

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

PRELUDE

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.

Blessed be God's name forever. Amen.

Beloved, now is the time to wake from sleep.
Let us confront our sins,
and confess them to the one who is merciful and just.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of new beginnings,
we confess that we have not welcomed your holy reign.
We have strayed from your paths.
We prepare for war instead of peace.
We dishonor one another and your creation.
Purify us with your refining fire
and set us again on your way of love,
that we may bear fruit worthy of repentance,
and welcome your coming among us.
Amen.

People of God,
a new thing is growing in our midst,
a tender branch,
a living sign.
By water and the Spirit you are joined to this wonder.
You have put on ✠ Christ,
and your sins have been washed away.
Rejoice in the way of the Lord.
Amen.

*GATHERING HYMN



1 Wake, a - wake, for night is fly - ing, the watch-men
2 Zi - on hears the watch-men sing - ing, and all her
3 Glo - ri - a! Let heav'n a - dore you! Let saints and



on the heights are cry - ing; a - wake, Je - ru - sa - lem, at last.
heart with joy is spring-ing. She wakes, she ris - es from her gloom.
an - gels sing be - fore you, with harp and cym-bal's clear-est tone.



Mid - night hears the wel - come voic - es, and at the
Her dear friend comes down, all glo - rious, the strong in
Gates of pearl, twelve por - tals gleam - ing, lead us to



thrill-ing cry re - joic - es: "Come forth, you maid-ens! Night is past.
grace, in truth vic - to - rious: her star is ris'n; her light is come.
bliss be - yond all dream - ing, with an - gel choirs a - round your throne.



The bride - groom comes! A - wake; your lamps with glad - ness take!"
Now come, O Bless - ed One, Lord Je - sus, God's own Son.
No eye has caught the light, no ear the thun - d'ring might



Al - le - lu - ia! Rise and pre - pare the feast to share;
Sing ho - san - na! Oh, hear the call! Come one, come all,
of such glo - ry. There we will go: what joy we'll know!



go, meet the bride - groom, who draws near.
and fol - low to the ban - quet hall.
There sweet de - light will ev - er flow.

*GREETING

The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,...be with you all.

And also with you.

*KYRIE



Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

Chris - te e - lei - son. Christ, have mer - cy.

Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray:

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God,
and strengthen our faith in your coming, that,
transformed by grace,
we may walk in your way;
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture readings, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing

for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Hear the One who is coming.

Come, Word of God.

PSALM

Refrain



My soul pro-claims your great-ness, O Lord; I
sing my Sav-ior's praise! Great won-ders you have
done for me, and ho-ly is your name.

- 1 My soul proclaims your great-ness, Lord; I sing my Sav-ior's praise!
- 2 Now every land and ev-'ry age this bless-ing shall pro-claim—
- 3 To all who live in ho-ly fear your mer-cy ev-er flows.
- 4 The ruthless you have cast a-side, the low-ly throned in-stead;
- 5 To Israel, your ser-vant blest, your help is ev-er sure;
- 6 Sing glory to the Ho-ly One, give hon-or to the Word,

You looked upon my low-li-ness, and I am full of grace.
great wonders you have done for me, and holy is your name. *Refrain*

With mighty arm you dash the proud, their scheming hearts ex-
pose. the hungry filled with all good things, the rich sent off un-fed. *Refrain*

the promise to our par-ents made their children will se-
cure. and praise the Power of the Most High, one God, by all a-dored. *Refrain*

SECOND READING

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Hear the One who is coming.

Come, Word of God.

The assembly stands to greet the gospel.

***CANDLELIGHTING**

The assembly sings verse 1 on the hymn.

1. God of the star-light and moon, mys-ter-y God of the
2. Beau-ty be-yond what we know, shap-ing a world that we
3. Out of the blue you ar-rive, weav-ing our lives with your

mid-night blue skies. Love draw-ing near, dream-ing new
can-not quite see. Form of a child, reach-ing to
con-stant sur-prise. Flick-er-ing flame, spark-ling with

fu-tures: fire of our hearts, a-rise.
greet us: time in e-ter-ni-ty.
prom-ise: God of the star-lit skies.

The first candle is lighted. The assembly sings verse 2 of the hymn.

When deep bklue darkness
has unfolded its mysteries,
we can measure
our environment,
understand it,
move through it with confidence.

When we next return to deep darkness,
we will know more
and fear less.

This candle which we light
represents our growing familiarity
with God's purposes,
where the stories we have heard
and the traditions we have inherited
resolve into new meaning
for a new day.

In time we will stride
confidently forward
into each new day,
unwavering in devotion,
unswerving in direction.
But not yet,
not fully.

***GOSPEL**

The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**
When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.’ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, “See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.” Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

This is the Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

After a brief silence for reflection, the assembly stands to proclaim the Word of God in song.

***HYMN OF THE DAY**

Joyful Is the Dark



1 Joy - ful is the dark, ho - ly, hid - den God,
 2 Joy - ful is the dark, Spir - it of the deep,
 3 Joy - ful is the dark, shad - owed sta - ble floor;
 4 Joy - ful is the dark, cool - ness of the tomb,
 5 Joy - ful is the dark, depth of love di - vine,



roll - ing cloud of night be - yond all nam - ing:
 wing - ing wild - ly o'er the world's cre - a - tion,
 an - gels flick - er, God on earth con - fess - ing,
 wait - ing for the won - der of the morn - ing;
 roar - ing, loom - ing thun - der - cloud of glo - ry,



maj - es - ty in dark - ness, en - er - gy of love,
 silk - en sheen of mid - night plum - age black and bright,
 as with ex - ul - ta - tion, Mar - y, giv - ing birth,
 nev - er was that mid - night touched by dread and gloom:
 ho - ly, haunt - ing beau - ty, liv - ing, lov - ing God.



Word - in - flesh, the mys - ter - y pro - claim - ing.
 swoop - ing with the beau - ty of a ra - ven.
 hails the in - fant cry of need and bless - ing.
 dark - ness was the cra - dle of the dawn - ing.
 Hal - le - lu - jah! Sing and tell the sto - ry!

Text: Brian Wren, b. 1936

Music: LINDNER, Carlton R. Young, b. 1926

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***NICENE CREED**

Siblings in Christ, as we look to the coming of the Savior,
let us confess the faith of the Church:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We love the resurrection of the dead, +
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

***PRAYER OF INTERCESSION**

Let us lift our prayers with all the faithful, joining the pleading of creation itself:

With your Church, that your Spirit may continue to enliven all the faithful, that we look with expectation to your coming among us everyday, and that your heart be in all those who serve your people, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With creation, as days grow shorter and colder, as bare branches and cold wind surround us, that we remember your life—as creation’s life—is never finished, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With the nations of the world, that wars may cease in all places, that governments and leaders be formed to serve all people with equity and justice, and that all people live in trust and harmony, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With those who are sick and suffering, that your wings of healing be spread over them, that your wisdom, patience, and perseverance be with all those who care for another’s needs, and that you visit those whose names and needs we lift up now: _____, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With those who cannot look with hope to your coming or with joy to this season, that love and comfort be with them, that beloved community surround those who mourn, that loving family surround those who are estranged or outcast from their places of belonging, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With whom else do we pray?
With all those we hold dear, and those known only to you, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

With all your faithful in every time and place who now worship the Prince of Peace, that the promises of baptism uphold us now until we gather with them, we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Come, Lord Jesus, and quickly! Hear our prayers and all our needs and speak your peace to our expectant hearts.
Amen.

***THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**
We greet one another with a sign of peace. Please be mindful of touch.

MEAL

God feeds us with Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

***OFFERTORY HYMN**



1 Come, thou long-ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo-ple free;
2 Born thy peo-ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king;



from our fears and sins re - lease us; let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for - ev - er, now thy gra - cious king-dom bring.



Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art,
By thine own e - ter - nal Spir - it rule in all our hearts a - lone;



dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na - tion, joy of ev - 'ry long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Let us pray:

Eternal God,

you make the desert bloom

and send springs of water to thirsty ground.

Receive these simple gifts of bread, wine, and money,

and make us messengers of your mercy and love

for all in need of your healing and justice.

We ask this through Christ our Savior.

Amen.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

***SURSUM CORDA**

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal part, consisting of four staves. Each staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat major), and a common time signature. The melody is written in a simple, stepwise fashion. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words hyphenated across bar lines. The first staff contains the lyrics 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.' The second staff contains 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff contains 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' The fourth staff contains 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'

*PREFACE

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Re - deem - er,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righ - teous-ness.
And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,
we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

*SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
God of might, heav - en and earth are full of your
glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is the one who comes in the name of the
Lord. Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.
Ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

***EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

We praise you, living and loving God,
that you have sent your Son to this world.
Christ is your Wisdom, sweetly ordering all creation,
our Lawgiver, burning with justice,
the Branch from Jesse's tree, sprouting flowers from old roots,
the Key of David, opening our prison doors.
And let the people cry, **O come and save us.**

*We praise you, serving and saving God,
that you send your Son also to this table,
who on the night before he died took bread, and gave thanks,
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

And let the people cry, **O come and save us.**

We beg you, mighty and merciful God:
send us the Spirit of your Son.
Dwell in this food and in all who share it,
that the earth may rejoice in your presence.
In Christ, the Dawning Day, enlighten a darkened world,
reign as Sovereign to unite all peoples,
and live among us, Emmanuel,
our deepest desire now and forever.
And let the people cry, **O come and save us.**

Even so, come, Lord Jesus, with your Father and your Spirit, to the church,
and receive our praises, now and forever.

Amen.

*LORD'S PRAYER



Our Fa-ther in heav-en, hal-lowed be your name,
your king-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav-en.
Give us to-day our dai-ly bread. For-give us our sins as we
for-give those who sin a-gainst us. Save us from the time of tri-al
and de-liv-er us from e-vil. For the king-dom, the pow'r,
and the glo-ry are yours, now and for-ev-er. A-men.

*INVITATION TO THE TABLE

COMMUNION

HYMNS DURING DISTRIBUTION

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of four staves of music in a single system, all written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are printed below the notes. The first staff contains the first line of the hymn. The second staff contains the second line. The third staff contains the third line. The fourth staff contains the final line of the hymn, which ends with a double bar line. The lyrics are: "Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace."

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers



1 Re - joi - ce, re - joi - ce, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain pro - claim the bride - groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'ring bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.
go forth as he ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias clear.
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, o'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride - groom is at hand.
in tri - umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold.
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907
Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, the Sav - ior
 2 He comes the pris - 'ners to re - lease, in Sa - tan's
 3 He comes the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of peace, your wel - come

prom - ised long; let ev - 'ry heart pre -
 bond - age held. The gates of brass be -
 soul to cure, and with the trea - sures
 shall pro - claim, and heav'n's e - ter - nal

pare a throne and ev - 'ry voice a song.
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.
 arch - es ring with your be - lov - ed name.

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702–1751
 Music: CHESTERFIELD, Thomas Haweis, 1734–1820

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray:

Faithful God,

in this meal you have remembered your mercy,
 bringing heaven to earth in the body and blood of Christ.

As we wait for the day

when all your promises will be fulfilled,
 sustain us and strengthen us by this holy mystery.

Guide us toward your promised future,
 coming to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

*BLESSING

*SENDING HYMN



To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra, al Sal - va - dor
1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
"A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

*DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Christ is near. **Thanks be to God.**