

The Season of Christmas

January 3, 2021 at 11:00 am - St. Thomas Parking Lot

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Prelude

Opening Hymn

Go Tell it on the Mountain

Hymnal #99

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *Refrain*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *Refrain*

African-American spiritual 19th cent; adapt. John W. Work (1901-1967)

Acclamation

Collect for Purity

Collect of the Day

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**



The Lessons

FIRST READING: *Jeremiah 31:7-14*

⁷Thus says the LORD: "Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.' ⁸See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. ⁹With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock.' ¹¹For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. ¹²They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. ¹³Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. ¹⁴I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,"

PSALM: *Psalms 84*

¹*How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! **

*My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.*

²*The sparrow has found her a house and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.*

³*Happy are they who dwell in your house! * they will always be praising you.*

⁴*Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.*

⁵*Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, *
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.*

⁶*They will climb from height to height, * and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.*

⁷*LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; * hearken, O God of Jacob.*

⁸*Behold our defender, O God; * and look upon the face of your Anointed.*

⁹*For one day in your courts is better than a thousand in my own room, *
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.*

¹⁰**For the LORD God is both sun and shield; * he will give grace and glory;**

¹¹**No good thing will the LORD withhold * from those who walk with integrity.**

¹²**O LORD of hosts, * happy are they who put their trust in you!**

SECOND READING: *Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-29a*

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

¹⁵I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, ¹⁸so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, ^{19a}and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

GOSPEL: *Matthew 2:1-12*

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ⁶'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" ⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Sermon

Prayers of the People

Confession of Sin

The Peace

HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Music

We Three Kings

Offertory

Celebrant All things come of thee, O Lord.

People ***And of thine own have we given thee.***

The Great Thanksgiving

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 him thanks and praise.***

Celebrant It is right, and a good and joyful thing . . .

. . . to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

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

Celebrant Holy and gracious Father. . .
. . . we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Celebrant We celebrate the memorial of our redemption. . . Almighty Father, now and
for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

***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, for ever and ever. Amen.***

The Breaking of the Bread

Fraction Anthem

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People ***Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.***

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace.

Amen.

Closing Hymn

The First Nowell Hymnal #109 (English Carol, 18th Cent)

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain: Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. *Refrain*

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. *Refrain*

This star drew nigh to the northwest, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay.

Then entered in those wise men three full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.

Post Communion Prayer

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.

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

Hymnal #89

Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876)

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven's all-gracious King.'
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not the tidings which they bring;
O hush the noise and cease your strife and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

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