Intergenerational Worship

Prayers – asking for others

Year A – Christmas Proper 1 Dec 24-25 Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

What is this: Intergenerational Prayers

Where it’s used: Christmas celebrations, assemblies, services; any intergenerational gathering, but specifically Lectionary based gatherings.

Time: 5 -10 minutes


What’s needed:

• Prayer Leader
• 5 ‘character’ prayer readers - Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Fellow Traveller, Angel
• Costumes (optional)
• Liturgy on screen or printed copies

This Prayer may be presented by 5 prepared volunteers representing 5 characters in the Christmas story, as well as a non-character reader.
Mary, Joseph, Shepherd, Angel, Fellow Traveller (an anonymous representative of the others caught up in the census of the empire; though may be a Wiseman, if you don’t mind that they are in Matthew not Luke).

You may wish them to dress your characters in symbolic costumes: if so, avoid obvious medieval style cliché costumes. Search Google Images with to get some inspiration for creating a nativity look that has some non-western character. You might connect with the culture of the particular giving project you are supporting through your offerings (for example, Christmas Bowl focuses on Zimbabwe this year) as your community seeks to express solidarity with those in need.

If you don’t have the enthusiastic people for these parts in your gathering, the liturgy can be led by one person. If this is the case, try to add some images of the different characters to mark the sections of the liturgy and point towards the focus of the coming section of prayer.
Introduction

Reader: Today, we pray, connecting the characters of the Christmas story we know and have heard again today, with the needs of the world. We bring our prayers for others and ourselves, as well as our gifts to support and bless others beyond ourselves in the wider world, before God now.

The character of Mary prompts us to pray for women and girls; Joseph to pray for men. Our Shepherd and Fellow Traveller Characters call us to pray for those living in the margins or seeking refuge. An Angel character – a messenger from God, invites us to pray for ourselves and let the Christmas story of God transform our story. Let’s pray.

Loving God

We have heard your story – the Christmas story today.

Your story tells us of your

Mary: Love
Joseph: Faithfulness
Shepherd: Humbleness
Traveller: Protection
Angel: Generosity.

Reader: That you gave yourself to the world, arriving as a vulnerable child in the midst of a violence and conflict. It calls us to remember the needs in the world around us.

We pray for Women and Girls

Mary: Your story tells of a girl, Mary, who falls pregnant. Her relationships are impacted. She runs away from her village to a relative who understands. She gives birth even further from home.

Reader: We pray for your women and girls around the world whose lives are made complicated by giving birth at a young age, by lack of support, by shame, rejection and judgment, leading to poverty and hardship. We pray for the resources shared through the Christmas Bowl partnering with Act for Peace, that these seeds and farming projects will provide security and healthy living for families of all kinds in Zimbabwe. We pray that women and girls will have safe spaces and people who will accept, respect, help and protect them.

All: We pray for love for those in need.
Reader: We pray for Men

Joseph: Your story tells us of Joseph, a man who has difficult decisions to make. There is no clear right or wrong for him. There are threats to his life and those he is responsible for. He listens to your voice, God to guide him and give him courage to do the risky thing.

Reader: Great God of wise and good thinking, help us in our choices, to be courageous for what is good, to be brave for the ways that will bring life and protection for others, especially the vulnerable. Help us to listen to you, when there is no clear right and wrong to side with compassion and care and to walk away from worrying about what others will think of us.

All: We pray for faithfulness and protection for those in need.

Reader: We pray for Refugees

Traveller: Your story is a story in which the family of Jesus is forced to become refugees, seeking safety in another country. A country which was once an enemy, is now safer than the country Jesus’ family knew as home.

Shepherd: Jesus begins to grow up as a refugee in one country. And then moves to home he has never known. How will Jesus fit in? How will he not feel like an outsider?

Reader: We pray for all the people of the world who are on the move. Who must leave their places of home, and seek safety somewhere else. We pray for welcoming places in countries of safety. We pray for trust and working together among nations to care for all people and cultures. We pray that we will do our part to put aside selfish fears and live in generous hope sharing the beautiful and plentiful world you have given us.

All: We pray for humbleness in helping those in need.

Reader: We pray for ourselves

Angel: Your story was shared with joy and hope in the world by angels – your messengers to those in the everyday struggles of work and life.
Reader: We pray that we will be bringers of hope too. We pray that our words and actions in the world would not just be for ourselves, but that we would live lives full of your joy and love, bringing a strong message of care and hope to those around is the world.

May our gifts and offerings through [Christmas Bowl/Be Hope/Share/name of project your offering will support] today bring hope and joy and life.

**All:** We pray generosity for those in need.

Reader: In the name of Christ,

**Amen.**