

# The Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord

December 24, 2023



## Service of the Word and Candlelight Vigil

### Hymn: 379 O Come, All Ye Faithful



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,  
4 Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, Born this hap - py morn - ing;



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!  
Je - sus, to Thee\_\_\_ be\_\_\_ glo - ry giv'n!



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:  
Word of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

#### *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

## Opening 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.

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

### **G** "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.**

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

## Readings from Holy Scripture on the Eve of the Nativity

### 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.

**G** Thanks be to God.

Gradual

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

**☐ 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!**

**Hymn: 386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice**



1 Now sing we, now re - joice,      Now raise to heav'n our voice;  
2 Come from on high to me;      I can - not rise to Thee.  
3 Now through His Son doth shine      The Fa - ther's grace di - vine.  
4 Oh, where shall joy be found?      Where but on heav'n - ly ground?



He from whom joy stream - eth      Poor in a man - ger lies;  
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it,      O pure and ho - ly Child;  
Death was reign - ing o'er us      Through sin and van - i - ty  
Where the an - gels sing - ing      With all His saints u - nite,



Not so bright - ly beam - eth      The sun in yon - der skies.  
Through Thy grace and mer - it,      Blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,  
Till He o - pened for us      A bright e - ter - ni - ty.  
Sweet - est prais - es bring - ing      In heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art!      Thou my Sav - ior art!  
Draw me un - to Thee!      Draw me un - to Thee!  
May we praise Him there!      May we praise Him there!  
Oh, that we were there!      Oh, that we were there!

Text: Latin and German, 14th cent.; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806-74, alt.

Tune: German, 14th cent.

Text and tune: Public domain

## 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 *Dona Nobis Pacem*

## The Christmas Gospel of Jesus' Birth (KJV)

Luke 2:1–14

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

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

## Hymn: 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

## 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 there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, good will toward men."

**P** This is the Word of the Lord. **C** 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.

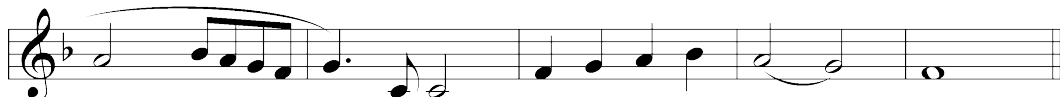
*Refrain*



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

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing, which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us."

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

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

## Hymn: 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

## 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.**





**C**andelighting Ceremony please tip only the unlit candles

## **C**ollect 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.

**C** Amen.

## **H**ymn: 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 - diant



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! Public domain

## **A**postles' 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.

## 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.

## Hymn: 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

*Return in the morning for*

***Christmas Day (The Nativity of Our Lord)***  
***Divine Service***  
***with the Lord's Supper***  
***Special Service time: 10:30 a.m.***

**Acknowledgments**

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**Special Thanks**

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



*Poinsettias given in memory of / in honor of...*

Marleen Baerns	1	Memory of	Loved Ones
Phil & Carol Barnett	1	Memory of	Loved Ones
Larry & Phillis Bembas	1	Memory of	Loved Ones
Laura Bisconte	1	Memory of	Elnora Mace
Ann Brown	1	Memory of	Loved Ones
Gift Family	1	Memory of	The Gift of Jesus
Fred Hansen	1	Memory of	Erna Hansen
Hebar Family	1	Memory of	Loved Ones
Renee Hickman	1	Memory of	Parents
Hicks Family	1	Memory of	Bailey and Jude Hicks
Ole & Mavis Johnson	1	Honor of	Military and Law Enforcement
Steve & Janice Kaiser	1	Memory of	Richard Haynes
McMichaels & Haynes	1	Memory of	Delora Roth
Amy Mohr	1	Memory of	Dick Mohr
Larry & Janet Moore	2	Memory of	Larry's Parents: Howard & Alice, Janet's Parents: Harry & Marylou Lillemoen, and Sister: Linda Julio
Betty Narveson	1	Memory of	Clayton
Mark Ratliff	2	Memory of	Megan and Barbara Ratliff
Paul Ruble	1	Memory of	Loved Ones in Glory
Sharon Schenk	1	Memory of	Charles Schenk
Smith-Sebrights	1	Memory of	Taryn Sebright
Jim & Valerie Vesper	1	Memory of	JoAnn & John Boling and Jim Vesper, Sr.
Sandra Wendland	1	Memory of	Albert
Tom Wittkopp	1	Memory of	Edward Wittkopp (Son)
Sharon Yoder	1	Memory of	Marcy Gaugert



