

Christmas Festival of Lessons and Song

A Bidding Prayer *Contemporary*

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this *city*.

And because God particularly loves them, let us remember in God's name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love our brother Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God God's pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

Presider and People

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

The Lessons

Genesis 3:1-23 or 3:1-15 (Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden)

Hymn **107**

Isaiah 40:1-11 (God comforts the people and calls on them to prepare for redemption)

Hymn **89 (v.1-2)**

Luke 1:26-38 (The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High)

Hymn **89 (v. 3-4)**

Luke 1:39-46 (The Virgin Mary is greeted by Elizabeth and proclaims her joy)

Hymn **112 (v. 1-4)**

Luke 2:1-20 (Jesus is born at Bethlehem and is worshiped by angels and shepherds)

Hymn **115**

Luke 2:21-36 (Jesus receives his name and is presented to Simeon in the Temple)

Hymn **79 (v. 1-2)**

John 1:1-18 (The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory)

Hymn **79 (v. 3-5)**

Collect (said together) God of David's fragile house of hope and expectation; in the time of empires, your word is born to those who have no place and sung to those who watch in the wild. May his birth unsettle our world with hidden glory and untold peace; through Jesus Christ, the Child of Promise. AMEN

Hymn **100**

Benediction

Celebrant May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon us and scatter the darkness from before our path; may God's blessing be among us and remain with us, now and always, **Amen.**

Dismissal

Deacon: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing the power of the Spirit.

People: Thanks be to God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the **Anglican Cycle of Prayer** we pray for Christians in other denomination and the work of the ecumenical movement. In the **Diocesan Cycle of Prayer** we pray for St. John's, Barrington; St. John the Evangelist, Newport; and the Chapel of St. John the Divine, Saunderstown. **In Our Parish**, we give thanks for the following birthdays: John Blanchette, Sandy Bell and Jack Broomhead.