

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Call to Repentance

- P** Lord God, as we gather together this evening to celebrate the birth of Your dear Son in the flesh, we are reminded once again why He came - to deliver us from everything that assails us: the devil, death, & our sins. And even though He has accomplished everything that needed to be done and you have claimed us as Your own dear children, we are reminded once again that we do not live our lives as You would have us live them. Let us silently reflect on our nature and our lives in light of God's Word and the Ten Commandments.

Confession and Absolution

- P** Let us confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**
- P** Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Christmas Eve Bidding Prayer

- P** Beloved in the Lord, at this holy Christmastide let it be our care and delight to hear once more the message of the angels, and to journey back to Bethlehem and see what God has brought to pass - the babe born of the Virgin, the Christ child, lying in a manger. May we once more hear, read, learn and mark those Holy Scriptures that reveal God's promises of deliverance and salvation from the moment of our disobedience to our glorious redemption brought to us through Jesus the Christ. But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world, for peace on earth and goodwill amongst men; for unity and love within His Bride the Church, especially within this community of faith. Let us remember all those who are in need: the homeless and those in shelters; the unemployed and the underemployed; the hungry and malnourished; the sick and the dying; those who are lonely and depressed; the aged and the little children; and those who do not know the love of Jesus or have wandered from the truth. And lastly, let us remember all those who rejoice with us around the world along with all those who are on another shore in a greater light whose hope was in the Word made flesh that we may always be together in the Lord. Let us humbly offer up these prayers and praises before God's throne in heaven using the words that our Savior taught us to pray.

Lord's Prayer

- C** **Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

379 O Come, All Ye Faithful

sts. 1, ref. 2-3

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;
 Sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!

Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God In the high - est:

Refrain

O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,

O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802-80, alt.
 Text and tune: John F. Wade, c. 1711-1786
 Text and tune: Public domain

First Reading

Genesis 3:8-15

⁸They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." ¹¹He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
 cursed are you above all livestock
 and above all beasts of the field;
 on your belly you shall go,
 and dust you shall eat
 all the days of your life.

¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman,
 and between your offspring and her offspring;
 he shall bruise your head,
 and you shall bruise his heel."

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

392 God Loves Me Dearly

sts. 1, ref. 2–3

1 God loves me dear - ly, Grants me sal -
 2 I was in slav - 'ry, Sin, death, and
 3 He sent forth Je - sus, My dear Re -

va - tion, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.
 dark - ness; God's love was work - ing To make me free.
 deem - er, He sent forth Je - sus And set me free.

Refrain
 There - fore I'll say a - gain: God loves me
 dear - ly, God loves me dear - ly, Loves e - ven me.

Text: August Rische, 1819–1906; tr. composite
 Tune: German
 Text and tune: Public domain

Second Reading

Genesis 22:15–18

¹⁵And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶and said, “By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice.”

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

352 Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

sts. 1–4

1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly
 2 What the Fa - thers most de - sired, What the proph - ets'
 3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
 4 As Your com - ing was in peace, Qui - et, full of

kept His word And at last to us did send
 heart in - spired, What they longed for man - y a year,
 Ja - cob's Lord— Him of two - fold race be - hold—
 gen - tle - ness, Let the same mind dwell in me

Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
 Stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
 Tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
 Which is Yours e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–59; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.
 Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, 1524, Wittenberg, ed. Johann Walter
 Text and tune: Public domain

Third Reading

Isaiah 9:2–7; 11:1–9

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
on them has light shined.

³ You have multiplied the nation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

⁴ For the yoke of his burden,
and the staff for his shoulder,
the rod of his oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult
and every garment rolled in blood
will be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

¹ There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.

² 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.

³ And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.
He shall not judge by what his eyes see,
or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist,
and faithfulness the belt of his loins.

⁶ 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.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra,
and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den.

⁹ 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.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming



1 Lo, how a rose e'er bloom - ing From ten - der stem hath
2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, The rose I have in
3 This flow'r, whose fra - grance ten - der With sweet-ness fills the
4 O Sav - ior, child of Mar - y, Who felt our hu - man



sprung! Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing As proph-ets long have
mind; With Mar - y we be - hold it, The vir - gin moth - er
air, Dis - pels with glo - rious splen - dor The dark-ness ev - 'ry -
woe; O Sav - ior, King of glo - ry, Who dost our weak - ness



sung, It came, a flow - 'ret bright, A - mid the
kind. To show God's love a - right, She bore to
where. True man, yet ver - y God, From sin and
know: Bring us at length we pray To the bright



cold of win - ter, When half - spent was the night.
us a Sav - ior, When half - spent was the night.
death He saves us And light - ens ev - 'ry load.
courts of heav - en, And to the end - less day.

Text (sts. 1-2): tr. Theodore Baker, 1851-1934, alt.; (sts. 1-2, 4): German, 16th cent.; (st. 3): Friedrich L. C. Layriz, 1808-59; (st. 3): tr. Harriet R. K. Spaeth, 1845-1925; (st. 4): tr. John C. Mattes, 1876-1948
Tune: Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengeseng, 1599, Köln
Text and tune: Public domain

Fourth Reading

Micah 5:2-4

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

361 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly The won - drous gift is giv'n!
 4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, De - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
 While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heav'n.
 Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
 O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear His com - ing; But in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels The great glad tid - ings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!
 Where meek souls will re - ceive Him, still The dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–93
 Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908
 Text and tune: Public domain

Fifth Reading

Luke 1:26–38

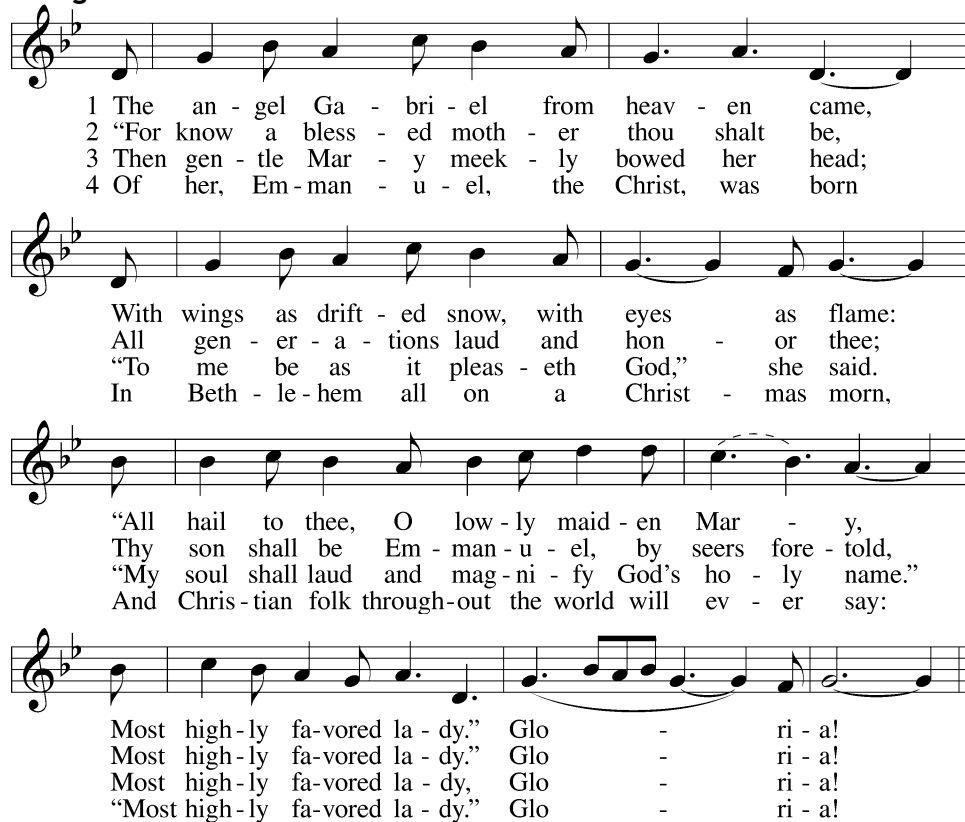
²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

356 The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
 2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
 3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

With wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
 All gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
 In Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
 Thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
 "My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
 And Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:

Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy, Glo - ri - a!
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!

Text: para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924
 Text and tune: Basque, c. 18th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Sixth Reading

Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
 and they shall call his name Immanuel"

(which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Luke 2:1–7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

- A** This is the Word of the Lord.
- C** Thanks be to God.

364 Away in a Manger



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
 But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
 Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky — looked down where He lay,
 I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.
 And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Text (sts. 1–2): Little Children's Book, 1885, Philadelphia; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, 1892, Louisville, alt.
 Tune: James R. Murray, 1841–1905
 Text and tune: Public domain

Seventh Reading

Luke 2:8–20

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest,
 and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

368 Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, 1862, Part 2, London, alt.
 Text and tune: French
 Text and tune: Public domain

Eighth Reading

Matthew 2:1–12

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

“‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
 for from you shall come a ruler
 who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

370 What Child Is This



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es - tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-98
 Tune: English, 16th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Ninth Reading

John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.

¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

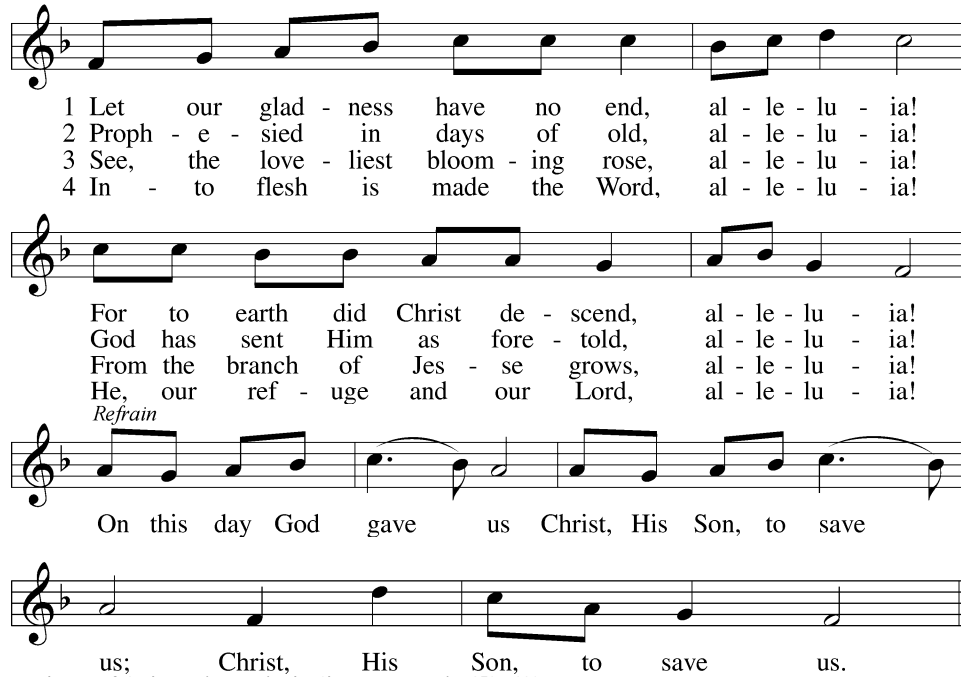
¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Sermon

381 Let Our Gladness Have No End



1 Let our glad - ness have no end, al - le - lu - ia!
 2 Proph - e - sies in days of old, al - le - lu - ia!
 3 See, the love - liest bloom - ing rose, al - le - lu - ia!
 4 In - to flesh is made the Word, al - le - lu - ia!

For to earth did Christ de - scend, al - le - lu - ia!
 God has sent Him as fore - told, al - le - lu - ia!
 From the branch of Jes - se grows, al - le - lu - ia!
 He, our ref - uge and our Lord, al - le - lu - ia!

Refrain
 On this day God gave us Christ, His Son, to save
 us; Christ, His Son, to save us.

Text (sts. 1, ref, 3-4): tr. unknown, alt.; (st. 2): tr. Vincent Pisek, 1859-1930
 Text and tune: Bohemian, 15th cent.
 Text and tune: Public domain

Apostles' Creed

C I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died and was buried.
 He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose again from the dead.
 He ascended into heaven
 and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
 From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the holy Christian Church,
 the communion of saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and the life ✝ everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

- P** Let us pray for the people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.
- P** In thanksgiving for the Savior of the nations and His birth among us as our King, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For the Church, that God would give her faithful pastors to proclaim the good tidings of His birth and willing ears to hear and believe this good news, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.
- P** For all families, that God would make each household a place of prayer and devotion to His Word; that He would bless parents of young children with patience; and that He would give comfort to the childless and abide with the fatherless, widows and orphans, the lonely and those separated from their families, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** Lord, have mercy.

- P** For this country, that God would grant our leaders wisdom and justice as they exercise His authority; that He would use all citizens to speak in defense of the defenseless; that God would abide with those who labor on behalf of others, especially those who must work this night; and that He would bring wars to an end, defend the innocent and bring Christ's healing peace to all, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** For the lonely, sick, recovering and those near death, that they would be comforted and persevere in hope until He visits them with healing, relief, deliverance and peace, let us pray to the Lord:
- C** **Lord, have mercy.**
- P** Lord God, in the birth of Your Son You have called people from every time and place into His Body, the Church. We give You thanks for the believers who went before us, especially those who were with us in Christmases past and who now live with You. Grant us sure confidence in the promise of resurrection and eternal life, and bring us with them at last into Your presence; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever
- C** **Amen.**

Candlelight Service

- P** As the light of these candles illumines our faces, it reminds us of Christ, our Light, the child in the manger at Bethlehem, a Savior suffering our death on the cross, and soon to come from His throne on high as Judge of all. He is our Light here on earth and the eternal Light who enlightens heaven, where there is no need of candle or sun. Rejoice! The Light of the World has come. That light transforms us with the brightness of His glory. This is the message we have heard from Him and proclaimed to you: that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
- C** **If we say we have fellowship with Him but still walk in darkness, we lie, and do not live according to the truth.**
- P** But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another;
- C** **And the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all our sins.**
- P** You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and then cover its light. Instead they set the lamp on its stand, set up high, and it lights everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before everyone, that they may see your good works and give praise to your Father in heaven. O God, as You make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of Your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, grant that we, who joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our judge; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** **Amen.**

363 Silent Night, Holy Night

sts. 1-3

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright Round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight; Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy

peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Text: Franz Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820-85
Tune: Franz Xaver Gruber, 1787-1863
Text and tune: Public domain

God's Blessing

P The almighty and merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.

C Amen.

387 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748
Tune: George Frideric Handel, 1685–1759, adapt.
Text and tune: Public domain

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