

An Ancient-Future Faith Community

Liturgy

December 20, 2015



GATHERING

Behold, our God comes; He does not keep silence.

In love, He gathers His covenant people to Him.

The earth is full of Your steadfast love, O LORD;

May Your lovingkindness come to us,

Your salvation according to Your promise.

Show us Your unfailing love, O LORD,

and grant us Your salvation.

Let us hear what God the LORD says,

for He speaks peace to His faithful people.

Faithfulness springs up from the ground,

and righteousness looks down from heaven.

The LORD will indeed give what is good.

Righteousness will go before Him

and shall make His footsteps our pathway.

Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him,

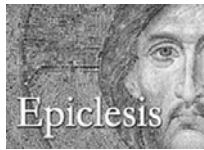
that His glory may dwell among us.

May the LORD make His face to shine upon us.

With preparation and in expectation, let us worship Him!

— Scripture weaving from Psalms 50, 119, and 85





Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Hail to the Lord's anointed, great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed, His reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression, to set the captive free;
To take away transgression and rule in equity.

He shall come down like showers upon the fruitful earth;
Love, joy, and hope, like flowers, spring in His path to birth.
Before Him, on the mountains, shall peace, the herald, go,
And righteousness, in fountains, from hill to valley flow.

Kings shall fall down before Him, and gold and incense bring;
All nations shall adore Him, His praise all people sing;
For He shall have dominion o'er river, sea and shore,
Far as the eagle's pinion or dove's light wing can soar.

Hymn tune: Melchior Teschner ,St. THEODULPH, 76.76 D. Words: James Montgomery; based on Psalm 72; first sung on Christmas Day, 1821 Setting: Ellen Koehler ©2011 Ellen Koehler.

INVOCATION

Prayers of welcome and of praise

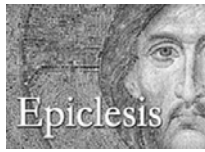
O King and Desire of the nations,
Cornerstone that binds them into one:
**Come, and deliver us whom You formed
out of the dust of the earth.**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease;
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

Latin hymn, 12th-C., transl. John M. Neale. Music: VENI EMMANUEL, 15th-C. plainsong.



PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us speak together the words of Paul
as he declared the Advent of the Prince of Peace:

**We are set apart for the gospel of God,
which He promised beforehand through His prophets
in the holy scriptures –**

**The gospel concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord,
who was descended from David according to the flesh,
and was declared to be the Son of God with power
according to the Spirit of holiness,
by the resurrection from the dead.**

**In Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,
and through Him God was pleased to reconcile all things,
whether on earth or in heaven,
by making peace through the blood of His cross.**

For He Himself is our peace.

To all God's beloved, who are called to be saints:

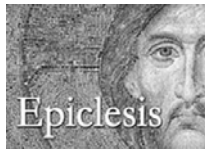
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

– Romans 1:1-7; Colossians 1:19-20; Ephesians 2:14

Good Christians All, Rejoice

Good Christians all, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice.
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Peace! Peace! Jesus Christ was born to save!
Calls you one and calls you all
To gain His everlasting hall.
Christ was born to save!
Christ was born to save!

Public domain. German melody: IN DULCI JUBILO.
Latin carol, tr. by John M. Neale



PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock;
You who are enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth!
*Show us your steadfast love, O LORD,
and grant us Your salvation.*

[Silence]

**Come, and restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.**

Spoken prayers of confession

**Come, and restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make Your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.**

– texts from Psalms 80:1-3, 19; 85:7

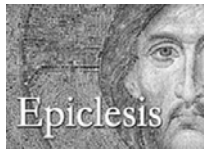
Send Out Your Light

Send out Your light, Lord,
Send out Your truth;
Send them that they may guide us.
Lord, may they bring us
Into Your courts,
To the heart of Your dwelling places.

Send out Your light, Lord,
Send out Your truth;
Send them that they may guide us.
Come, and restore us,
Lord God of Hosts;
Make Your face shine upon us,
That we may be saved.

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Words based on Psalms 43:4, 84:1-2, and 80:19.





ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for He has looked favorably on His people, and redeemed them.

*God has raised up a mighty Savior from the house of David.
He has shown the mercy promised to our fathers,
and remembered His holy covenant.*

In the tender compassion of our God,
the Dayspring from on high has come to us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

— from Luke 1:68-79

In Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God!

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and prayers of praise and gratitude

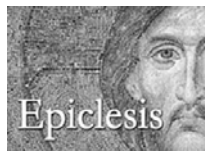
The Magnificat

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
And my spirit exults in God my Savior.
For He has looked with mercy on my lowliness,
And His name will be forever exalted.
For the mighty God has done great things for me,
And His mercy will reach from age to age.

And holy, holy, holy is His name.

He has mercy in ev'ry generation;
He has revealed His power and His glory.
He has cast down the mighty in their arrogance,
And has lifted up the meek and the lowly.
He has come to help His servant Israel;
He remembers His promise to our fathers.

CCLI Song # 14497 ©1980 Birdwing Music; John Michael Talbot



LIGHTING OF THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE: PEACE

Reading: Micah 5:2-5a

Lighting of the candle

Prepare the way of the Lord.

We light this candle as a symbol of peace.

May the visitation of Your Holy Spirit, O God, purify us that we may be ready for the coming of Jesus, our hope, our joy, and our peace.



THE WORD

Micah 5:2-5a

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.



The Lord's Prayer (spoken)

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

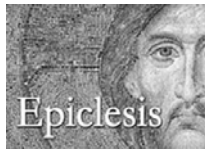
Give us this day our daily bread,

And forgive us our 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



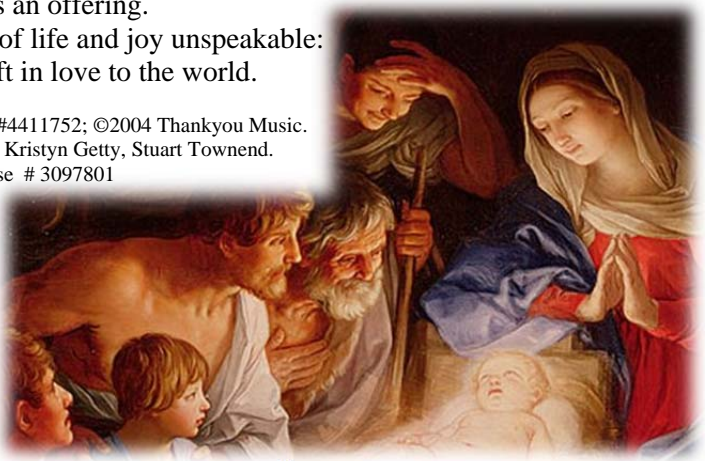
Fullness of Grace

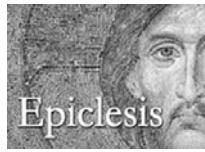
Fullness of grace in man's human frailty,
This is the wonder of Jesus.
Laying aside His power and glory,
Humbly He entered our world.
Chose the path of meanest worth;
Scandal of a virgin birth.
Born in a stable, cold and rejected;
Here lies the hope of the world.

Fullness of grace, the love of the Father
Shown in the face of Jesus.
Stooping to bear the weight of humanity,
Walking the Calvary road.
Christ the holy innocent
Took our sin and punishment.
Fullness of God, despised and rejected;
Crushed for the sins of the world.

Fullness of hope in Christ we had longed for,
Promise of God in Jesus.
Through His obedience we are forgiven,
Op'ning the floodgates of heav'n.
All our hopes and dreams we bring
Gladly as an offering.
Fullness of life and joy unspeakable:
God's gift in love to the world.

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SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

Hail to the Lord's Anointed (verse 4)

O'er every foe victorious, He on His throne shall rest;
From age to age more glorious, all blessing and all blest.
The tide of time shall never His covenant remove;
His name shall stand forever, His name to us is Love.

Teschner/ Montgomery; setting: Koehler.

Benediction:

May our Lord Jesus Christ, who came once in humility and will come again in triumph and glory, fill your hearts with joyful expectation at all times, as you go forth into the world to love and serve the Lord.

Amen.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and preserve you complete and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it.

– based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Thanks be to God!

Come quickly Lord Jesus. Maranatha!

A thought about worship... “Advent is a time to review once again where our faith is placed and how our lives are lived. Trust in Jesus is not merely a onetime act but a continuous state of being, a moment-by-moment existence in Christ. It is a daily turning from a life lived for self to a life lived in tune with the power of the Spirit who continually calls us to be like Jesus.”

(Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 52).

Lectionary for next week: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148;
Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52
Isaiah 40; Luke 3:1-14 (additional readings)

Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community

www.Epiclesis.org | Info line: (916)572-9113

Sunday mornings at The Carmichael Chapel, 4600 Winding Way
(Corner of Winding Way and Pasadena), Sacramento, CA 95841.

Informal gathering: 10:00 AM; Worship at 10:30 AM.

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