

O Holy Night!



*Haitien Nativity
Scene in Banana Bark*

Christmas Eve Service *St. Paul's Episcopal Church ~ December 24th, 2011*

10:00 pm Candlelight Service

Celebrant: The Reverend Janet Fullmer
Deacon: The Reverend Stephen Schafroth

The Word of God

Prelude

Rule Beasley

The Opening Hymn

O Come, all ye faithful

Hymnal 83

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 O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

God from God, Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten Son of God the Father; *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest; *Refrain*

See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps; *Refrain*

Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,
we would embrace thee, with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly? *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing; *Refrain*

Words: John Francis Wade; Public Domain

The Acclamation

Celebrant
People

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Song of Praise

The snow lay on the ground

Hymnal 110

The snow lay on the ground, the stars shone bright, when Christ our Lord was born
On Christmas night.
Venite adoremus Dominum. Venite adoremus Dominum.

Refrain Venite adoremus Dominum. Venite adoremus Dominum.

'Twas Mary, daughter pure of holy Anne, that brought into this world the God made man.
She laid him in a stall at Bethlehem; the ass and oxen shared the roof with them. *Refrain*

Saint Joseph, too, was by to tend the child; to guard him, and protect his mother mild;
the angels hovered round, and sang this song, Venite adoremus Dominum. *Refrain*

And thus that manger poor became a throne; for he whom Mary bore was God the Son.
O come, then, let us join the heavenly host, to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. *Refrain*

Celebrant
People
Celebrant

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant
that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in
heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.

Please be seated.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness-- on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

People The Word of the Lord.
 Thanks be to God.

The Psalm **Psalm 96** *Cantate Domino*

Page 725, BCP

Sing to the LORD a new **song**; *
sing to the LORD, all the whole **earth**.
2 Sing to the LORD and bless his **Name**; *
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to **day**.
3
Declare his glory among the **nations** *
and his wonders among all **peoples**.
4 For great is the LORD and greatly to be **praised**; *
he is more to be feared than all **gods**.
5
As for all the gods of the nations, they are but **idols**; *
but it is the LORD who made the **heavens**.
6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his **presence**! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his **sanctuary**!
7
Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the **peoples**; *
ascribe to the LORD honor and **power**.
8 Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his **Name**; *
bring offerings and come into his **courts**.
9
Worship the LORD in the beauty of **holiness**; *
let the whole earth tremble be-**fore him**.
10 Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is **King**! *
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with **equity**."
11
Let the heavens re-**joice**,
and let the earth be **glad**;
let the sea thunder and all that is **in it**; *
let the field be joyful and all that is **therein**.
12
Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the LORD when he **comes**, *
when he comes to judge the **earth**.
13 He will judge the world with **righteousness** *
and the peoples with his **truth**.

The Second Reading

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Sequence Hymn

Angels we have heard on high

Hymnal 96

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Refrain: Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear? *Refrain*

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. *Refrain*

See him in a manger laid, whom the angels praise above;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love. *Refrain*

The Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.
People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

People The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Prayers of the People

Loving Father, Help us remember the birth of Jesus, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Deliver us from all darkness and evil by the blessing which Christ brings;

Teach us to be merry with clear hearts.

May the Christmas morning make us happy to be thy children;

And Christmas evening bring us to our beds with grateful thoughts, forgiving and forgiven.*

Bless all those we love and care for;

That they may be filled with joy and the love of Christ.

Be with all those who suffer, grieve, sorrow, or feel lost and abandoned by You.

Let the grace and mercy of your presence guide and sustain them.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

(Congregation adds petitions)

Hear the pleas of your people in need;

Relieve their burdens and give them your peace that passes all understanding.

Let us pray with St. Augustine of Hippo:

Let the just rejoice,

for their justifier is born.

Let the sick and infirm rejoice,

For their saviour is born.

Let the captives rejoice,

For their Redeemer is born.

Let slaves rejoice,

for their Master is born.

Let free men rejoice,

For their Liberator is born.

Let All Christians rejoice,

For Jesus Christ is born!

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect:

God of love, Father of all, the darkness that covered the earth has given way to the bright dawn of your Word made flesh. Make us a people of this light. Make us faithful to your Word that we may bring your life to the waiting world. Make all the world come celebrate You this night as we remember your coming as little baby boy! We pray these things through Christ our Lord. **Amen.***

The Peace *Please stand*

Celebrant

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People

And also with you.

The Holy Communion

The Offertory

“Softly, Sweetly”

Choir

The Doxology

Hymnal 380

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

Eucharistic Prayer A

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your son Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

WLP 858 **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,

LEVAS 264

**Our Father, which 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God. Holy Food, for Holy People.

All are welcome to receive; Please come forward for the elements or for a blessing. The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words: The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [Amen.] The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [Amen.] Gluten free bread and grape juice are available; please ask the server if you prefer these alternatives.

The Communion Hymns

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light

Hymnal 91

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light, and usher in the morning:
O shepherds, greet that glorious sight, our Lord a crib adorning.
This child, this little helpless boy, shall be our confidence and joy,
The power of Satan breaking, our peace eternal making.

Words: John Rist; Public Domain

Of the Father's love begotten

Hymnal 82

O little town of Bethlehem

Hymnal 79

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

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The Postcommunion Prayer *Please stand.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen .**

The Christmas Blessing

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

The Lighting of the Candles

The Recessional

Silent Night

Hymnal 111

**Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright,
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior is born.**

**Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light,
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth!**

Deacon [Dismissal]

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

The Postlude

Rule Beasley

*Celebrant: The Rev. Janet Fullmer; Deacon: The Rev. Stephen Schafroth;
Acolyte: Don Dickinson; Worship Leader: Ron Fullmer; Eucharist Minister: Diane Walworth; Lector: Don Dickinson;
Prayers of the People: Rosemary Ross; Altar Guild: Mary Ellen Lowe, Monte Dickinson;
The Wassail Bowl: Ann and Bill Ketchum*

*Prayers of the People adapted in part from: *From A Christmas Prayer* by Robert Louis Stevenson;
St. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-440); International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL)

St. Paul's is a loving, welcoming Christian community gathered to be Christ's hands and heart in the world.

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