

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Prelude

Candlelighting (Lucernaria)

V. Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.

R. ***Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.***

V. Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved:

R. **O Lord God of hosts.**

V. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

R. ***Come and save us, O Lord God of hosts.***

V. Show us your mercy, O Lord:

R. **And grant us your salvation.**

Opening Hymn

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers (verses 1, 3)

Hymnal #68

Rejoice! rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear!
The evening is advancing, and darker night is near.
The Bridegroom is arising, and soon he will draw nigh;
up, watch in expectation! at midnight comes the cry.

Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;
arise, thou Sun so longed for, above this darkened sphere!
With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption, and ever be with thee!

Laurentius Laurenti (1660-1722); tr. Sarah B. Findlater (1823-1907)

Acclamation

pg. 355 in Book of Common Prayer

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

People ***And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.***

Collect for Purity

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

The First Reading: *Isaiah 35:1-10*

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ²it 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. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say 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." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then 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; ⁷the 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. ⁸A 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. ⁹No 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. ¹⁰And 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.

Psalm 146:4-9

⁴***Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, *
whose hope is in the LORD their God;***
⁵***Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; *
who keeps his promise forever;***
⁶***Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, *
and food to those who hunger.***
⁷***The LORD sets the prisoners free; the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; *
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;***
⁸***The LORD loves the righteous; the LORD cares for the stranger; *
he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.***
⁹***The LORD shall reign forever, *
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!***

The Second Reading: *James 5:7-10*

⁷Be 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. ⁸You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. ⁹Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Gospel – *Matthew 11:2-11*

²When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" ⁴Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the 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. ⁶And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

⁷As 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? ⁸What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written,

'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

¹¹Truly 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."

The Sermon

Nicene Creed

Prayers of the People - *All remain standing.*

Presider or deacon

Let us pray for all our needs in this Holy Season, saying, **Hear us Lord!**

. . . Hear us as we remember those who have died in the peace of Christ, both those who have confessed the faith and those whose faith is known to you alone, and grant us with them a share in your eternal kingdom.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Confession of Sin

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

The Peace

HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Music

People, Look East

French carol

Offertory

Celebrant All things come of thee, O Lord.

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

The Great Thanksgiving

The Great Thanksgiving - *Eucharistic Prayer B*

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

***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 We give thanks to you, O God . . .

. . . Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . .

. . . 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 for ever. **AMEN.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

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

A period of silence is kept.

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.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion Music

Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding

Hymnal #59

Hark! a thrilling voice is sounding: 'Christ is nigh,' it seems to say;
'Cast away the works of darkness, O ye children of the day.'

Wakened by the solemn warning, from earth's bondage let us rise;
Christ, our sun, all sloth dispelling, shines upon the morning skies.

Lo! the Lamb, so long expected, comes with pardon down from heaven;
let us haste, with tears of sorrow, one and all to be forgiven;

so when next he comes with glory, and the world is wrapped in fear,
may he with his mercy shield us, and with words of love draw near.

Honor, glory, might, and blessing to the Father and the Son,
with the everlasting Spirit while unending ages run.

Latin, ca. 6th cent.; tr. *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861

Sending Forth

Postcommunion 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.

Blessing

Closing Hymn*Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord (verses 1, 2)*

Hymnal #437

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord! Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
tender to me the promise of his word; in God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name! Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure, from age the same; his holy Name—the Lord, the Mighty One.

Dismissal

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
People ***Thanks be to God.***

Postlude*Go Tell it on the Mountain*

Hymnal #99

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.

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

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

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

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ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

12251 Antioch Rd, Overland Park, KS 66213

913-451-0512

Website: www.stthomasop.org Email: stthomas@stthomasop.org