

Inauguration of the Christmas Tree

After the tree has been decorated with lights and some Christian symbols, the family gathers around it. Friends and neighbours may be invited for the lighting of the tree and the prayer service.

Introduction

All may sing a Christmas hymn or carol.

The leader may begin with the following.

Leader: All peoples have seen a great light.

All: The Lord has visited his people.

Or:

Leader: Glory to God in the highest.

All: And peace to God's people on earth.

Scripture Reading

Leader: Let us listen to these words from Scripture.

Reader: In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through him,
and without him not one thing came into being.
What has come into being in him was life,
and the life was the light of all people.
The light shines in the darkness
and the darkness did not overcome it. *John 1:1-5*

Or:

Other Passages:

Genesis 2:4-9, *the tree of life*; **John** 1:9,14,16-18, *the true light*;
Luke 2:1-14, *the birth of Jesus*; 2:15-20, *the visit of the shepherds*;
2:25-32, *Simeon recognises the Messiah in Jesus presented in the temple.*)

*After the reading all may pause for a moment of silent reflection on God's love for us.
Then all may sing a verse of a Christmas hymn or carol.*

Prayer of Praise (*All should stand*)

Leader: Let us praise God for the gift of love that is revealed
in the birth of Jesus.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Leader: All glory and praise to you,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for sending your Son in human flesh.
He became one of us
in order to make us your children,
and he died upon the tree of the cross
to bring us eternal life.



All: Blessed be God for ever.

We praise you for the beauty of this tree
that we have decorated:
may its ever-green branches
remind us of your unending care for all people;
may its lights
illumine the darkness of the night;
may its presence bring cheer and hope for all people.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

As we gather in the presence of your Son,
we ask you to strengthen your love
in our family (and friends),
and grant that we may always rejoice
in the gift of salvation Jesus has given us.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

Glory and praise to you, almighty God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

Conclusion

All may share a sign of peace and sing a Christmas hymn or carol.