

His life brings light to us all

LO, HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING

ARR. RONALD A. NELSON

The altar party enters as the congregation stands and proclaims:

People **Welcome all wonders in one sight!**
 Eternity shut in a span.
 Summer in winter, day in night,
 heaven on earth and God in humanity.

Great little one whose all-embracing birth
brings earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

THE GREETING

Leader Grace, mercy and peace
 from God our Father
 and the Lord Jesus Christ
 be with you.

People **And also with you.**

PRAYERS OF PENITENCE

Leader Christ the light of the world has come
 to dispel the darkness of our hearts.
 In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

Silence is kept.

Leader God of Grace,
 you sent your child full of grace and truth:
 forgive our failure to receive him.
 Lord, have mercy.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader Jesus our Savior,
 you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:
 forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.
 Christ, have mercy.

People **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader Spirit of love,
 your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:
 forgive the hardness of our hearts.
 Lord, have mercy.

People **Lord, have mercy.**

Presider May the God of all healing and forgiveness
 draw you to himself,
 that you may behold the glory of his child,
 the Word made flesh,
 and be cleansed from all your sins,
 through Jesus Christ.

People **Amen.**

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

H 96

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;
 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

The Leader introduces a period of silent prayer with the words

Leader Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas season
that our joy in the birth of Christ will last forever.

Silence is kept.

Leader Lord Jesus Christ,
your birth at Bethlehem
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:
accept our heartfelt praise
as we worship you
our Savior, and our eternal God.

People **Amen.**

LISTENING TO THE SACRED STORIES *Seated*

THE FIRST LESSON

Reader A reading from the Book of Isaiah. 61:10-62:3
I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
This is the Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 147 *Verses are spoken by Reader; congregation reads the antiphon.*

Alleluia.

How good it is to make music for our God,
how joyful to honour him with praise.

The Lord builds up Jerusalem
and gathers together the outcasts of Israel.

He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up all their wounds.

ANTIPHON: Great is our Lord and mighty in power.

He counts the number of the stars
and calls them all by their names.

Great is our Lord and mighty in power;
his wisdom is beyond all telling.

The Lord lifts up the poor,
but casts down the wicked to the ground. **ANTIPHON**

Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving;
make music to our God upon the lyre;

Who covers the heavens with clouds
and prepares rain for the earth;

Who makes grass to grow upon the mountains
and green plants to serve our needs. **ANTIPHON**

He gives the beasts their food
and the young ravens when they cry.

He takes no pleasure in the power of a horse,
no delight in human strength;

But the Lord delights in those who fear him,
who put their trust in his steadfast love. **ANTIPHON**

SECOND READING

Reader

A reading from the letter to Galatians.

3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL SEQUENCE HYMN GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

We sing the refrain and then verse 1. Stand.

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 the night, be -
trem - bled when lo! a - bove the earth rang
Repeat Refrain
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.

GOSPEL

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

1:1-18

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

GOSPEL SEQUENCE HYMN GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

We sing the refrain and then verse 2. Music on previous page.

SERMON *Seated*

THE REV. LAURIE ANZILOTTI

After the sermon, silence is kept for a time.

THE NICENE CREED *Stand*

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:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary
and was made 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.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He 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 INTERCESSION

Intercessor In peace let us pray to the Lord.

God, your child our Savior was born in human flesh.

Renew your Church as the Body of Christ. Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor There was no room for your child in the inn.

Protect with your love those who have no home and all who live in poverty. Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Intercessor	Mary, in the pain of labor, brought your child to birth. Hold in your hand all who are in distress. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	Your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness. Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	The angels sang, "Peace to God's people on earth." Strengthen those who work for peace and justice at Episcopal City Mission, Wyman Center and in the Rockwood and Meramec R-III School Districts and in all the world. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	Shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy. Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	Strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger. Bless our homes and all whom we love. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	Heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven. Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Intercessor	Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth. Open our hearts that he may be born in us today. Holy God,
People	hear our prayer.
Presider	God of Grace, angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph and the saints through him who is your Word made flesh, our Savior Jesus Christ.
People	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.

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 *Seated*

THE FIRST NOEL

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.

The table is prepared and bread and wine are brought forward.

Presider Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

People **Amen.**

The Presider takes the bread and wine. All stand.

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth.

And now we give you thanks because in the incarnation of the Word, a new light has
dawned upon the world; you have become one with us that we might become one with
you in your glorious kingdom.

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.
Blessed the one 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.

Presider

Holy and gracious God: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and maker of all.

Jesus stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Savior Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper Jesus took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Presider and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Presider

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, Almighty God, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in Christ. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Savior. By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever.

AMEN



A - men.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

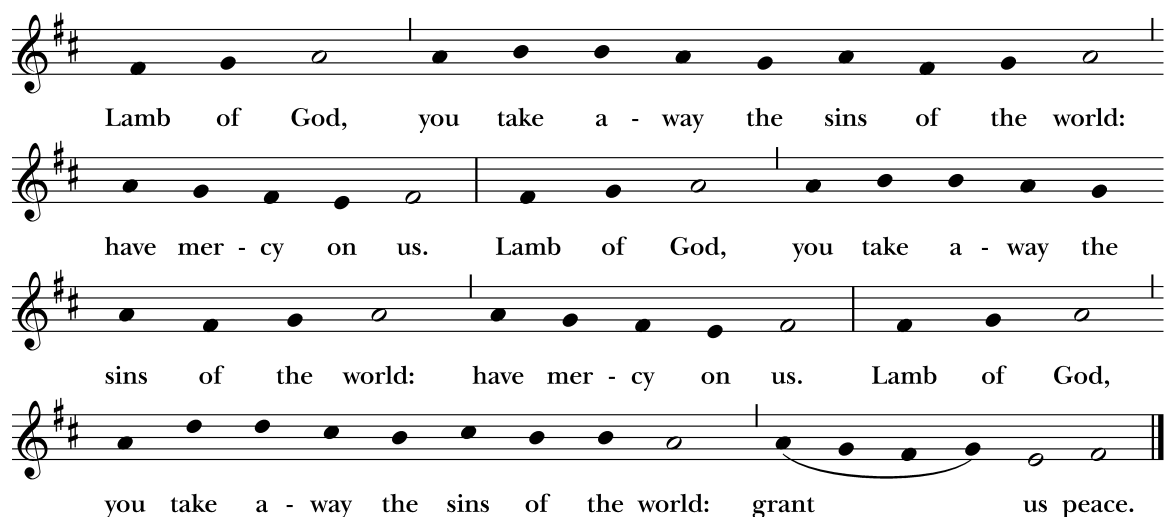
People Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine 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.



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

Presider The Gifts of God for the People of God.

This is Christ's table and all are welcome and all are fed. For gluten free wafer, please indicate as you walk forward to receive. 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 MEDITATION

INSTRUMENTAL

Seated

POST COMMUNION PRAYER *Stand*

Silence is kept. Then,

People **Almighty God,**
 we thank you for feeding us
 with the body and blood of your child Jesus Christ.
 Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
 to be a living sacrifice.
 Send us out
 in the power of your Spirit
 to live and work
 to your praise and glory. Amen.

BLESSING

Presider May the Father,
 who has loved the eternal Son
 from before the foundation of the world,
 shed that love upon you his children.

People **Amen.**

Presider May Christ,
 who by his incarnation gathered into one
 things earthly and heavenly,
 fill you with joy and peace.

People **Amen.**

Presider May the Holy Spirit,
 by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,
 give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

People **Amen.**

Presider And the blessing of ...

People Amen.

SENDING 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;

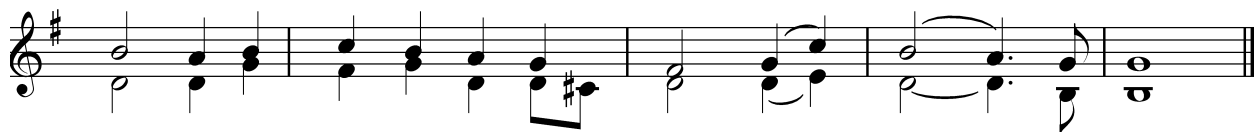


1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son — of the Fa - ther;
3 glo - ry to God, — glo - ry in the high - est;
5 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?

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.

DISMISSAL

Presider Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People Glory, thanks and praise to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

POSTLUDE 10:30 only

LET OUR GLADNESS HAVE NO END

ARR. J. WAYNE KERR

HOW THE LIGHT COMES

I cannot tell you
how the light comes.
What I know
is that it is more ancient
than imagining.
That it travels
across an astounding expanse
to reach us.
That it loves
searching out
what is hidden,
what is lost,
what is forgotten
or in peril
or in pain.
That it has a fondness
for the body,
for finding its way
toward flesh,
for tracing the edges
of form,
for shining forth
through the eye,
the hand,
the heart.

I cannot tell you
how the light comes,
but that it does.
That it will.
That it works its way
into the deepest dark
that enfolds you,
though it may seem
long ages in coming
or arrive in a shape
you did not foresee.
And so
may we this day
turn ourselves toward it.
May we lift our faces
to let it find us.
May we bend our bodies
to follow the arc it makes.
May we open
and open more
and open still
to the blessed light
that comes.

—JAN RICHARDSON