

*God With Us*  
*Liturgy for a Christmas meal*



A short liturgy written for a Christmas meal, and designed to work alongside the **SGM Lifeworlds** resource *God With Us*.

This is a simple set of readings reflecting on the wonder of God with us, God choosing to make his home with us. You may find it useful in aiding discussion around the incarnation, or to open up a time of worshipful prayer. It could be used at the beginning or end of a meal, or between courses. Please adapt and use it however you like.

**Reading 1 - Luke 2:8-12**

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

Luke 2:8-12

Out in the fields, something strange is happening. The sky breaks open, hordes of radiant angels burst out in song, and the stunned shepherds cower in the grass.

God has come to us.

God is here, omnipotent, infinite God, bundled in rags and asleep in a straw bed; the creator himself wearing human bones, muscles and skin. Down the hill in the town of Bethlehem, the sustaining power of the universe clutches a tiny hand around Mary's little finger.

Little wonder the sky breaks open. What else can it do? Heaven can't help itself. If the angels don't sing, the earth itself is going to convulse with joy. But the drama is

subtle. Played out in the hills, in the dead of night, where no-one but the shepherds will see.

God arrives quietly, subversively, known only to a few bewildered peasants who don't quite understand what they're seeing, but know that they have been blessed beyond all measure.

### **Reading 2 - John 14:22-23**

Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them."

John 14:22-23

God has come to us, makes his home among us. The invitation is open to all.

### **Prayer**

Father, thank you for sending your son.

Jesus, thank you for entering our world.

Spirit, thank you for your presence with us at this table.

We praise you for the wonder of God become flesh, and we welcome you among us. Be in our conversation, in our fellowship, in our eating and drinking, as we remember Jesus' birth, and celebrate an open heaven.

As we follow your ways, make your home with us, as you promise.

[Keep silence, leaving space for reflection and open prayer, before closing with the final reading.]

### **Reading 3 – Revelation 21:3**

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God.

Revelation 21:3

Scripture taken from: TNIV © IBS, 2004