

New Year's Service of Confession and Forgiveness

(Instructions about the candle lighting)

P: Candles and their light, almost by their very nature, are symbolic. Candlelight represents love. Candlelight represents beauty. Candlelight represents warmth and caring. Candlelight represents goodness, goodness which is stronger than evil. Candlelight represents life. These candles represent our lives this past year.

Silence

P: At times our lives did shine brightly for all to see the love of God, which lives in our hearts. At times our lives flickered and flashed wildly, growing stronger. At times our lives and the love, which lives inside seemed almost as if it would go out.

Silence

P: O Lord our God, you know the ways this past year in which our lives have not represented truth and knowledge. You know the times in which we struggled to be warm and caring and the times when we did not choose goodness. Forgive us Lord, for those times when our lives did not reflect your love. Give us your help and healing in our lives that we may begin this New Year with hope and joy.

C: Amen.

Silence

P: In Jesus' name the Lord our God forgives our sins this day and every day, this year and every year. What is over is done; God gives us grace for what is to come. Amen.

P: As a sign of God's forgiveness we do this.

(The congregation extinguishes their candles as a sign of God's forgiveness)

P: Yet we cannot live in the cold and in the darkness, we but wither and die. From whence does our light come?

(The acolyte lights the altar candles)

P: Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

C: The light no darkness can overcome.

P: Let us pray.

C: Eternal Father, you gave your Son the name of Jesus to be a sign of our

salvation. Plant in every heart the love of the Savior and Light of the world, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

What Child is This LBW #40

The Reading of Psalm 8 (*responsively*) p. 217

The Reading from the New Testament Philippians 2:9-13

Joy to the World LBW #39

The Reading of the Gospel Luke 2:21

The Sermon

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly LBW #44

The Offering “A Better World” Women’s Choir

The Prayer of the Church

(At the end of each petition . . .

P: In the name of Jesus,

C: The Light of the World.)

The Nicene Creed

The Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord’s Prayer (*as a sign of unity in Jesus’ name, the congregation joins hands*)

Communion Distribution Hymns:

Oh Come, All Ye Faithful LBW #45

O Little Town of Bethlehem LBW #41

The First Noel LBW #56

The Post Communion Prayer

The Old Testament Blessing: Numbers 6:22-27

(When exiting the acolyte takes a flame from the Altar candle as a reminder that we are called to be light to the world)

God the Father sent Jesus Christ into our world to offer us light. Through his name comes the forgiveness of sin and by the Spirit comes healing and strength for every day. And we, too, are called to be lights in this world, in this new year, each new

day.

P: Go in Peace. Serve the Lord. Go as a light to the World.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Distribution of Lights for the New Year

*(As you come to the altar to receive your light, please bring all your belongings
with you, and exit down the center aisle.)*

P: You are a light in Jesus' name.

C: **Amen.**