Call to Worship #1:

L: Rejoice! Happy Christmas to everyone!
P: Happy Christmas to you also!
L: Christ our Savior is born.
P: God's Light is poured into the world.
L: O Come, let us celebrate this wonderful gift.
P: Let us praise God with shouts of joy and singing!

Call to Worship #2

L: The world was once in darkness
P: Now we have God's Light, Jesus to shine on us.
L: The words and promises of God are all true!
P: God has given us the best gift of all!
L: Rejoice! God is with us!
P: Praise be to God! AMEN.

Call to Worship #3

[From THE FAITH WE SING, p. 2098 The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy]

Choir (singing): verse 1
L: And the angels sang of his coming to frightened shepherds.
P: And we heard the angels' song and came running to greet him.

Congregation and Choir: verse 2
L: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.
P: He came to us as light to banish our darkness and the darkness has never overcome the light.
Congregation and Choir: verse 3

L: Christ our true light is here!
P: Rejoice, Rejoice, Emmanuel has come to us this day!

PRAYERS, LITANY, BENEDICTION

Opening Prayer:
The celebration of Christmas has just begun. Even though many of us have gone through the gift giving and receiving, have feasted with family and friends, there is yet another gift which has been given. You, O Loving God, have wrapped the gift of your Son Jesus Christ around our lives. The light of your love through him is shining brightly. It is not a harsh light, but a multitude of bright colors that remind us of the wondrous ways you love us. Open our hearts and spirits as we hear the words of your holy scriptures, and the beautiful music. Bring us to you with such joy that it will seem as though our feet aren't even touching ground.
AMEN.

Prayer of Confession
Gracious God, you have sent your Son to us to show us the way. Even when we have turned our backs, followed our own paths, you offer us Light. Forgive us when we are so willful and stubborn. Forgive us when we think more about ourselves and our comforts than we think of reaching out to others. Remind us again that Jesus witnessed to us the Light of Love that serves, guides and heals. Thank you for loving us so much that you would give us this most precious gift. And when we again falter and fail, lift us again with your gentle touch. Pour the Light into our lives once more, that finally, we will fully understand the power and depth of your love for us. AMEN.
Pastoral Prayer

It is interesting, O God of Miracles and Light, that we think of Christmas Day as the final destination for the journey on which we have embarked. Advent was the time of preparation, a time to examine our lives, our hopes, our fears. It was a time to place our trust in your never-failing love and to move again toward you, through the darkness to your Light. We are exhausted from our preparation for this season. The demands of the world have been heavy. But we are here to hear again the powerful reminder of your love that was intended for us throughout all of time. In the beginning of all creation your Light was given to illuminate the majesty of this place; your light shined forth through the lives of the prophets, and most especially through Jesus your Son.

We are bathed in that light on this day and reminded that this journey has now begun. For once the light has been given, it cannot be hidden...it pours out of those whom it has touched. Send us forth into this world in service to the Light.

Healing and Comforting God, we have spoken aloud and within our hearts the names of people and situations that need your loving touch. Our hearts ache for those who are ill and for those who mourn. We feel that we cannot do enough for them, but we trust in your comforting love to be with them on this journey. For those who feel lost and alone, seeking God, we ask that you help us to reach out to them with your good news of great and abiding love. For all the situations in our world this day, where there is warfare, oppression, strife, all the hideous ways in which your beloved people can suffer, God, please lay your hand of healing love on them. Help them to feel your powerful presence with them, guiding and strengthening. These things we have spoken with our lips and our hearts we offer in confidence of your eternal love and in the name of Jesus Christ. AMEN.
**Litany**

L: Look at the lights! Aren't they beautiful?

P: **We always thought of Christmas Lights as a secular celebration item.**

L: Ah, but God is in all things!

P: **The Light is in the world. It is not a separate thing to be hidden away.**

L: The Light of God cannot be hidden! We are called to bear that light.

P: **We, with our many gifts and talents, are being summoned by God to tell the good news.**

L: This is a happy day! God wants us to proclaim the great joy that is given to all people.

P: **That Jesus Christ is born! Hallelujah!**

**Benediction, Blessing, Commission:**

Go now, bringing the joy of God's love with you to all that you meet. Remember that God is with you in all you do. Rejoice, dear people, for God's Light has come for the whole world. Go in peace and may God's glorious peace always go with you. AMEN.

**ARTISTIC ELEMENTS**

[Note: It will be important to include in your worship bulletin a brief description of the meaning of this worship visual setting. A worship center does not have to be your altar.]

**SURFACE:** Riser in the center back portion of the worship center. The tall Christ Candle will be placed on this riser.

**FABRIC:** Cover the worship center with white or gold cloth, making sure that it puddles down onto the floor in front of the worship center.

**FLOWERS AND FOLIAGE:** If people have not removed their poinsettias and other Christmas flowers from the church the night before, surround the worship
center with these lovely gifts of flowers. If the plants have been removed, place holly, ivy, and evergreen branches on the worship center.

**CANDLES:** Place the large white Christ Candle on the riser in the center back of the worship center.

**OTHER:** Christmas lights, multicolored, not white only, can be lavishly strung on the worship center and even down the front of the center so that they create a burst of colored light. Weave the greenery around the lights so that the wires are hidden. Affix the connecting wire to the back of the worship center, if possible so that it doesn't show.