

The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord

December 24, 2021

Service of the Word and Candlelight Vigil



Hymn: 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful (Stnzs 1-3)

- 1 O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the king of angels: Refrain

- ref O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

- 2 Highest, most holy, Light of Light eternal,
Born of a virgin, a mortal He comes;
Son of the Father Now in flesh appearing! Refrain

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest: Refrain

Text and Tune: Public domain

pening Versicles

Ps. 2:1-2, 4-6; antiphon: Liturgical Text

L When all was still, and it was midnight,
your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

G Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

L The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together,
against the LORD and against his anointed.

G He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.

☐ Then he will speak to them in his wrath,
and terrify them in his fury, saying,

☐ "As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill."
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

☐ When all was still, and it was midnight,
your almighty Word, O Lord, descended from the royal throne.

Hymn: 366 It Came upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,
2 Still through the clo-ven skies they come With peace-ful wings un-furled,
3 All you, be-neath your heav-y load, By care and guilt bent low,
4 For lo, the days have come to pass By proph-ets seen of old,



From an-gels bend-ing near the earth To touch their harps of gold:
And still their heav'n-ly mu-sic floats O'er all the wea-ry world.
Who toil a-long a drea-ry way With pain-ful steps and slow:
When down in-to the cir-cling years Came Christ as was fore-told.



"Peace on the earth, good-will to all, From heav'n's all-gra-cious king."
A-bove its sad and low-ly plains They bend on hov-`ring wing,
Look up, for gold-en is the hour, Come swift-ly on the wing,
His word of peace shall to the earth God's an-cient prom-ise bring,



The world in sol-emn still-ness lay To hear the an-gels sing.
And ev-er o'er its ba-bel sounds The bless-ed an-gels sing.
The Prince was born to bring you peace; Of Him the an-gels sing.
And all who take this gift will hear The song the an-gels sing.



Readings from Holy Scripture on the Eve of the Nativity

A Christmas Prophecy from Isaiah

Isaiah 62:10-12

Go through, go through the gates;
prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway;
clear it of stones;
lift up a signal over the peoples.
Behold, the LORD has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:
Say to the daughter of Zion,
“Behold, your salvation comes;
behold, his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.”
And they shall be called The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD;
and you shall be called Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Is. 9:6; Ps. 98:1a

C **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.
Sing to the Lord a new song,
for he has done marvelous things!**

A Christmas Epistle from Saint Paul

Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

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

Choral Anthem: Night of Silence, Silent Night

The Christmas Gospel of Jesus' Birth

Luke 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And 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.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

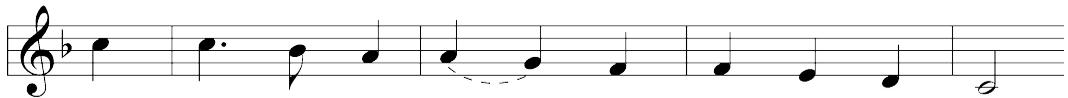
Hymn: 364 Away in a Manger



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 night.
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

Tune and text: Public domain

The Christmas Gospel of Jesus' Birth continued...

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And 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. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

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

P This is the Word of the Lord. **G** Thanks be to God.

Hymn: 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 and tune: Public domain

The Christmas Gospel continued...

Luke 2:15-20

When 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." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

P The Christmas Gospel. **C** Thanks be to God.

+ Sermon +

Prayer

L Let us pray:

For the gift of Christmas peace and pardon, with all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the holy Christian Church, here and scattered throughout the world, and for the proclamation of the Gospel and the calling of all to faith, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For our nation, for our cities and communities, and for the common welfare of us all, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For those who labor at this hour, for those whose work is difficult or dangerous, and for all who travel, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For all those in need this night and through this Christmas season and coming new year, for the hungry and homeless, for the widowed and orphaned, and for all those in prison, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the sick and dying and for all those who care for them, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For the blessed memory of our loved ones, let us give thanks to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L For . . . *[additional bids for prayer may be inserted here]* . . . let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy.

L Finally, for these and for all our needs of body and soul, let us pray to the Lord:

C Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.



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.

Candelighting Ceremony please tip only the unlit candles; extinguish w/o blowing

Collect for the Eve of the Nativity

O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **☩ Amen.**

Hymn: 363 Silent Night, Holy Night (Include Stanza 2g in German below)



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - dant



vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
beams from Thy ho-ly face With the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,



Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

2g Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht! Hirten erst kundgemacht,
Durch der Engel Halleluja Tönt es laut von fern und nah:
Christ, der Retter, ist da, Christ, der Retter, ist da!

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Apostles' Creed

**☩ 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.**

Closing Sentences

- L** To us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder.
- C** **And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

You may extinguish your candles

Blessing

- L** Let us bless the Lord.
- C** **Thanks be to God.**

- P** The almighty and merciful Lord, the Father, the † Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.
- C** **Amen.**

See hymn on next page

Hymn: 387 Joy to the World

- 1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and
nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat
the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness And wonders of His love, And wonders of His
love, And wonders, wonders of His love.

*Return in the morning for Christmas Day Divine Service
with the Lord's Supper at 10:30 a.m.*



Acknowledgments

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Special Thanks

To Laura Bisconte and the Choir, Janice Kaiser (clavinova), Susan Johnson (clavinova), and tonight's Lectors. Thank you!

