

## **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.

*Celebrant:* Let us pray together

**Lord make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. 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                    109 (v.1-3)**

Luke 1:26-58 (The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High)

**Hymn**                    **109 (v. 4-5)**

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**                    **128 (v. 1-3)**

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

**Hymn**                    **128 (v. 4,5)**

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

## The Peace

### Offertory Hymn

110

### The Great Thanksgiving

*The people stand as they are able.*

*Celebrant* May God be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

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

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Holy God, our Source and Ending, Alpha and Omega, we give thanks to you!

You have called all creation into being, setting the earth on its foundations. You have spread out the heavens like a tent, and set a boundary to the seas, you have filled the world with your creatures and called all things good. The heavenly beings are your messengers night and day, and with them we sing and give glory to you,

## Wonder Love and Praise - #785 *Holy, holy, holy*

The image shows a musical score for a hymn. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal lines.

San - to, san - to, san - to, mi cor - a - zon te a - do - ra! Mi  
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you! My

cor - a - zon te sa - be de - cir: san - to e - res Se - ñor.  
heart is glad to say the words: you are ho - ly, Lord.

In these latter days, God leaned toward the earth and spoke to us by a Son, Jesus the beloved, Born to our sister Mary and the Holy Spirit, guarded by our brother Joseph with fatherly care, Jesus came among us as a baby, humbly born, cradled beside the beasts and warmed by their breath, human as we are, in need of human love. Yet kings bowed down before him, bringing gifts and emperors were troubled by his reign – this Child in whom all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.

This word of God made flesh and full of grace was sent to deliver us from our sin, from the power of evil and the fear of death. As a servant, Jesus emptied himself of might upon the cross, and as the risen Anointed One is enthroned at God's right hand to bring mercy and justice to all the earth at the end of days.

And so, rejoicing in all God has done for us, we proclaim the

mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again!**

Holy God, as you visited us in the birth of Jesus, visit us now by the power of your Spirit in these creatures of bread and wine, making them for us the Body and Blood of Christ, the banquet of heaven here on earth, as we remember how Jesus took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to his friends saying, “Take, eat, This is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” And after supper, took a cup of wine and blessed and gave it to them, saying: “Drink this, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for you and for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

Blessed God, shed your grace brighter than starlight on us that we may bear your good tidings to all and renew the weary world in your name: the name Emmanuel – God – With – Us, to whom we give honor and glory in joy, now and forever, Amen.

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray. **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 Breaking of the Bread**

*Celebrant* Alleluia. We break this bread to share in the life of Christ.

*People*      **We who are many are one body for we all share in the one bread.**

*Celebrant*      The gifts of God for the People of God.

*This is God's table, and all are welcome to receive communion. Receive the bread by cupping the hands one on top of the other. You may help to guide the chalice to your lips. If you do not wish to receive Communion, you may cross your hands on your chest and receive a blessing.*

*Celebrant*      Let us pray together. **God of abundance, you have fed us with the Bread of Life and the Cup of Compassion; you have united us with Christ and with one another; and you have made us one with your people in heaven and on earth. Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit, that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world and continue forever in the risen life of Christ our Brother. Amen.**

**Closing Hymn**      *Joy to the World*

*100*

## **Blessing**

*Celebrant*      May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer and Life Giving Spirit be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the **Anglican Cycle of Prayer** we pray for the Province de L'Eglise Anglicane Du Congo. In the **Diocesan Cycle of Prayer** we pray for the Church of the Epiphany, Rumford. **In Our Parish**, we give thanks for the following birthdays: Jack Broomhead, Amy Prince, Steve Garnett, Richard Youngken, Sydney Elizabeth Brabrook and Olivia Letendre.