

An Ancient-Future Faith Community

Liturgy

December 27, 2015 (First Sunday after Christmas)

GATHERING

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise Him in the heights!

Praise Him, all His angels; praise Him, all His host!

Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you shining stars!

Praise Him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for He commanded and they were created.

**He established them forever and ever; He fixed their bounds,
which cannot be passed.**

Praise the LORD from the earth, all creatures and all nature;

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the LORD,

for His name alone is exalted;

His glory is above earth and heaven.

**He has raised up a horn for His people, praise for all His faithful,
for the people of Israel who are close to Him. Praise the LORD!**

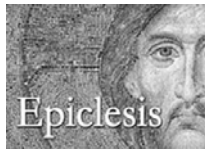
– from Psalm 148

O Come All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!





True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal;
Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created.

O come let us adore Him...

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

O come let us adore Him...

Public domain. Text: Latin hymns, ascribed to John Francis Wade. Music: John Francis Wade.

INVOCATION

Prayers of welcome and praise

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship You, we give You thanks,
we praise You for your glory.**

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.**

*The Gloria in excelsis deo ("Glory to God in the highest")
is an ancient hymn of the early church.*

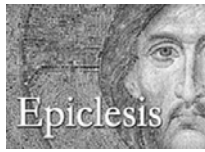
Angels From the Realms of Glory

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Traditional French carol tune. Words: James Montgomery, 1816,



PROFESSION OF FAITH

In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets
at many times and in various ways,

**But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son,
whom He appointed heir of all things,
and through whom also He made the universe.**

The Son is the radiance of God's glory
and the exact representation of His being,
sustaining all things by His powerful word.

**When He had made purification for sins,
He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven,
having become as much superior to the angels
as the name He has inherited is superior to theirs.**

For to which of the angels did God ever say,
"You are my Son; today I have become your Father"?
Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my son"?

**And again, when God brings His firstborn into the world, He says,
"Let all God's angels worship Him."**

In speaking of the angels He says,
"He makes His angels spirits, and His servants flames of fire."

**But about the Son He says, "Your throne, O God,
will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of Your kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your companions
by anointing You with the oil of joy."**

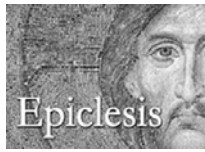
– Hebrews 1:1-9

Angels From the Realms of Glory

Though an Infant now we view Him, He shall fill His Father's throne,
Gather all the nations to Him; every knee shall then bow down.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Traditional French carol tune. Words: James Montgomery, 1816,



PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem us, who were under the law, that we might receive adoption as children.

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, He saved us – not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy. – from Galatians 4:4-5, Titus 3:4-7

O Lamb of God, the only begotten Son of the Father, Jesus Christ, who was made human to take away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us and turn us from our iniquities.

[Silence]

You who were made manifest to destroy the works of the devil,
have mercy upon us and enable us to renounce and forsake them.

[Silent confessions]

You who are our great advocate with the Father,
Receive our prayer. Amen.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

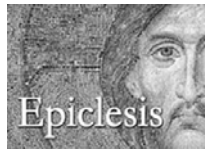
Born Thy people to deliver, born a Child and yet a King;
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit, rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all-sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley; Music: Rowland H. Prichard; hymn tune: HYFRYDOL

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This is the good news, good tidings of great joy, which is for all people:
In the city of David a Savior was born to us; He is Christ, the Lord!
Lord, You have allowed our eyes to see Your salvation.
the salvation which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples: a light of revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel.

– based on Luke 2:10-11, 30-32



God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.

God rest ye, merry gentlemen, let nothing you dismay;
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day,
To save us all from Satan's pow'r when we were gone astray.

O tidings of comfort and joy, ...

Public domain. Traditional English carol.

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and testimonies of thanksgiving and praise.

God of love, Prince of peace, King of kings: You humbled Yourself
and dwelt among us, the Word made flesh, that we might have life.
**With grateful hearts we bring these gifts, Your tithes and our
offerings. In worship, may our loving hearts enthrone You.**

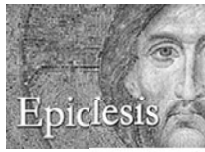
What Child is This?

What Child is this who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherd watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate, where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come peasant, king to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise a song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the Babe, the Son of Mary.

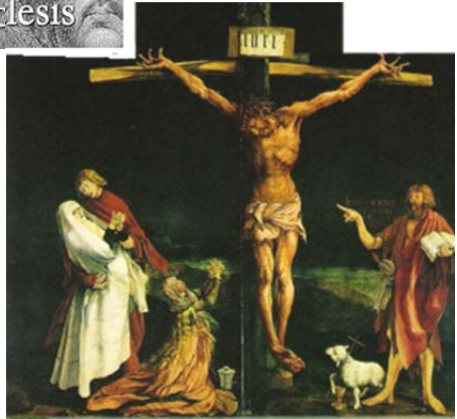
Words: William C. Dix, 1865. Hymn tune: GREENSLEEVES, 16th century English melody.



THE WORD

Isaiah 40:1-31

Luke 3:1-14



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.

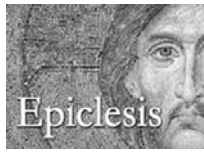
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

The Lord's Prayer (sung)

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heav'n.
Provide each day our daily needs;
Forgive our sins as we forgive others' wrongs;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil
For Thine is the kingdom, forever and ever;
And Thine is the power, forever and ever;
And Thine is the glory, now and forever,
Amen, amen, amen.

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Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing worldly minded, for with blessing in His hand
Christ our Lord to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood.
Lord of lords in human vesture, in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day;
That the powers of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry:
"Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Lord most high!"

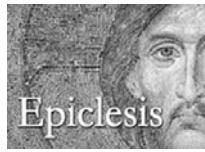
Public domain. Tune: PICARDY (French carol). Liturgy of St. James, tr. by Gerard Moultrie

Agnus Dei

Alleluia, alleluia,
For our Lord God Almighty reigns.
Alleluia, alleluia,
For our Lord God Almighty reigns.
Alleluia, holy,
Holy are You, Lord God Almighty.
Worthy is the Lamb,
Worthy is the Lamb.
You are holy.
Holy are You, Lord God Almighty.
Worthy is the Lamb,
Worthy is the Lamb;
Amen.



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SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

Angels from the Realms of Glory

All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising to th'eternal Three in One.

Refrain

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Traditional French carol tune. Words: James Montgomery, 1816,

Benediction

Beloved, servants of the Lord, we depart from this place in peace,
according to God's word. For we have seen His salvation.

Amen!

Now go forth, in peace and joy, into the world to live out your
baptisms, loving and serving the Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and
reigns with the Father and the Spirit, one God, now and forevermore.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A thought about worship...—“The incarnation is the starting point for our spirituality. . . . God united himself with humans in order for men and women to be united with God. The incarnation is not something unrelated to us; it has everything to do with our spirituality—for the incarnation not only brings God to human nature but brings human nature to God.” (Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004], 62).

Lectionary for next week: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20;
Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:1-18

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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