washed clean, and acknowledge You as the Lord of their lives. In the most Holy of names we pray. Amen.

Hymn #318 HWB *Joy to the World*