



Inspired by

The First Songs of Christmas: A 31-Day Advent Devotional

by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth

Collaboratively produced by

Corps and Community Mission Department

Music and Creative Arts Ministries

USA Eastern Territory – Youth Department

Editor/Project Manager

Mark Bender

Worship Outlines

Peggy Thomas

Sermon Outlines

Captains Denesia and Norman Polusca

Major Peter Mount

Dramas

Martyn Scott Thomas

Children's Moments

Captain Denesia Polusca

Kids Five Videos

USA Eastern Territory – Youth Department



THE SALVATION ARMY | USA CENTRAL TERRITORY

Commissioner Evie Diaz, Territorial Commander

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The Salvation Army, Hoffman Estates, Illinois.



My Christmas Song unpacks the songs sung by ordinary people caught up in the extraordinary story surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ. Worshipers will listen to these Spirit-filled songs and discover how the birth of Jesus can still transform.

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, “Children’s Moments,” and sermon ideas.

This series is inspired by meditations on Luke 1 & 2, from the book, ***The First Songs of Christmas: A 31-Day Advent Devotional*** by Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth.

Weekly themes for the series are as follows:

Week One (November 29, 2026): ***Elizabeth’s Song of Blessing***

Week Two (December 6, 2026): ***Mary’s Song of Praise***

Week Three (December 13, 2026): ***Zechariah’s Song of Prophecy***

Week Four (December 20, 2026): ***The Angels’ Song of Glory***

Christmas Eve (December 24, 2026): ***Lessons and Carols***

Week Five (December 27, 2026): ***Simeon’s Song of Salvation***

Services contain:

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

Please remember this as you plan your worship service:

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 Territorial Corps and Community Mission Department expresses its indebtedness to the following for their creativity, editing, and hard work:

- **Peggy Thomas** (Norridge Citadel, Illinois) – meeting outlines
- **Martyn Thomas** (THQ, Music and Creative Arts Ministries) – dramas
- **Major Jennifer Rosamilia and Captain Stephen Thomas** (USA Eastern Territory, Youth Department) – Kids Five videos
- **Captain Denesia Polusca** (Norridge Citadel, Illinois) – children’s moments
- **Captains Denesia and Norman Polusca** (Norridge Citadel, Illinois) – sermons
- **Major Peter Mount** (College for Officer Training, Chicago, Illinois) – sermon
- **Alfredo Martinez** (THQ, Intercultural Ministries) – translation into Spanish
- **Mark Bender** (THQ, Corps and Community Mission Department) – editing/formatting; project management

Special thanks to **Captains Denesia and Norman Polusca** and **Major Peter Mount** for their creation of the sermon materials.

With grateful appreciation for the inspirational writings of:

Lucado, Max. ***Because of Bethlehem: Love Is Born, Hope Is Here***. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2016.

Piper, John. ***Good News of Great Joy: 25 Devotional Readings for Advent***. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021.

Wolgemuth, Nancy DeMoss. ***The First Songs of Christmas: A 31-Day Advent Devotional***. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2019.

Zondervan Publishing House. ***The NIV Worship Bible***. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.



CONTENTS

Week 1: November 29, 2026 – Elizabeth’s Song of Blessing

- Worship Service Outline
- Drama: *Bless You*
- Children’s Moment: *The Song of Blessing*
- Sermon: **Elizabeth’s Song of Blessing** – Luke 1:39-45

Week 2: December 6, 2026 – Mary’s Song of Praise

- Worship Service Outline
- Drama: *Magnify*
- Children’s Moment: *My Song of Praise*
- Sermon: **Magnify the Lord** – Luke 1:46-55

Week 3: December 13, 2026 – Zechariah’s Song of Prophecy

- Worship Service Outline
- Drama: *A Piece of Quiet?*
- Children’s Moment: *The Song of Prophecy*
- Sermon: **Zechariah’s Song of Prophecy** – Luke 1:67-79

Week 4: December 20, 2026 – The Angels’ Song of Glory

- Worship Service Outline
- Drama: *Repeat the Sounding Joy*
- Children’s Moment: *The Song of Glory*
- Sermon: **The Angels’ Song of Glory** – Luke 2:8-20

Christmas Eve: December 24, 2026 – Lessons and Carols

- Worship Service Outline
- Devotional: **Taking the Christ Child Home** – Luke 2:7, 19; Matthew 2:11

Week 5: December 27, 2026 – Simeon’s Song of Salvation

- Worship Service Outline
- Children’s Moment: *Simeon’s Song of Salvation*
- Sermon: **My Song of Salvation** – Luke 2:25-35

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 Corps and Community Mission Dept. webpage: <https://salarmycentral.org/cacm/resources/>

WORSHIP IS A JOURNEY

“Worship is the expression of a relationship in which God the Father **reveals** himself and his love in Christ and by his Holy Spirit administers grace, to which we **respond** in faith, gratitude, and obedience.” (Robert Schaper, *In His Presence*)

Expressed another way, **Worship is a journey**—a journey into God’s presence (*The Gathering*); of hearing from God (*The Word*); that celebrates Christ (*The Response*); and that sends us into the world changed by our encounter with God (*The Sending*).

These are four elements that a worship service should include. They are like load-bearing walls:

1. **[The Gathering]** – To unite our spirits in God’s presence. To prepare us to hear the word of God.
2. **[The Word]** – God addresses his people through the Holy Scriptures. The Word is revelation. God reveals his truth through Bible readings and the sermon.
3. **[The Response]** – God reveals; we respond. Response may be reflective or celebratory.
4. **[The Sending]** – Worshipers are empowered by a blessing (benediction) to do God’s will (charge).

These “labels” are included in the meeting outlines to give a greater understanding of how these services have been put together. Consider using this in your own ministry.

CALLS TO WORSHIP and SCRIPTURE READINGS

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

A scripture reading has been included in each service, which can be read by one person or turned into a responsive reading. Consider using this time in a variety of ways, such as a presentation each week by a different family, small group or ministry (women’s ministry, men’s ministry, corps cadets, etc.) in your corps.

DRAMAS, CHILDREN’S MOMENTS and KIDS FIVE VIDEOS

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.

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.

Focusing on a special moment in the service for children brings all ages into worship with new perspectives (as well as some laughter!).

SUPPLEMENTAL VIDEOS: Kids Five Videos, produced by the USA Eastern Territory, which can be used in place of Children's Moments! <https://salarmycentral.org/cacm/resources/>

SERMON MATERIALS

Sermon materials 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.

MUSIC

Music options 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. Optional songs or choruses are 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.

Example:

Song# – First Line (SB) or Title (HC/SS)	Tune# – TB Title	CD Disc#-Track# (#verses on HT)
SB#100/HC#280/SS#186 – Angels, from the realms of glory	TB-407 – Regent Square HC-280 SS-186	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:

SB	Salvation Army Song Book – words
TB	Salvation Army Tune Book – tunes
HC	Hallelujah Choruses
SS	Songs of Salvation
CF	Carolers Favorites

Examples:

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

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 by singing “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.

VIDEO

The Music and Creative Arts and Visual Communications Departments have produced videos of supplementary worship service components, which can be used for in-person or online worship. Please access them through the Visual Communications website:

<http://wsvr.viscomapps.com/>

SUPPORT RESOURCES USED IN THIS SERIES

Trade Central carries the following support resources at: <http://satradecentral.org/>

Keyboard/Instrumental Accompaniment

The Salvation Army Song Book (2015) – vocal

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

Hallelujah Choruses Books 1-32 (1-340)

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

The Salvation Army Carolers Favorites – band/vocal

CD Accompaniment

Hymn Tune Accompaniments compact discs (12 total)

Hallelujah Choruses accompaniment compact discs 1-33

INSPIRATIONAL SOURCES

Lucado, Max. ***Because of Bethlehem: Love Is Born, Hope Is Here***. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2016.

Piper, John. ***Good News of Great Joy: 25 Devotional Readings for Advent***. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2021.

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MUSIC SOURCES

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