



*A Light Shines in the Darkness*

cover art by parishioner Ann Widner

## **WELCOME!**

Merry Christmas! On behalf of the members and community of St. Francis' Episcopal Church, I welcome you to this Christmas Service.

While the world around us has belted out, "Merry Christmas!" for weeks now, we in the Episcopal Church begin this greeting today, on the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In the weeks prior to Christmas, the Episcopal Church celebrated Advent—a season of waiting. Now, we inaugurate the celebration of Christmas; the season of receiving.

And what have we received? God With Us! Jesus! The Incarnate One. The nativity scene of Jesus' birth dominates our liturgical space reminding us in image that God breaks into the world. God brings light to our darkness. White is the color of Christmas as it signifies the highest and holiest celebration along with evergreen boughs and trees. As they are evergreen, so too, is God's love for us everlasting.

With prayers for every blessing of peace in this season of God With Us,

The Rev. Laurie Anzilotti, Vicar

## **FLOWERS GIVEN BY**

Donna Bernert, in Memory of her father Joe Thum

Joe Bernert, in Memory of his sister Louise and in Memory of his parents Joe and Louise Bernert

Carole Clary, in Thanks for the opportunity given to me to love, worship and serve at St. Francis

Phil Davis, in Memory of his parents Donald and Jackie Davis

Chuck Dougherty, in Memory of his wife Cindy Dougherty

Darrell Gibbs, in Memory of his wife Judy A. Rowe Gibbs and in Thanks for God for bringing us together and her being my angel on earth

Janet Houseman, in Memory of Michael Barcelona

Chris and Mary Ann Kinder, in Memory of our parents Jim and Saundie Hogan and Floyd and Virginia Kinder

Anna Mackey, in Memory of her husband David Touchstone

Gina and Al Nessel, in Memory of Lea Dagata Humphry and in Memory of Nancy Rood Lambert

Kathleen and Joe O'Reilly, in Thanks for the health of our family

Barb Sacco and Family, in Memory of her husband Nick Sacco

Doris and Bob Schaefer, In thanks for their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren

Sue Schmidt and Family, in Memory of Sue's husband John Schmidt

Jim and Doris Schneider

Bill Thompson, in Memory of Dave Hartmann

Della Thompson, in Memory of Sandra Vaccari

## SPECIAL MUSIC

### THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE *Stand.*

*The choir sings.*

Reader Christmas is a time to proclaim.

People **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Reader We proclaim a hope that is stronger than any trial.

People **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Reader We proclaim a victory that is stronger than any defeat.

People **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Reader We proclaim a peace that is stronger than any conflict.

People **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

Reader We proclaim a freedom that is stronger than any bondage.

People **Joy to the world, the Lord is come!**

*The congregation listens as prayer is offered.*

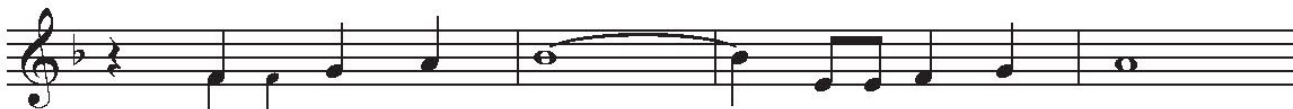
*All join in singing.*



(1st Sunday) We wait in	} hope _____ the morn - ing Light,
(2nd Sunday) We watch in	
(3rd Sunday) We pre - pare in	
(4th Sunday) We praise with	
(Christmas Eve) We pro - claim with	



the love of Christ il - lu - mi - nates \_\_\_\_\_ the night. \_\_\_\_\_



We wait with	} joy _____ the Sav - ior's birth;
We watch with	
We pre - pare with	
We praise with	
We pro - claim with	



we wait in	} hope _____ peace on earth.
we watch in	
we pre - pare in	
we praise with	
we pro - claim with	

Presider God in heaven, we thank you for guiding us through our Advent journey. Through waiting, watching, preparing, and praising, we are now ready to proclaim. Help us receive the glory of Christmas, as we celebrate and rejoice that you have come to us through the gift of Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. Amen.

Shepherds Jesus is born! Jesus is born!

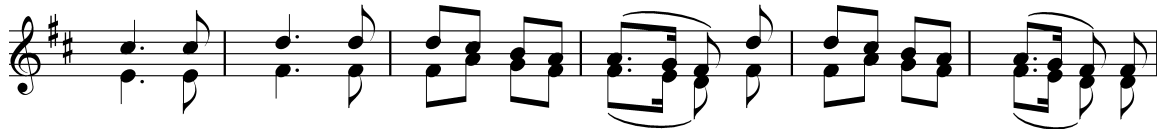
## HYMN

## JOY TO THE WORLD

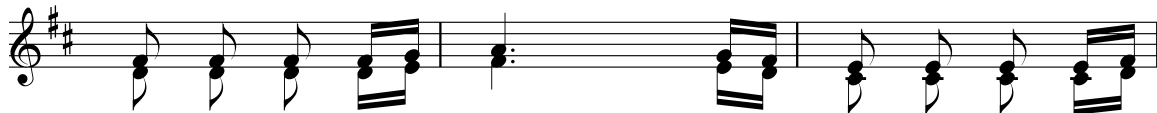
H 100



1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -  
2 Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, re -  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, and



heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture  
peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

## THE GREETING

Presider Blessed be God, Creator, Incarnate and Abiding Spirit.

People Amen.



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,  
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why these songs of hap - py cheer?  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;  
 4 See him in a man - ger laid whom the an - gels praise a - bove;



and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.  
 What great bright - ness did you see? What glad tid - ings did you hear?  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.  
 Ma - ry, Jo - seph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love.

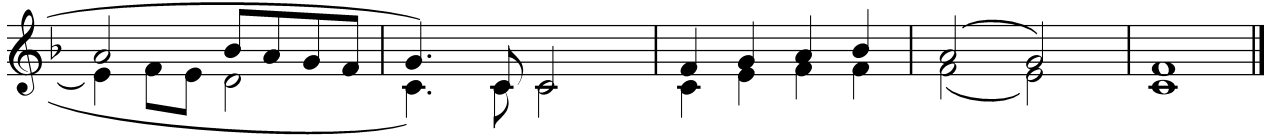
*Refrain*



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

**THE COLLECT OF THE DAY**

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Eternal God,  
 in the stillness of this night  
 you sent your almighty Word  
 to pierce the world's darkness with the light of salvation:  
 give to the earth the peace that we long for  
 and fill our hearts with the joy of heaven  
 through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

People **Amen.**

## WE HEAR THE SACRED STORIES *Seated*

### THE FIRST LESSON

Reader	A reading from the Book of Isaiah.	9:2-7
	The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness-- on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. The Word of the Lord.	
People	<b>Thanks be to God.</b>	

## THE PSALM OF THE DAY

## PSALM 96

Verses are read by reader. Antiphon is spoken by all.

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song;  
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his Name;  
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations  
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;  
he is more to be feared than all gods. **ANTIPHON**

*Antiphon: Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord.*

- 9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;  
let the whole earth tremble before him.
- 10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King!  
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;  
he will judge the peoples with equity." **ANTIPHON**
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;  
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy  
before the Lord when he comes,  
when he comes to judge the earth.
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness  
and the peoples with his truth. **ANTIPHON**

## GOSPEL SEQUENCE *Stand*

## MOTHERING GOD

MHSO 142

1 Moth - er - ing God, you gave me birth  
in the bright morn - ing of this world. Cre -  
a - - tor, source of ev - - 'ry breath,  
you are my rain, my wind, my sun.

## THE STORY OF CHRIST'S BIRTH: GODLY PLAY

*A merging of the story of Christ's birth from Luke and Matthew. Seated.*

Reader 1        This night is like no other night. It is a time to dream and sing our way to Bethlehem. The children will show us how to go.

Reader 2        The little town we seek sits in the hill country some ten miles south of Jerusalem. For thousands of years the houses have gathered there on the hilltop like a family breaking bread. "Bethlehem" means "House of Bread."

Reader 1        In the center of the village is a small inn. On this night it is overflowing with people seeking sleep and a place to eat. Behind the inn is a dark stable. A gray donkey chews his barley and broken straw while a weary cow leans and rests after the day's plowing in the valley. A sheep nearby is nearly asleep.

Reader 2        All is still and quiet in the little town.

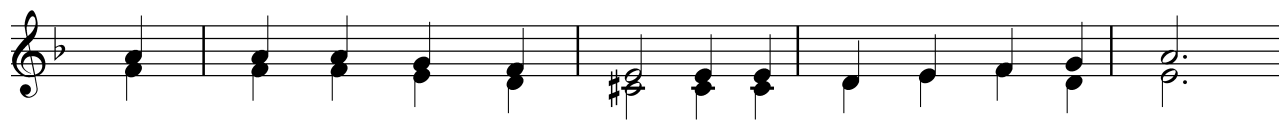
### O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Ma - ry; and gath - ered all a - bove,



1 A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
2 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.



1 yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
2 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!



1 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
2 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.



Reader 1 As night gathers, the last two travelers come slowly up the road. Look, there is a young woman about to be a mother. She is walking with her husband. They are Joseph and Mary from Nazareth! They have walked for six days to come to this city where King David was born, so long ago.

Reader 2 They have come, like so many others, because the Roman emperor wants to count each one, so he can take their money as a tax.

Reader 1 But it is late, and Mary is so weary. Where will they sleep? There is no room in the inn. They decide to sleep with the animals.

## ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

H 102



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a  
 2 He came down to earth from hea - ven, who is



1 low - ly cat - tle shed, where a mo - ther laid her  
 2 God and Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a



1 ba - by in a man - ger for his bed: Ma - ry  
 2 sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall; with the



1 was that mo - ther mild, — Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child. —  
 2 poor, the scorned, the low - ly, lived on earth our Sa - vior ho - ly.

Reader 2 Stars brighten slowly in the sky. All creation holds its breath. Suddenly, from the stable, comes the cry of a newborn child! Mary gently wraps the baby in a blanket and lays him in the feed box that his father has filled with straw.

## AWAY IN A MANGER

H 101

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,  
 \* 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.  
 close by me for ev - er, and love me I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
 and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

- Reader 1      In the hills outside Bethlehem, shepherds watch their shadowy sheep. All at once, the dark is lost in light, and in the midst of the light is something even brighter: the faces of angels.
- Reader 2      The fearful shepherds then hear music in the sky, and a voice says clearly, "Do not be afraid. Listen, I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by all people. Today in the City of David a Savior is born! He is Christ, the Lord."
- Reader 1      Then more angels appear, a whole heavenly host of them, praising God and singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to all people, everywhere."
- Reader 2      The shepherds run with joy across the fields to Bethlehem to the barn behind the inn. There they find the Holy Family and creep forward, overwhelmed with mystery, to find Nativity itself in the center of all that love.

## GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

*Refrain*

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and  
 ev - ery - where; go tell it on the moun - tain, that  
 Je - sus Christ is born! 1 While shep - herds kept their  
 2 The shep - herds feared and  
 watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night, be -  
 trem - bled when lo! a - bove the earth rang  
 hold, through-out the hea - vens there shone a ho - ly light.  
 out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sa - vior's birth.

*Repeat Refrain*

Reader 1

Three camels plod up the road to Bethlehem. They have come from the East, far beyond the Arabian Desert, perhaps from as far as the Caspian Sea. The camels carry three kings, the wise ones, the Magi. They are following the wild star, the destiny they had never seen before, and they are following it, wherever it goes, to find the King its shining shows them.

## WE THREE KINGS

1 We three kings of O - ri - ent are, bear - ing  
 2 Born a King on Beth - le - hem's plain, gold I

1 gifts we tra - verse a - far, field and foun - tain,  
 2 bring to crown him a - gain, King for ev - er,

1 moor and moun - tain, fol - low - ing yon - der star.  
 2 ceas - ing nev - er o - ver us all to reign.

*Refrain*

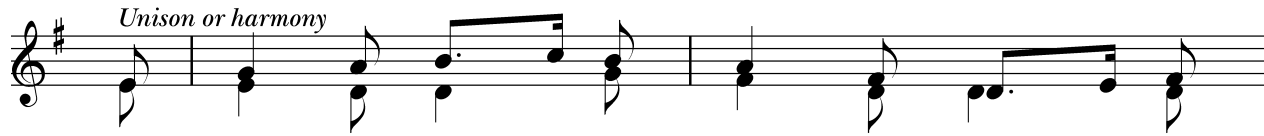
O \_\_\_\_\_ star of won - der, star of night,  
 star with roy - al beau - ty bright; west - ward lead - ing,  
 still pro - ceed - ing, guide us to thy per - fect light!

Reader 2            The kings' journey ends in a new kind of king. Their restlessness rests at last. They fall to their knees and give him bright gold, sweet-smelling frankincense and bitter myrrh, brought so far with so much long.

Reader 1            So now we all come, following the star, to find God-with-us. We come, as people have come all through the ages, to bring our own gifts to this Child, God's gift to us.

Presider            Come forward now. Bring your gifts of stars and of yourselves to place around the manger. Show us the way into the Mystery of Christmas, as we sing, for this night is holy and filled with overflowing silence.

*All with stars are invited to walk forward and place their star around the nativity scene.*



1 What child is this. who. laid to rest. on  
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,



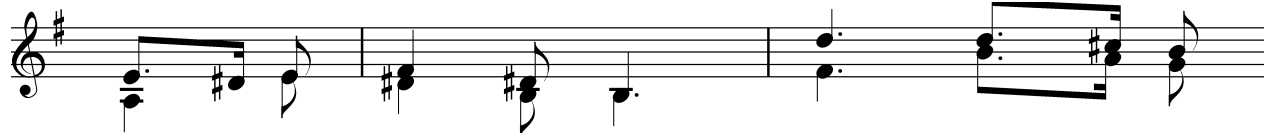
Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with  
peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -



an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

*Refrain*

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds



guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to



bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

**HOMILY****THE REV. LAURIE ANZILOTTI**

*After the homily, silence is kept for a time.*

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** *Stand*

- Intercessor Heavenly Father, you have promised to hear when we pray in the name of your Son.  
Therefore in confidence and trust we pray for the Church:  
Father, enliven the Church for its mission
- People **that we may be salt of the earth and light to the world.**
- Intercessor Breathe fresh life into your people.
- People **Give us power to reveal Christ in word and action.**
- Intercessor We pray for the world:  
Creator of all, lead us and every people into ways of justice and peace.
- People **That we may respect one another in freedom and truth.**
- Intercessor Awaken in us a sense of wonder for the earth and all that is in it.
- People **Teach us to care creatively for its resources.**
- Intercessor We pray for the community:  
God of truth, inspire with your wisdom those whose decisions affect the lives of others
- People **that all may act with integrity and courage.**
- Intercessor Give grace to all whose lives are linked with ours.
- People **May we serve Christ in one another, and love as he loves us.**
- Intercessor We pray for those in need:  
God of hope, comfort and restore all who suffer in body, mind or spirit.
- People **May they know the power of your healing love.**
- Intercessor Make us willing agents of your compassion.
- People **Strengthen us as we share in making people whole.**
- Intercessor We remember those who have died and those who mourn:  
We remember with thanksgiving those who have died in the faith of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone.
- People **Father, into your hands we commend them.**
- Intercessor Give comfort to those who mourn.
- People **Bring them peace in their time of loss.**
- Intercessor We praise you for St. Francis, Mary—the godbearer—St. Joseph and all your saints who have entered your eternal glory.
- People **May their example inspire and encourage us.**

Intercessor Lord, you have called us to serve you.

People **Grant that we may walk in your presence: your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds, your strength in our wills; until, at the end of our journey, we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **THE PEACE**

Presider Unto us a child is born, unto us a child is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

*We invite you to extend the peace of God to those in the congregation.*

## **CHRISTMAS WELCOME FROM THE VICAR** *Seated*

## **GATHERING AT CHRIST'S TABLE**

*We return with thanksgiving the gifts God has given us. This includes bread and wine of the earth and financial offerings from our labor.*

## **OFFERTORY**

### **WEXFORD CAROL PERFORMED BY CAITLIN SELLE**

## **DOXOLOGY**

*The following is sung as the offerings are presented.*

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

# THE OFFERING OF THE BREAD AND WINE *Stand*

S 120

*Celebrant* *People*  
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

*Celebrant* *People*  
Lift up your hearts. 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.

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*The Presider continues.*

Presider ...Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name.

# SANCTUS

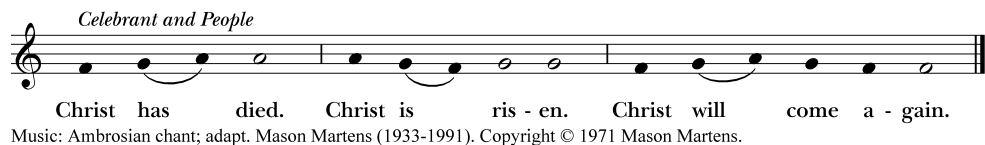
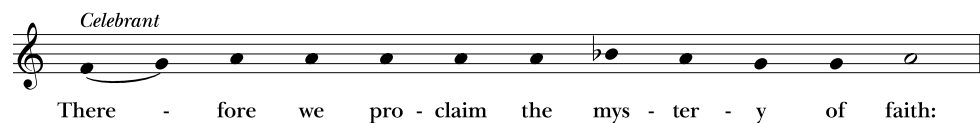
S 125

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The Presider continues.*  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -  
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: From *A Community Mass*; Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Copyright © 1971, 1977 GIA Publications, Inc.





*The Presider continues.*

Presider ...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 forever.

**AMEN**



*A - men.*

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People **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**

*The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

Presider We break the bread of life, and that life is the light of the world.

People **God here among us, light in the midst of us, bring us to light and life.**

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:  
 have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
 sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,  
 you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

Presider The Gifts of God for the People of God.

*Our bread is gluten-, dairy- and nut-free. This Eucharistic table does not belong to the Episcopal Church or to St. Francis'. This is God's table, and all are welcome. In the Episcopal Church, we receive both the bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Jesus. If you choose not to receive communion, please come forward and cross your arms over your heart to receive a blessing.*

COMMUNION HYMN

O COME ALL YE FAITHFUL

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O  
 2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
 \*5 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;  
 3 sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven a - bove;  
 5 we would em - brace thee, with love and awe;

1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;  
 2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;  
 3 glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est;  
 5 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?

*Refrain*  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -  
 dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

## THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

*Please tip your candle into the flame to receive the light; after receiving the light, please hold your candle upright.*

### HYMN AFTER COMMUNION

### SILENT NIGHT

H 111

*Seated*

Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,  
shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face,  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

### POST COMMUNION PRAYER *Stand*

*After all have received communion the Presider says*

Presider God is with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

People **God of Grace,**

**in this night you have made known to us again**

**the coming of our Jesus Christ:**

**confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him**

**until the day dawns**

**and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.**

**To him be glory both now and for ever.**

## BLESSING

Presider Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing ...

People Amen.

## SENDING HYMN

## THE FIRST NOEL

H 109



1 The first No - well the an - gel did say  
2 They look - ed up and saw a star



1 was to cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay;  
2 shin - ing in the east be - yond them far,



1 in fields as they lay, keep - ing their sheep,  
2 and to the earth it gave great light,



1 on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.  
2 and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.

### *Refrain*



No - well, No - well, No - well, No - well,



born is the King of Is - ra - el.

## DISMISSAL

Presider A child has been born for us, a child given to us.  
Go in peace, praising God for all we have seen and heard. Alleluia, alleluia!

People Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## POSTLUDE