



Epiclesis

An Ancient-Future Faith Community

Liturgy

December 26, 2010 (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!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation;

O sing, all ye bright hosts of heav'n above!



Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

O come let us adore Him...

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.

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

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**We believe that the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity,
being truly and eternally God,
of one substance and equal with the Father,
did, when the fullness of time had come,
take upon Himself human nature,
with all its essential properties and common frailties,
yet without sin.**

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
in the womb of the virgin Mary, and of her substance.
*In this way, two whole natures, the divine and the human,
perfect and distinct, were inseparably joined together
in one person without being changed, mixed, or confused.*

**This person is truly God and truly man,
yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.**

In His human nature, united to the divine nature, the Lord Jesus
was set apart and anointed with the Holy Spirit beyond measure,
having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

*In Him the Father was pleased to have all fullness dwell,
so that being holy, blameless, and undefiled,*



full of grace and truth,

*He might be completely equipped
to fulfill the office of a mediator and guarantor.*

**He did not take this office to Himself but was called to it by His
Father, who put all power and judgment into His hand
and commanded Him to execute it.**

– from Westminster Confession (MESV), Chap. VIII, Sec. 2-3

Good Christians All, Rejoice

Good Christians all, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice.
Give ye heed to what we say:
News! News! Jesus Christ is born today!
Ox and ass before Him bow,
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christians all, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice.
Now ye hear of endless bliss:
Joy! Joy! Jesus Christ was born for this!
He has opened heaven's door,
And man is blessed evermore.
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

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

Lord Jesus Christ,
We confess our willingness to be loved
but also our reluctance to love.
We confess our readiness to accept your forgiving love
but also our reluctance to forgive.
We confess our eagerness to grasp your offer of redeeming love,
but also our resistance to follow you without question.
In this Season of Light forgive us, we pray,
our failure to respond as we should.
Come to us anew, and by your grace, assist us to receive You
with joy, as the shepherds;
with gratitude, as Simeon;
with obedience, as Mary;
with love, as you have loved us.
Even so: come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

O Lord, Hear My Prayer

O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
When I call answer me.
O Lord hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer,
Come and listen to me.

©1982 Les Presses de Taizé (France); Based on Psalm 102:1,2
Music from the Taizé community

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

I will recount the gracious deeds and praiseworthy acts of the LORD,
because of all that the LORD has done for us, according to His mercy and
the abundance of His steadfast love. For He said, “Surely they are my
people,” and He became their Savior in all their distress. It was no
messenger or angel, but His presence that saved them. In His love and in
His pity He redeemed them; He lifted them up and carried them...

— from Isaiah 63:7



God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen

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

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

Now to the Lord sing praises all you within this place;
And with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace,
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.

O tidings of comfort and joy, ...

Public domain. Traditional English carol.

TIME OF OFFERING

Testimonies and declarations of God's faithfulness

Angels From the Realms of Glory

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.

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light.

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen His natal star.

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.

Public domain. Words, James Montgomery; Music, *Regent Square*, Henry T. Smart



THE WORD

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

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 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

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

Jesus, Thou joy of loving hearts,
Thou fount of life, Thou light of men;
From the best bliss that earth imparts
We turn unfilled to Thee again.

Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood,
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee Thou art good,
To them that find Thee all in all.



We taste Thee, O Thou living bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the fountainhead,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;
Glad when Thy gracious smile we see,
Blest when our faith can hold Thee fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay,
Make all our moments calm and bright;
Chase the dark night of sin away,
Shed o'er the world Thy holy light.

Attr. to Bernard of Clairveaux; Tr. Ray Palmer. Music, Henry Baker; Hymn tune: Quebec

SENDING FORTH

The Life of the Body

Angels From the Realms of Glory (reprise)

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

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Public domain. Words, James Montgomery; Music, *Regent Square*, Henry T. Smart



Benediction

Jesus is the Word made flesh in our midst.

May his incarnation fill our hearts with joy and peace.

Jesus is the promised Savior, born of Mary.

May his birth among us renew our hope.

Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

May the gift of his presence bring forth rejoicing.

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

 bless you now and forever.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A thought about worship...

“The spirituality of Advent calls us to start our journey in expectation of the second coming of Christ. . . . The hope of a world restored under God proclaims that evil is not the final word. . . . The second coming says that the ultimate word in history is the triumph of God, the reign of God’s kingdom, the eternal and lasting rule of the good. Here is where our Advent meditation rests.”

Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004, 50.

Epiclesis: An Ancient-Future Faith Community

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.