

WORSHIP KIT

A New BIRTH

A Living HOPE

the turning of the year

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Complete Script For Worship Leaders

- The **Born Anew** opening section's hymn is sung by the congregation to the tune Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring 87 87 D, interspersed with words spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Father, for the year now ending offer we our songs of praise;
For each blessing of your sending grateful hearts and voices raise.
Born anew by your kind Spirit, whose strong voice our souls has stirred,
Life eternal we inherit in the water and the Word.

- ☐ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ☑ **By his great mercy we have been given a new birth to a living hope, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**
- ☐ You have been born anew, through the living and enduring Word of God.
- ☑ **God washed us by the power of the Holy Spirit, giving us new birth and a fresh beginning.**
- ☐ Justified by God's grace in Jesus Christ, we have the hope of eternal life.
- ☑ **We are filled with hope, as we wait for the glorious return of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.**
- ☐ Seize the hope that is set before you, hope that is a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul.

For your dear Son's incarnation, for his holy, precious death,
Blessèd source of our salvation; for the Holy Spirit's breath;
For your mercies, strong and tender; for your guidance through the year,
Songs of gratitude we render and with fervent hope draw near.

¶ In this Prayer of the Day, O Lord, we thank you for the year now past and for all the blessings you have poured out among us throughout these days. We have been born anew through the forgiveness you provide us every day, and we look forward to the year to come with great hope in our hearts that you will continue to provide for us and protect us and give us the faith and strength to face whatever comes our way. In your mercy, grant us all that we need to follow in your way, as we trust in you and hold fast to the promise that you will be with us to help us every day of our lives, as we live in hope in you. Amen.

Through the dawning year attend us that we Christ's disciples prove.
Thus, your Holy Spirit send us, in our words and deeds to move,
Faith and hope and love supplying for the times that lie ahead,
For our living and our dying and our rising from the dead.

- The **Children's Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

Needed: a calendar of the new year

¶ Hello, boys and girls. Today we celebrate the turning of the year. That means we are beginning a new year. (*Hold up the calendar.*) Can anyone tell me what this is? (*Allow the children to respond.*) That's right! It is a calendar of all the dates in the new year. As I turn the pages and go from month to month, we see blank squares that stand for the days of the new year. Some things we do know that are coming up in the new year. Maybe there are school events, vacations, weddings or graduations we already know about. But we don't know everything that is in store for us for these new days. But the good news is that God does. He tells us in Jeremiah 29:11: "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

We have great hope for the new year because we know that God is in control and wants the very best for us. And even if things don't go exactly as we had planned, we can trust that God will be with us every step of the way and will show us what he wants for our life in the year to come. No matter what happens, we know too what we should do for sure. We should love and serve him in all we say and do and we should always give him thanks for everything he has given us every day of the year. Each day should be a response to what God did for us in Jesus, when he sent his Son to die on the cross and rise again that we might be forgiven and live with him forever in heaven. Now that is something to celebrate today and always! So have a good day, today, boys and girls, and every day, celebrating Jesus.

- The **First Reading**, Isaiah 11:1-3a, 5-10, is spoken by the pastor:

P There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. ... Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.

- The **Responsive Psalmody, from Psalm 71**, is sung by the congregation to the tune Fred Til Bod 77 77 77, interspersed with words spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Peace, to soothe our bitter woes, God in Christ on us bestows:
Jesus bought our peace with God with his holy, precious blood;
Peace in him for sinners found is the Gospel's joyful sound.

P Sovereign Lord, I put my hope in you.

C I have trusted in you since I was young. I have relied on you all my life.

P You have protected me since the day I was born.

C You have taught me ever since I was young, and I still tell of your wonderful acts. I will always praise you.

P Now that I am old and my hair is gray, do not abandon me, O God!

C Be with me while I proclaim your power and might to all generations to come.

P I will tell of your goodness; I will speak of your salvation.

C I will always put my hope in you; I will praise you more and more.

Peace within the Church still dwells in her welcomes and farewells;
And through God's baptismal pow'r peace surrounds our dying hour.
Peace be with you, full and free, now and through eternity.

- The **Second Reading**, Romans 8:18-25, is spoken by the pastor:

☐ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

- The **Gospel Celebration** is sung by the congregation to the tune Mendelssohn 77 77 D with refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

- The **Gospel**, John 3:1-9, is spoken by the pastor:

☐ Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit." Nicodemus said to him, "How can these things be?"

- The **Gospel Celebration** is sung by the congregation to the tune Mendelssohn 77 77 D with refrain:

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
 Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
 Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
 Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.
 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

- The **Homily** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ "A New Birth ... A Living Hope."

Good words for a New Year's celebration, don't you think? A good theme for our worship.

That was Jesus' point to Nicodemus in our Gospel lesson today, wasn't it? Jesus wasn't talking about HIS OWN birth, after all. He was talking about NICODEMUS' new birth ... and about the new birth that ALL who believe in Christ share.

For that new birth to occur, we have to look beyond the Bethlehem stable to the Jerusalem cross—an uncomfortable thing to do during this season of birth. But a necessary thing to do. The baby wrapped in swaddling clothes ... well ... his very purpose for being born in that stable was to hang naked before the world on that cross.

... AND TO RISE AGAIN!

That's the key! "By his great mercy we have been given a new birth to a living hope, THROUGH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD!"

Our new birth isn't one from the womb. It is one from the GRAVE ... Jesus Christ was born again from the grave through his Father's ... OUR Father's ... resurrecting power!

So, allow me to ask the question again: What is being born anew in you?

The answer that our God gives us is HOPE! It is hope that is born not of ONE birth but of TWO births—one from the womb in Bethlehem ... and one from the tomb outside of Jerusalem.

And from one more birth, as well: one from the cold baptismal water that washed you and renewed you ... and DROWNED you. We began our Christian lives with DEATH ... and with new birth ... to a LIVING HOPE.

That hope looks to another birth from another tomb. It is YOUR birth. And it is YOUR tomb.

Tune..... Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring 87 87 D

The image displays a piano accompaniment for the hymn 'Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring'. The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The first system starts with a treble clef staff containing a series of chords and a bass clef staff with a similar accompaniment. The second system continues the piece, with a treble clef staff showing a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a steady accompaniment. The third system features a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a steady accompaniment. The fourth system concludes the piece, with a treble clef staff showing a melodic line and a bass clef staff with a steady accompaniment. The score is marked with measure numbers 1, 9, 17, and 25 at the beginning of each system.

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