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Windows on Christmas

2021 Advent Worship Series

Inspired by

***Windows on Christmas*** by Bill Crowder

Collaboratively produced by

***Corps and Community Mission Department***

and ***Music and Creative Arts Ministries***

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A picture containing text, clipart

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**The Salvation Army | USA Central Territory**

**Commissioner Brad Bailey, *Territorial Commander***

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| Windows on Christmas  2021 Advent Worship Series  **FOREWORD** |

“Windows on Christmas” provides a fresh perspective on the Christmas story looking through the “windows” of some of the people who were there, helping us to see what they saw and feel what they felt—that we might be able to learn what they learned.

The five-week series includes worship service materials for the four Sundays of Advent, Christmas Eve Service and Sunday after Christmas. Available in English and Spanish, the series includes music options, dramas, readings, videos and other Christmas resources.

This series is inspired by ***Windows on Christmas*** by Bill Crowder (Discovery House, 2007).

The worship resources are available on the Music and Creative Arts website: https://www.samusiccentral.org/advent-2021

Video components are available on the Visual Communications website: <http://wsvr.viscomapps.com/>

**Weekly themes for the series are as follows:**

Week One (November 28, 2021): **The Window of Exaltation** – *The Angels*

Week Two (December 5, 2021): **The Window of Wonder** – *Mary*

Week Three (December 12, 2021): **The Window of Obedience** – *Joseph*

Week Four (December 19, 2021): **The Window of Worship** – *The Shepherds*

Christmas Eve (December 24, 2021): **Our Window on Christmas**

Week Five (December 26, 2021): **The Window of Witness** – *Anna*

**Services contain:**

* Song Options
* Calls to Worship/Scripture/Responsive Readings
* Advent Wreath Readings
* Dramas/Children’s Moments
* Sample Sermon Outlines

Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a ***suggestion***. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The meeting outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. It is recommended that the headings of each section of the service be included in the bulletin.

**APPRECIATION**

In producing this series, the Corps and Community Mission Department expresses its indebtedness to **Peggy Thomas** and **Katie Laidlaw** (Norridge Citadel, Illinois), **Martyn Thomas** (THQ, Music and Creative Arts Ministries), and **Mark Bender** (THQ, Corps and Community Mission Department) for their creativity, editing, and hard work. Special thanks to **Captains Catherine and Peter Mount** (Norridge Citadel, Illinois) for their creation of the sermon outlines and video sermons. Translation into Spanish has been expertly provided through **Alfredo Martinez** (THQ, Intercultural Ministries).

With grateful appreciation for the inspirational writings of:

Crowder, Bill. *Windows on Christmas.* Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 2007.

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* Worship Service Outline
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* Worship Service Outline
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**Christmas Eve – Our Window on Christmas**

* Worship Service Outline
* Devotional: **Our Window on Christmas**

**Week 5 – The Window of Witness** – *Anna*

* Worship Service Outline
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| Windows on Christmas  2021 Advent Worship Series  **EXPLANATORY NOTES** |

**This worship series has an abundance of content. Please feel free to select what you want to use, rearrange items, or add your own ideas to the services.**

**WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINES**

Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. To better accommodate changes, these worship service outlines are provided on the Music and Creative Arts website: <https://www.samusiccentral.org/worship-series>

If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed.

**VIDEO**

The Music and Creative Arts and Visual Communications Departments have produced videos of many of the worship service components, which can be used for both in-person or online worship. Please access them through the Visual Communications website: <http://wsvr.viscomapps.com/>

**MUSIC**

Music is an essential component of any worship service. It is a signal to unite and begin. It establishes the setting for praise and meditation. It adds variety, vitality and focus to worship. It can also be a means of learning and retaining spiritual truth, as well as expressing and sharing our faith.

These worship outlines are designed with the smallest to the largest congregation in mind, allowing for live (piano, ensemble, band, etc.) and recorded (compact discs) accompaniment.

All CD accompaniment songs/choruses have been chosen from the **Hymn Tune Accompaniment (HT)** and **Hallelujah Choruses (HC)** series. Very often an optional song or chorus is given which would fit at that point in the service in place of the original choice. You may wish to sing several of these songs as an additional worship time.

The information for each service component is listed in a grid format as in the following example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Song# – First Line (SB) or Title (HC/SS/CF)** | **Tune# – TB Title** | **CD Disc#-Track# (#verses on HT)** |
| **SB#100/HC#280/SS#186/CF#5 – Angels, from the realms of glory** | TB-407 – Regent Square  HC-280  SS-186  CF-5 | HTD4-T12 (4 vs.)  HCD26-T20 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#114/HC#146/SS#137 – Light of the world/Here I am to Worship** | TB-444 – Here I am to worship  HC-146  SS-137 | No HT CD  HCD13-T16 |

Accompaniment abbreviations/examples:

**SB** Salvation Army Song Book – words

**TB** Salvation Army Tune Book – tunes

**HC** Hallelujah Choruses

**SS** Songs of Salvation

**CF** Carolers Favorites

**HTD4-T12 (4 vs.)** Hymn Tune Accompaniment Disc #4-Track #12 (plays 4 verses)

**HC-280** Hallelujah Choruses #280

**HCD26-T20** Hallelujah Choruses Disc #26-Track #20

**SS-186** Songs of Salvation #186

Careful attention is needed when singing songs in a medley. When planning and selecting songs it is important to understand the difference between songs about God (a horizontal perspective) and songs sung to God (a vertical perspective). There is a generally held principle that these perspectives should not shift back and forth. For instance, if you were to sing “O Worship the King” (horizontal song) and “Shout to the Lord” (vertical song) consecutively, it is more conducive to worship to sing “O Worship the King” first and then “Shout to the Lord”, rather than the reverse. Once a vertical song is sung, it needs some type of resolution, whether it be a prayer or another vertical song. Worship “moments” can lose their impact if care is not taken in this area. Also, try to avoid mixing songs with radically different tempos or styles.

Vocal benediction options have been included for each service which can be an effective way to end each service.

**CALLS TO WORSHIP, RESPONSIVE READINGS and LIGHTING OF ADVENT CANDLES**

Services usually begin with a Call to Worship which introduces the theme of the service.

A responsive reading has been included in each service, which is the scripture reading for the service. It can be replaced by one person reading the scripture passage. A traditional Advent candle reading is also included, and could be presented each week by a different family, small group or ministry (women’s ministry, men’s ministry, corps cadets, etc.) in your corps.

**SPECIAL WORLD SERVICES COLLECTION – 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

During announcements/offering, announce that a special World Services Offering will be collected on the 4th Sunday of Advent. Encourage congregation to be creative in saving and multiplying their offerings for this collection. For ideas, see the resources produced by the World Missions Department: <https://centralmissions.org/mstoolkit/>

**DRAMAS and CHILDREN’S MOMENTS**

Drama sketches and Children’s Moments have been included in the series to add variety and depth to worship. The experience of *seeing* the Word portrayed, in addition to *hearing* the Word proclaimed, can provide worshipers with increased understanding and perspective. Focusing a special moment in the service for children brings all ages into worship with new perspectives (as well as some laughter!).

While it is not always necessary to memorize a script, memorization enhances any dramatic presentation when time and proficiency permit. Props are kept to a minimum. It is important to take time to read through the script before using this series to know what preparations will be needed.

**SOURCE MATERIAL FOR SERMONS**

Source material for the sermons are provided as a guide in preparation for a total worship experience. *Each sermon included should be viewed as a catalyst for preaching,* ***not a verbatim reading****.* These will be most effective if they are adapted, using personalized illustrations that relate to your specific congregation. Original illustrations have been left in but should only be used as a guideline.

**SUPPORT RESOURCES USED IN THIS SERIES**

The following support resources may be purchased through Trade Central: <http://satradecentral.org/>

Keyboard/Instrumental Accompaniment

The Salvation Army Song Book (2015) – vocal

The Salvation Army Tune Books (2015) – piano/band

Hallelujah Choruses Songbooks 1-26 (#1-280)

Hallelujah Choruses Instrumental Series 1-26 or

Hallelujah Choruses Piano/Rhythm Book (#1-280)

Songs of Salvation – song book for ARCs and Harbor Light Centers

Carolers Favorites – vocal/piano/band

CD Accompaniment

*Hymn Tune Accompaniments* compact discs (12 total)

*Hallelujah Choruses* accompaniment compact discs 1-26

**Sources Cited:**

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DeBenedetto, Susannah. “Benedictions for Advent” on Liturgylink. November 23, 2015. <https://www.liturgylink.net/tag/susannahdb/>

Gire, Ken. 1996. *Windows of the Soul*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

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Biblegateway. 2000. “BibleGateway.Com: A Searchable Online Bible in over 150 Versions and 50 Languages.” Biblegateway.Com. BibleGateway. 2000. https://www.biblegateway.com/.

*NIV Worship Bible.* 2000. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

***The Holy Bible—Versions Quoted:***

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**(NLT)** New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

**(NRSV)** New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

**Music Sources:**

*Hallelujah Choruses*. 1992-2020. Vol. 1–26. Hoffman Estates, IL: The Salvation Army USA Central Territory.

*Songs of Salvation: The Salvation Army Official Song Book for Adult Rehabilitation Centers and Harbor Light Centers in The United States of America*. 2015. Des Plaines, IL: The Salvation Army USA Central Territory.

*The Salvation Army Carolers Favorites*. West Nyack, NY: The Salvation Army USA Eastern Territory.

*The Song Book of The Salvation Army*. 2015. North American Edition. Alexandria, VA: The Salvation Army National Headquarters.