

Christmas Day



Grace Lutheran 2025

Invocation and Opening Prayer

P: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: The Lord be with you

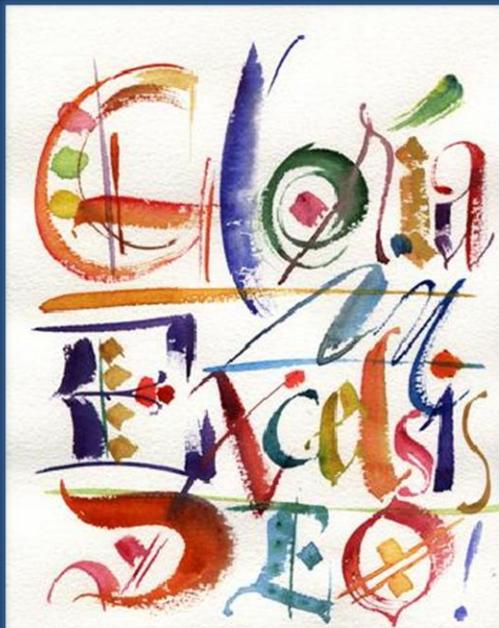
C: And also with you

P: Let us pray

**C: In the voice of creation,
in the psalms of David,
in the words of the prophets,
in the message of the angels,
in the dream of Joseph,
in the song of Mary,
in the proclamation of the Shepherds,
Your promise is spoken, eternal God,
and, in the fullness of time,
it took form and flesh in the baby, Jesus.**

And, as we now celebrate His birth long ago with scripture, meditations and carols, may your Word incarnate be renewed as a Light in our own hearts and an Inspiration for our own minds to fuel our good works every day of this joyous Christmas season and the coming New Year.

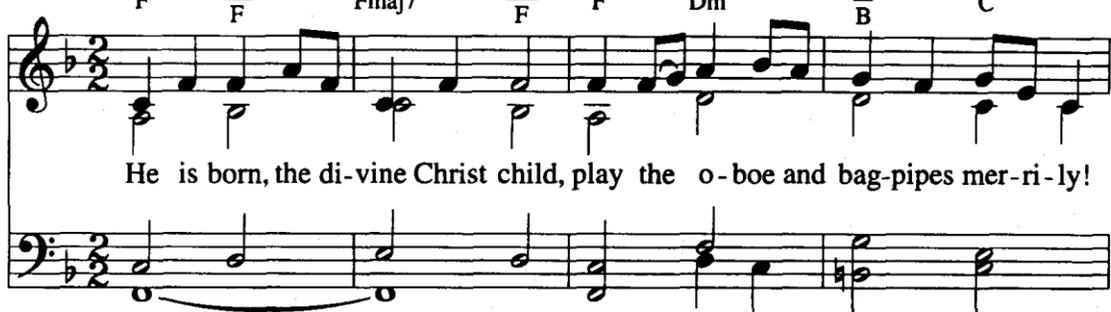
We ask this through him whose coming was, is and will yet be; Your Son, our Lord, Jesus the Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.



He is Born, the Divine Christ Child

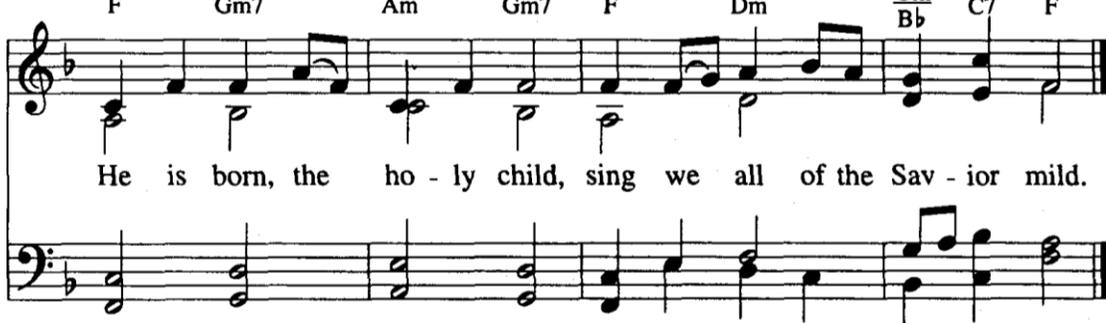
Refrain (Unison)

F $\frac{B\flat}{F}$ Fmaj7 $\frac{B\flat}{F}$ F Dm $\frac{G}{B}$ C



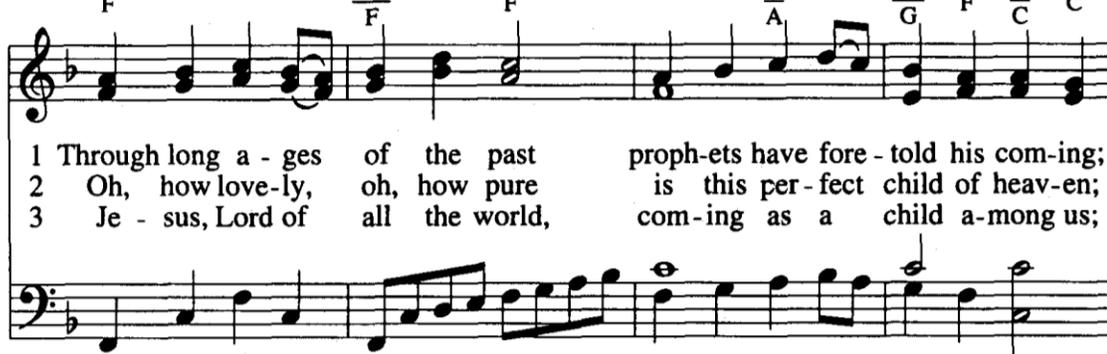
He is born, the di-vine Christ child, play the o-boe and bag-pipes mer-ri-ly!

F Gm7 Am Gm7 F Dm $\frac{Gm}{B\flat}$ C7 F



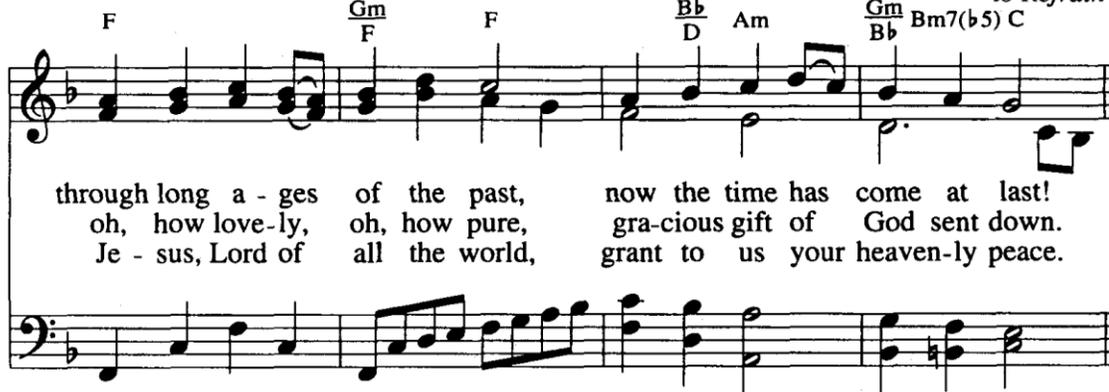
He is born, the ho-ly child, sing we all of the Sav-ior mild.

F $\frac{Gm}{F}$ F $\frac{F}{A}$ $\frac{C7}{G}$ F $\frac{F}{C}$ C



1 Through long a - ges of the past proph-ets have fore - told his com-ing;
 2 Oh, how love-ly, oh, how pure is this per-fect child of heav-en;
 3 Je - sus, Lord of all the world, com-ing as a child a-mong us;

F $\frac{Gm}{F}$ F $\frac{B\flat}{D}$ Am $\frac{Gm}{B\flat}$ Bm7(b5) C *to Refrain*



through long a - ges of the past, now the time has come at last!
 oh, how love-ly, oh, how pure, gra-cious gift of God sent down.
 Je - sus, Lord of all the world, grant to us your heav-en-ly peace.

The Pregnancy is Announced to Joseph

According to the first Chapter of the Gospel of Matthew

The genesis of Jesus Christ:

After his mother Mary had become engaged to Joseph, but before they "came together," she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. But Joseph, her husband, being righteous and not willing to make a show, desired to release her secretly.

But as he was considering doing this, behold, an angel of the Lord was fluoresced to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid. Take Mary as your wife, for the one conceived in her from the Spirit is holy. She will give birth to a son, and you are to call his name, 'Jesus,' for he will save his people from their sins."

But this all happened in order that what the Lord said speaking through the prophets may be fulfilled:

Behold! The virgin will be seized in the womb and will birth a son, and they will call his name Emmanuel, [which being translated means, "The God with us."]

And Joseph, having been awakened from the sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife and had no marital relations with her until she had birthed a son, and he called his name "Jesus."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of three staves of music with lyrics underneath. The first staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), G5 (quarter). The second staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), G5 (quarter). The third staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F#5 (quarter), G5 (quarter).

Re - jice and be mer - ry in songs and in
A hea - ven - ly vi - sion ap - peared in the
Like - wise a bright star in the sky did ap -
And when they were come, they their trea - sures un -
mirth; O praise our Re - deem - er, all mor - tals on
sky; Vast num - bers of an - gels the shep - herds did
pear, Which led the wise men from the East to draw
fold, And un - to him off - ered myrrh in - cense and
earth! For this is the birth - day of Je - sus our
spy, Pro - claim - ing - the birth - day of Je - sus our
near; They found the Mes - si - ah, sweet Je - sus our
gold. So bless - ed for - ev - er be Je - sus our



King, Who brought us sal - va-tion: his prai-ses we'll sing.
King, Who brought us sal - va-tion: his prai-ses we'll sing.
King, Who brought us sal - va-tion: his prai-ses we'll sing.
King, Who brought us sal - va-tion: his prai-ses we'll sing.

Emmanuel

Carl Frederick Buechner (1926-2022) was an American writer and theologian, an ordained Presbyterian minister and the author of more than thirty published books. His work encompasses different genres, including fiction, autobiography, essays and sermons. Buechner's work has often been praised for its ability to inspire readers to see the grace in their daily lives.

Back to the essential message of Christmas, which is Emmanuel, God with us, and to the questions it raises: Who is this God and how is he with us? "The high and lofty One who inhabits eternity" is the answer to the first. The One who is with us is the One whom none can look upon because the space-and-time human mind can no more comprehend fully the spaceless, timeless Reality of the One than the eyes of the blind can comprehend light. The One who is with us is the One who has made himself known at most only partially and dimly through the pantomime of nature and history and the eloquent but always abstruse utterance of prophets, saints, and mystics. It is the answer to the second question that seems "folly to the Gentiles" and "a stumbling block to the Jews," because the claim that Christianity makes for Christmas is that at a particular time and place God came to be with us himself. When Quirinius was governor of Syria, in a town called Bethlehem, a child was born who, beyond the power of anyone to account for,

was the high and lofty One made low and helpless. The One who inhabits eternity comes to dwell in time. The One whom none can look upon and live is delivered in a stable under the soft, indifferent gaze of cattle. The Father of all mercies puts himself at our mercy. For those who believe in the transcendence and total otherness of God, it radically diminishes him. For those who do not believe in God, it is the ultimate absurdity. For those who stand somewhere between belief and unbelief, it challenges credulity in a new way. It is not a theory that can be tested rationally, because it is beyond reason, and because it is not a theory, not something that theologians have thought their way to. The claim is, instead, that it is something that has happened, and reason itself is somehow tested by it, humankind's whole view of what is possible and real. Year after year the ancient tale of what happened is told - raw, preposterous, holy - and year after year the world in some measure stops to listen.



Good King Wenceslas



1. Good King Wen-ces - las looked out On the Feast of Steph-en,
 2. Hith - er, page, and stand by me; If thou know - 'st tel - ling;
 3. 'Bring me flesh and bring me wine! Bring me pine logs thi - ther!
 4. 'Sire, the night is dark - er now, And the wind blows strong - er.
 5. In his mast-er's steps he trod, Where the snow lay dint - ed;



When the snow lay round a - bout, Deep and crisp and e - ven;
 yon - der peas - ent who is he? Where and what his dwell - ing?
 Thou and I shall see him dine When we bear them thi - ther.'
 Fails my heart I know not how I can go no long - er.'
 Heat was in the ver - y sod Which the saint had print - ed.



Bright - ly shone the moon that night, Though the frost was cru - el,
 'Sire he lives a good league hence, Un - der - neath the moun - tain,
 Page and mon - arch forth they went, Forth they went to - ge - ther,
 'Mark my foot - steps, good my page, Tread thou in them bold - ly:
 There - fore Christ - ian folk, be sure, wealth or rank poss - ess - ing,



When a poor man came in sight, Gath - ring win - ter fu - el.
 Right a - gainst the for - est fence, By Saint Ag - nes' foun - tain.
 Through the rude winds wild la - ment And the bit - ter wea - ther.
 Thou shalt find the win - ter's rage Freeze thy blood less cold - ly.
 Ye who now will bless the poor Shall yourselves find bless - ing.

The Birth of the Messiah

According to the Second Chapter of the Gospel of Luke

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This registration was the first taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. And everyone went to register, each to their own city.

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 registered with Mary, the woman he was engaged to, who was pregnant.

While they were there, the days were fulfilled for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and swaddled him, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guest room.

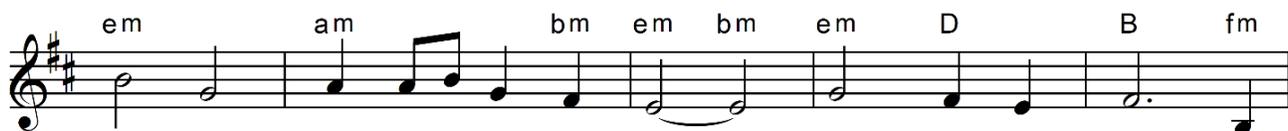
Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God!

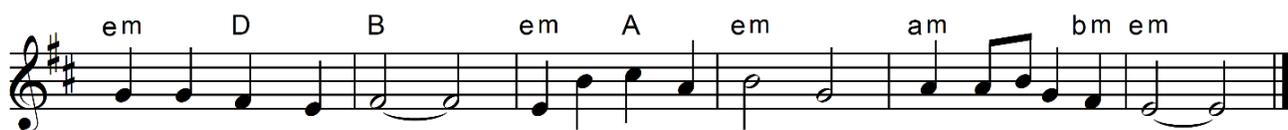
Noel Nouvelet!



1.No - el nou - ve - let! sing we this new No - el! Thank we now our
2.Wa - king from sleep, this won-der did I see: In a gar-den
3.How my heart re - joiced to see the sight di - vine, For withrays of
4.Then a ti - ny bird left off its song, to say Un - to cer-tain
5.Ma - ry and Jo - seph in Beth-le-hem they found Where the ox and
6.I be-held these won - ders as on my bed I lay, Dream-ing of a



God, and of his good-ness tell; Sing we No - el to
fair there stood a beau-teous tree, Where - on I spied a
glo - ry did the rose-buds shine, As when the sun doth
shep - herds: 'Haste you now a - way! In Beth - le - hem the
ass the In - fant did sur - round, Who in their man - ger
Child all at the break of day: Sing we No - el to



greet the new-born King: No-el nou-ve - let! this new No - el we sing.
rose - bus o - pen - ing.
rise at break of day.
Lamb of God you'll see.'
slept up - on the hay.
greet the new-born King:

The Ideal Christmas Dinner

Cathy Kaufman

Kaufman was Associate Editor of "Savoring Gotham" and a Senior Editor of the "Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America," and writes for many publications. She is an adjunct professor of Food Studies at The New School and New York University and is the author of "Cooking in Ancient Civilizations." She loves foie gras, but to atone for her gluttony, can be found in Chinatown twice a week, practicing tai chi.

Dickens did not single-handedly invent the signature "Cratchit meal;" his legacy was in popularizing a very specific menu to the exclusion of other foods historically served at Christmas. His story was a roadmap for middle and working-class pleasures at the precise moment when both meal structures and the nature of Christmas celebrations were changing. Americans of all economic stripes needed such a roadmap for in colonial America the question of whether and how to celebrate Christmas was controversial and depended upon one's ethnic roots.

Great differences existed even within the Anglo-American settlements. Puritans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, and Quakers, among others, tended to disdain the holiday as a popish invention. In 1621 William Bradford, the Puritan governor of Plymouth Colony, squelched an afternoon of gaming launched by non-Puritan arrivals to the colony, famously bellowing that no public Christmas frolics would occur on his watch; a little later, between 1658 and 1681, the Massachusetts Bay Colony outlawed Christmas celebrations and feasting, subject to a five shilling penalty, although there is no evidence of prosecutions under the law.

Ethnically diverse areas such as New York and Philadelphia were home to many Christmas-keepers. The fashionable wealthy threw holiday balls with fancy collations that were condemned by their religious rivals as profligate trash, as the sums wasted on cold roasts and cornucopia of sweets, temples of sugarplums, and pyramids of kisses could be put to better use. Shops and businesses might be open for normal commerce on December 25, depending on ownership and patronage, a pattern that continued well into the nineteenth century. Private papers occasionally describe a quiet Christmas dinner, but just as often, the day passed without remark.



Diaries note the potting of mincemeats and baking of pies, but these latter chores just as often melted into the winter routine of provisioning the larder and were not specifically associated with the holiday. As late as 1874, Henry Ward Beecher, the Congregationalist reformer, reminisced that Christmas was a foreign holiday celebrated by the doctrinally suspect Episcopalians in his Connecticut hometown; his sister, Catharine Beecher, never mentioned Christmas in her cookbooks and domestic manuals.

Dutch colonists scattered throughout the Hudson River Valley celebrated different winter holidays that would eventually merge into the extended American holiday season. New Year's Day was the most important, widely celebrated since the seventeenth century with open house parties at which spiced cakes, often more in the nature of a modern cookie shaped in decorated wooden molds, were served. St. Nicholas day, falling in early December, honored the Catholic saint whose miracles included bestowing dowries on impoverished young women. The saint's generosity grew to giving candies and presents to good children, which became the basis for the nineteenth-century Santa Claus. But in the seventeenth century, New Amsterdammers were threatened with punishment (like the Massachusetts Bay Puritans, no records of prosecutions have been found) for honoring the superstitions of the papacy by gathering publicly on St. Nicholas's Day with candies and other foods. The public record is otherwise quiet about St. Nicholas celebrations until the 1770s, when St. Nicholas parties sprang up in New York as political counterweights to entertainments sponsored by the St. George Society, whose members were Tories and sympathetic to aristocratic English custom. New Yorkers chafing under the English yoke protested Tory Christmas by hijacking a little-used Dutch holiday.

Southern society was defined primarily by Anglicans, who celebrated with gusto. Having transplanted to the plantations the culture of the English gentry, the wealthy feted friends and dependents throughout the Twelve Days of Christmas with every available furred and feathered game. A popular eighteenth-century Virginia ditty set the culinary tone:

*Christmas is coming, hang on the pot
Let spits turn round, and ovens be hot;
Beef, pork, and poultry now provide
To feast thy neighbours at this tide;
Then wash all down with good wine and beer
And so with mirth conclude the year!*



The Cherry Tree Carol



1. When Jo - seph was an old__ man, an old man was__ he, he____
 2. As Jo - seph and__ Ma - ry were walk - ing one__ day, "Here__
 3. Then Ma - ry spoketo Jo - seph, so meek and so__ mild, "Jo - seph
 4. Then Jo - seph flew in an - ger, in an - ger flew he, "Let the
 5. Then Je sus spoke a few__ words, a few words spo-ke he, "Let my
 6. "Bow down, O cher - ry tree!__ Bow low to the__ ground! Then__
 7. Then Jo - seph took__ Ma - ry All on his le - ft knee; Say - ing
 8. As Jo - seph was a walk - ing, He heard an an - gel say, "To -
 9. "He nei - ther shall be bo - rn in In house nor in__ hall, nor__
 10. "He nei - ther shall be cloth - ed in pur - ple nor in pall, but__
 11. "He nei - ther shall be rock - ed in sil - ver nor__ gold, but__



court - ed Vir - gin Ma - ry, the queen of Ga - li - lee, He____
 ap - ples and__ cher - ries O Ma - ry did__ say, "Here__
 ga - ther me some cher - ries for I am with__ child, Jo - seph
 fa - ther of the ba - by Gather cher - ries for__ thee! Let the
 mo - ther have some cher - ries; bow low down cher - ry tree, Let my
 Ma - ry gath - ered cher - ries while Jo - seph stood a - round; Then__
 "What have I____ done, Lord? Have mer - cy on__ me!" Say - ing,
 night shall be the birth - ing of Christ our heavenly King! To -
 in the place of para - dise, but in an ox - s' stall, nor__
 in the bare white lin - en that use - th bab - ies all, but__
 in a wood - en cra - dle that rocks up - on the mould, but__



court - ed vir - gin Ma - ry the queen of Ga - li - lee.
 app - les and__ cher - ries O Ma - ry did__ say.
 ga - ther me some cher - ries for I am with__ child.
 fa - ther of the ba - by gather cher - ries for__ thee.
 mo - ther have some cher - ries, bow low down cher - ry tree.
 Ma - ry ga - thered cher - ries while Jo - seph stood a - round.
 "What have I____ done Lord? Have mer - cy on__ me!
 night shall be the birth - ing of Christ our heaven'ly King!__
 in the place of para - dise, but in a ox - s' stall."
 in the bare white lin - en that use - th bab - ies all."
 in a wood - en cra - del that rocks up - on the mould."

Christmas Eve

Christina Rossetti (5 December 1830 – 29 December 1894)

Rossetti was an English writer of romantic, devotional and children's poems. She also wrote the texts of two Christmas carols: "In the Bleak Midwinter" and "Love Came Down at Christmas."

Christmas hath darkness	Earth, strike up your music,
Brighter than the blazing noon,	Birds that sing and bells that ring;
Christmas hath a chillness	Heaven hath answering music
Warmer than the heat of June,	For all Angels soon to sing:
Christmas hath a beauty	Earth, put on your whitest
Lovelier than the world can show:	Bridal robe of spotless snow:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,	For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.	Brought for us so low.

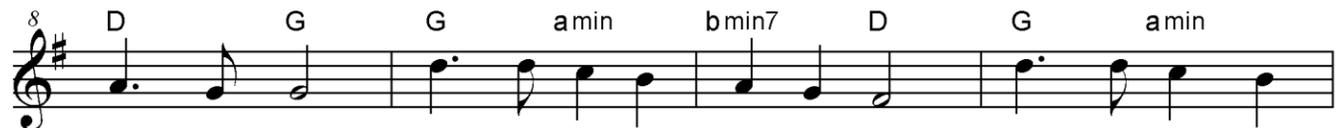
See Amid the Winter's Snow



See a - mid the win - ter's snow, born for us on
 Lo, with - in a man - ger lies God who built the
 Say, ye ho - ly shep - herds, say what your joy - ful
 "As we watched at dead of night, lo, we saw a
 Sa - cred in - fant, all di - vine, what a might - y



earth be - low, see, the ten - der Lamb ap - pears, prom - ised from e -
 star - ry skies, who en - throned in height sub - lime sits a - mid the
 news to - day; where - fore have ye left your sheep, on this lone - ly
 won - drous light; an - gels sing - ing 'Peace on earth' told us of the
 love was thine, thus to come from high - est bliss down to such a



ter - nal years. Hail, thou ev - er bless - ed morn; hail, re - demp - tion's
 cher - u - bim.
 moun - tain steep?
 Sav - ior's birth."
 world as this!



hap - py dawn; sing through all Je - ru - sa - lem, Christ is born in Beth - le - hem.

The Annunciation to the Shepherds

According to the Second Chapter of the Gospel of Luke

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch that night over their flock. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were afraid with a great fear.

But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am proclaiming good news to you of great joy for all people: to you is born today 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 army, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among people of

God's delight!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this word that has taken place - which the Lord has made known to us!" So, they went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the word that had been spoken to them about this child. Everyone who heard the shepherds were amazed at what the shepherds told them, but Mary preserved all of these words, considering them in her heart.

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

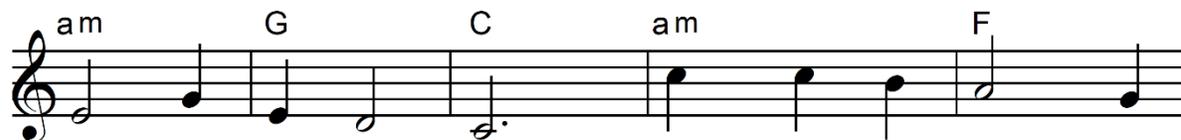
C: Thanks be to God!



Shepherds What Fragrance



Shep - herds, what fra - grance, all per - fum - ing, Sweet - ly our
 Whence comes this daz - zling rad - iance, ren - ding The gloo - my
 Hark! on the trem - bling air, such sing - ing As hath our
 Glo - ry to God in high - est hea - ven: Let all be -



sens - es now doth seize? Did e - ver flowers, at
 sha - dows of the night? Did e'er the morn - ing
 souls to won - der stirred! Choirs, in sweet con - cord,
 low his prai - ses sound! O may such grace to



spring - tide bloom - ing, Breathe forth such balm - y scents as
 star, a - scend - ing, Shed from his car a ray so
 earth - wards wing - ing: Strains that no mor - tal ear hath
 earth be gi - ven That peace may ev - ery - where a -



these? Shep - herds, what fra - grance, all per - fum - ing,
 bright? Whence comes this daz - zling rad - iance, ren - ding
 heard! Hark! on the trem - bling air, such sing - ing
 bound! Glo - ry to God in high - est hea - ven:



Sweet - ly our sens - es now doth seize?
 The gloo - my sha - dows of the night?
 As hath our souls to won - der stirred!
 Let all be - low his prai - ses sound!

The Throne of God

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

A German Lutheran pastor who taught at Union Theological Seminary, Bonhoeffer returned to Germany in the midst of World War II to be an anti-Nazi dissident and founding member of the Confessing Church. He was eventually arrested and killed by the Nazi's for his alleged participation in the 20 July plot to assassinate Hitler. Bonhoeffer's writings on Christianity's role in the secular world have become widely influential. The following is an excerpt from a Sermon on Luke 1 preached in London on the Third Sunday in Advent, December 17, 1933.

When God chooses Mary as the instrument - when God decides to come in person into this world in the manger in Bethlehem - this is not an idyllic family occasion, but rather the beginning of a complete reversal, a new ordering of all things on this earth. If we want to be part of this event of Advent and Christmas, we cannot just sit there like a theater audience and enjoy all the lovely pictures. We ourselves will be caught up in this action, this reversal of all things - we will become actors on this stage. For this is a play in which each spectator has a part to play, and we cannot hold back. What will our role be? Worshipful shepherds bending the knee, or kings bringing gifts? What story is being enacted when Mary becomes the mother of God, when God comes into the world in a lowly manger? The judgment and redemption of the world - that is what is happening here. For it is the Christ Child in the manger himself who will bring that judgment and redemption. It is he who pushes away the great and mighty of this world, who topples the thrones of the powerful, who humbles the haughty, whose arm exercises power against all who are highly placed and strong, and whose mercy lifts up what was lowly and makes it great and glorious. So we cannot come to this manger in the same way as we would approach the cradle of any other child. Something will happen to each of us who decides to come to Christ's manger. Each of us will have been judged or redeemed before we go away. Each of us will either break down or come to know that God's mercy is turned toward us. What does this mean? Is it not just a figure of speech? - the way pastors exaggerate a beautiful, pious legend? What does it mean to say such things about the Christ Child? If you want to see it as just a way of speaking, well, then go ahead and celebrate Advent and Christmas

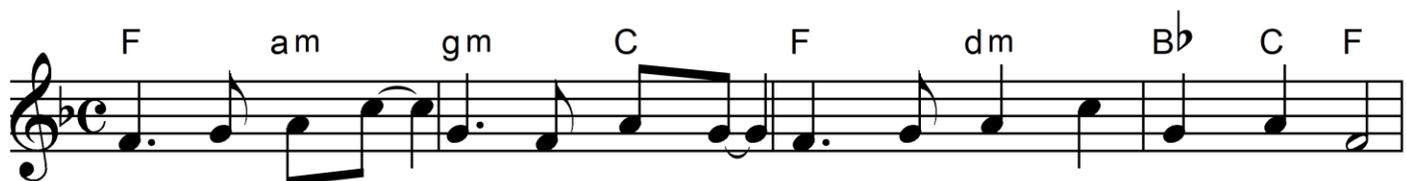


in the same pagan way you always have - as an onlooker. For us it is not just a figure of speech. It is what we have said: that it is God, the Lord and Creator of all things, who becomes so small here, comes to us in a little corner of the world, unremarkable and hidden away, and wants to meet us and be among us as a helpless, defenseless child — not as a game or to charm us, because we find this so touching, but to show us where and who God really is, and from this standpoint to judge all human desire for greatness, to devalue it and pull it down from its throne. The throne of God in the world is set not on the thrones of humankind but in humanity's deepest abyss, in the manger. There are no flattering courtiers standing around his throne, just some rather dark, unknown, dubious-looking figures, who cannot get enough of looking at this miracle and are quite prepared to live entirely on the mercy of God. For those who are great and powerful in this world, there are two places where their courage fails

them, which terrify them to the very depths of their souls, and which they dearly avoid. These are the manger and the cross of Jesus Christ. No one who holds power dares to come near the manger; King Herod also did not dare. For here thrones begin to sway, the powerful fall down, and those who are high are brought low, because God is here with the lowly. Here the rich come to naught, because God is here with the poor and those who hunger. God gives the hungry plenty to eat, but sends the rich and well-satisfied away empty. Before the maidservant Mary, before Christ's manger, before God among the lowly, the strong find themselves falling; here they have no rights, no hope, but instead find judgment. And even if today they think nothing will happen to them, it will come tomorrow or the next day. God puts down the tyrants from their thrones; God raises up the lowly. For this Jesus Christ came into the world as the child in the manger, as the son of Mary.



Suo Dan



Sleep my ba - by, I'll em-brace you Snug and warm you'll al - ways be.
Sleep in peace to - night be - lov - ed, Sweet-ly sleep, and watch I'll keep.
Do not wor-ry, just the leaves are Knocking, knock-ing on the door.



Mo-ther's arms are circl-ed round you, Mo-ther's love I have for thee.
Tell me why your lips are smil-ing, Smil-ing sweet - ly in your sleep.
Do not wor-ry, just the wave-lets Murmuring, mur-mering on the shore.



No - thing shall dis - turb thy slum-ber, None shall e-ver hurt your rest.
Are the heaven-ly an - gels smil-ing On your in-no-cence and joy,
Sleep my ba - by, nought can hurt you Res - ting safe-ly in my love.



Sleep in peace, my child be - loved, Gent-ly sleep u - pon my breast.
Smi - ling back to heav-en's an-gels Rest-ing here, be - lov - ed boy.
Smi - ling sweet-ly on my bo-som At the an - gels blessed a - bove.



Sight

Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was a German theologian, philosopher, and biblical scholar known for his attempt to reconcile the criticisms of the Enlightenment with traditional Protestant Christianity. "Servant of the Word: Selected Sermons of Friedrich Schleiermacher"

It is not in vain that Scripture compares the Word of God, in its nature and effects, to light. The sun's light shines down upon us pure and colorless; but it breaks forth from earthly objects only in a variety of colors, and all of them contribute to the beauty of our earth. Where these colors stand next to one another in their natural arrangement, and sparkle and play upon one another, there we see the rainbow – the arch of peace – resplendent in its perfect beauty. Only when we reunite the various broken rays, is pure and colorless light again restored. So it is with the Word of God. It has shone upon earth through the Son of God, pure in its heavenly splendor. But in every other person it becomes a unique light, breaking forth in an individual color. The beauty of Christ's church consists in the fact that, in the fellowship of believers, all these colors are harmoniously united, all the diverse human views and representations of the one salvation gently flow together. That is what it means to seek the truth in love.

Well, So What is What

*W. H. Auden (February 21, 1907– September 19, 1973)
An Anglo-American poet, author, and essayist.*

Well, so that is that. Now we must dismantle the tree,
Putting the decorations back into their cardboard boxes -
Some have gotten broken - and carrying them up to the attic.
The holly and mistletoe must be taken down and burnt,
And the children got ready for school.
There are enough leftovers to do, warmed up, for the rest of the week -
Not that we have much appetite, having drunk such a lot,
Stayed up so late, attempted-quite unsuccessfully -
To love all our relatives, and, in general
Grossly overestimated our powers.
Once again, as in previous years, we have seen the actual Vision and failed
To do more than entertain it as an agreeable possibility.
Once again we have sent Him away,
Begging, though, to remain His disobedient servant -
The promising child who cannot keep his word for long.

Jesus the Light of the World

F C7 F F Bb F C

1. Hark! the Her - ald an - gels sing, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
2. Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
3. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Je - sus, the Light of the world;
4. Hail! the heav'n - born Prince of peace, Je - sus, the Light of the world;

F C7 F F C7 F

Glo - ry to the new - born King, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
Join the tri - umph of the skies, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord, Je - sus, the Light of the world.
Hail! the sun of right - eous - ness, Je - sus, the Light of the world.

F Bb F G7 C

We'll walk in the light, beau-ti-ful light, Come where the dew-drops of mer-cy are bright,

12 F Bb F C7 F

Shine all a-round us by day and by night, Je - sus, the Light of the world.

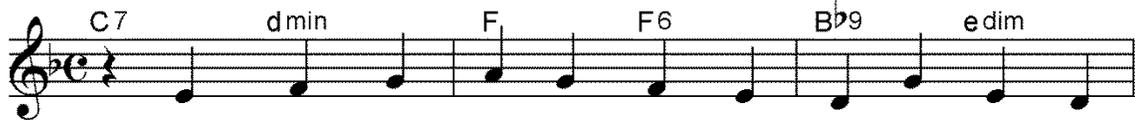
Nicene Creed

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

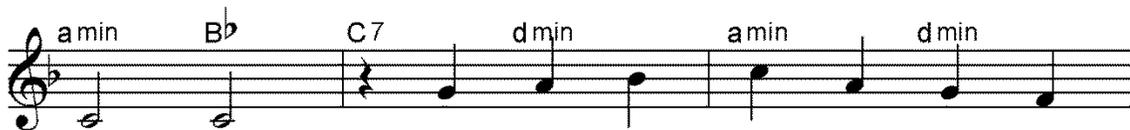
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate 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 look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

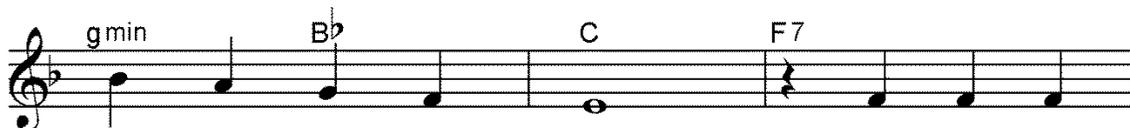
Prayers of the Church and Passing the Peace Offering and Offertory Carol



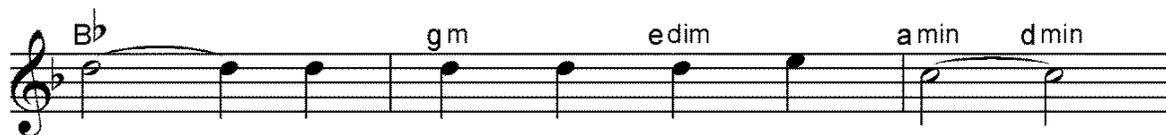
1. Where shep - herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's
 2. In that un - like - ly place I find him as they
 3. How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be
 4. Can I, will I for - get how love was born, and



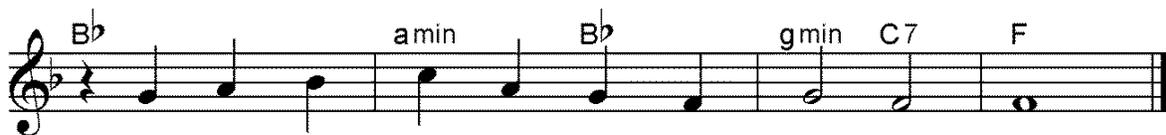
word, _____ I come in half be - lief, a
 said: _____ sweet new - born babe, how frail! and
 there, _____ his prophe - e - cies ful - filled! With
 burned _____ its way in - to my heart un -



pil - grim strange - ly stirred, but there is
 in a man - ger bed, a still, small
 pound - ing heart I stare; a child, a
 asked, un - forced, un - earned, to die, to



room _____ and wel - come there for me, _____
voice _____ to cry one day for me, _____
son, _____ the Prince of Peace for me, _____
live, _____ and not a - lone for me, _____



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
a still, small voice to cry one day for me.
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
to die, to live, and not a - lone for me.

Offering Prayer

A: Let us pray.

C: Gracious God, joining those people long ago who brought their gifts to your infant Son, we now bring our gifts of praise, adoration and thanks. Receive them as a response to the abundant blessings You provide us every day. We pray that You are pleased with our offerings and that You will use them to accomplish Your holy will. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

P: The Lord be with you. C: And also with you.

P: Lift up your hearts. C: We lift them to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. C: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and responsible that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you almighty and merciful God, through our Savior, Jesus, the Christ; who was born in a manger in a Shepherd's town, but took his throne in the holy city of God's Kings to overcome death and the grave on the cross. Because Jesus is born with our birth, we take hope in our re-birth through His resurrection. And so, in great joy this day, we now join our voices with those of the angels who sang over fields on that blessed night:

Verse

**Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the new-born King.**

Refrain

***Gloria in excelsis Deo
Gloria in excelsis Deo***

FMaj7 Am7 dm7 FMaj7 D7b9 Gm7 C7 F6
 FMaj7 Am7 dm7 FMaj7 D7b9 Gm7 C7 F6
 Am7 D7 Gm7 C7 FMaj7 Bb6 Gm7 C7
 F6 D7b9 Gm7 C7 Gm7 C7 F6

Lord's Prayer

Distribution

Post Communion Blessing

Benediction

God Rest You



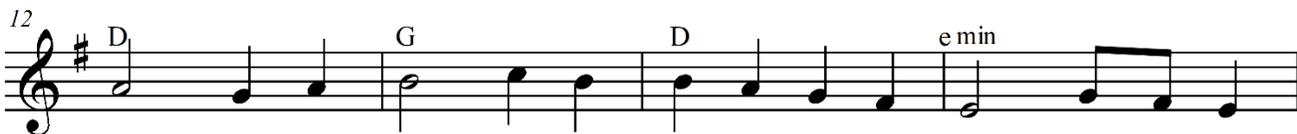
1. God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men let no - thing you dis -
 2. In Beth - le - hem in Jew - ry this bless - ed babe was
 3. From God our heav - nly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel
 4. "Fear not," then said the an - gel, "Let no - thing you a -
 5. The shep - herds at those ti - dings re - joic - ed much in
 6. But when to Beth - le - hem they came where our dear Sa - vior
 7. Now to the Lord sing pra - ises all you with - in this



may, Re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ - mas
 born, And laid with - in a man - ger up - on this bless - ed
 came, And un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought ti - dings of the
 fright. This day is born a Sa - vior of a pu - re Vir - gin
 mind, And left their flocks a - feed - ing in tem - pest, storm, and
 lay, They found Him in a man - ger where ox - en feed on
 place, And with true love and broth - er - hood each o - ther now em -



day, To save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r when we were gone a -
 morn, The which his moth - er Ma - ry did noth - ing take in
 same; How that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by
 bright, To free all those who trust in Him from Sa - tan's pow'r and
 wind, And went to Beth - l'em straight - a - way this bless - ed babe to
 hay; His mo - ther Ma - ry kneel - ing un - to the Lord did
 brace; This ho - ly tide of Christ - mas all o - thers doth de -



stray: *O, its ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and*
 scorn.
 name:
 might:
 find:
 pray:
 face:



joy. *O ti - dings of com - fort and joy!*



