



# Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 2025 ♦ 9:00 pm

*Celebrant/Preacher: The Rev. Jason Shelby*

*Deacon: The Rev. Celeste Stump*

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*We warmly welcome you if you are here with us for the first time today. We joyfully welcome all people into our community without exception. Whoever you are, and whatever the status of your relationship with God, you will find fellow travelers here. Please join us for coffee and fellowship after the service.*

*Please take a moment to silence your cellphone. Thank you.*

*The Prelude*

*Sure On This Shining Night*

*Morten Lauridsen*

## The Word of God

*Please stand as able and join in singing.*

### The Processional Hymn

**O Come, All ye Faithful**

**Hymnal #83**

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;

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God,  
glory in the highest;

O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing;

### The Opening Acclamation

*Celebrant*      **Blessed be God: ♦ Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

*People*      **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

### The Collect for Purity

*Celebrant*      Almighty God,

*People*      **to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that  
we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through  
Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Please remain standing as able and join in singing.*

## The Gloria

**Gloria in excelsis Deo**

**Hymnal #96 (Refrain)**



Words: French carol, tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt.  
Music: French carol, arr. Edward Shippen Branes (1887-1958).

## The Collect of the Day

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

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

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

*Please be seated for the Lessons.*

## The First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

*Reader* A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

<sup>2</sup>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.  
<sup>3</sup>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.  
<sup>4</sup>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.  
<sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
<sup>6</sup>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.  
<sup>7</sup>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.

*Reader* The Word of the Lord

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

## The Response: Psalm 96

Reader Let us read from Psalm 96 responsively (the People reading the text in bold).

Refrain: **Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice;  
now ye hear of endless bliss;  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest for evermore.  
Christ was born for this!**

<sup>1</sup>Sing to the LORD a new song; \*  
**sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.**

<sup>2</sup>Sing to the LORD and bless his Name; \*  
**proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**

<sup>3</sup>Declare his glory among the nations \*  
**and his wonders among all peoples.**

<sup>4</sup>For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; \*  
**he is more to be feared than all gods.**

<sup>5</sup>As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; \*  
**but it is the LORD who made the heavens.**

<sup>6</sup>Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! \*  
**Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!**

<sup>7</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples; \*  
**ascribe to the LORD honor and power.**

*Refrain*

<sup>8</sup>Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name; \*  
**bring offerings and come into his courts.**

<sup>9</sup>Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; \*  
**let the whole earth tremble before him.**

<sup>10</sup>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."**

<sup>11</sup>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.**

<sup>12</sup>**Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy**  
before the LORD when he comes, \*  
**when he comes to judge the earth.**

<sup>13</sup>He will judge the world with righteousness \*  
**and the peoples with his truth.**

*Refrain*

## The Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14

Reader A Reading from Paul's letter to Titus.

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Reader The Word of the Lord

People **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand as able and join in singing.*

### The Sequence Hymn

**God rest you merry, gentlemen**

Hymnal #105



1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle-men, let noth - ing you dis - may;  
2 From God our heaven - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came  
3 "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "Let noth - ing you af - fright;  
4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,

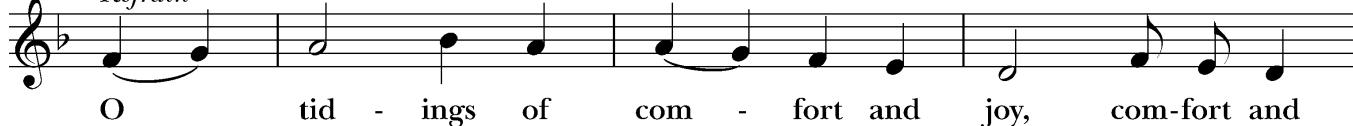


re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ-mas Day,  
and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought tid - ings of the same:  
this day is born a Sa - vior of a pure vir - gin bright,  
and with true love and char - i - ty each o - ther now em - brace;



to save us all from Sa - tan's power when we were gone a - stray.  
how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.  
to free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's power and might."  
this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas doth bring re - deem - ing grace.

*Refrain*



O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com-fort and  
joy; O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

*Please remain standing as able.*

## The Gospel: Luke 2:1-14

*Deacon* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

*Deacon* The Gospel of the Lord.

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

*Please be seated.*

## The Sermon

*The Rev. Jason Shelby*

*There will be a moment of silence for reflection following the sermon.*

*Please stand as able and join in saying the Nicene Creed.*

## The Nicene Creed

*All* **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 man. 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, who with the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified, who 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.**

*Please remain standing as able.*

**The Prayers of the People (the People read the responses in **bold**)**

*Deacon* Let us pray for the Church and for the world.  
Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Deacon* Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Deacon* Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Deacon* Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Deacon* Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Deacon* We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

*Silence*

*Deacon* Lord, in your mercy  
**People** **Hear our prayer.**

*Celebrant* Almighty God, to whom our needs are known before we ask: Help us to ask only what accords with your will; and those good things which we dare not, or in our blindness cannot ask, grant us for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

*Please kneel or sit as able.*

## The Confession of Sin

*Deacon* Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*All* **Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

## The Absolution

*Celebrant* Almighty God have mercy **+** on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

*Please stand as able.*

## The Peace

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

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

*Ministers and People exchange signs of peace in the name of the Lord.*

*Please be seated.*

## The Welcome and Announcements

*Anyone who has a birthday or anniversary in the next week is invited to come forward for a blessing:*

*All* **Watch over your child(ren), O Lord, as their days increase; bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand; comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may the peace which passes all understanding abide all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

# The Holy Communion

## The Offertory Sentence

*Celebrant* Walk in love as Christ loves us, bring offerings of praise and thanksgiving to his table.

## The Offertory Anthem

### I Wonder as I Wander

by Kyle Pederson

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky  
how Jesus the Savior had come for to die;  
for poor orn'ry people like you and like I;  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.  
How I, a mere mortal, may look up in awe  
as Bethlehem's star beckons me through the dawn;  
It shines on the manger, the Prince of all peace  
and bids me to wonder, "Is this gift for me?" Emmanuel.  
The gift in the manger is given for all,  
the strong and heroic, the lost and the small.  
Christ bids to our stone hearts, "come soften and give,'  
And offers his own heart so others may live.  
I wonder as I wander our under the sky,  
How the light of the heavens is born in this child.  
The universe dances with glory and grace  
And I gaze in the manger and see love's face. Emmanuel.  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.*

*Jill Lynch, soprano*

## The Offertory Hymn

### What child is this, who, laid to rest

What child is this, who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,  
while shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

Hymnal #115 (v. 1-3, lyrics)

Why lies he in such mean estate  
Where ox and ass are feeding?  
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here  
The silent Word is pleading.

*Refrain*

So bring him incense, glod and myrrh,  
Come, peasant, king, to own him:  
The King of kings salvation brings,  
Let loving hearts enthrone him.

*Refrain*

*Please stand as able.*

## The Great Thanksgiving

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

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

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

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

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

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

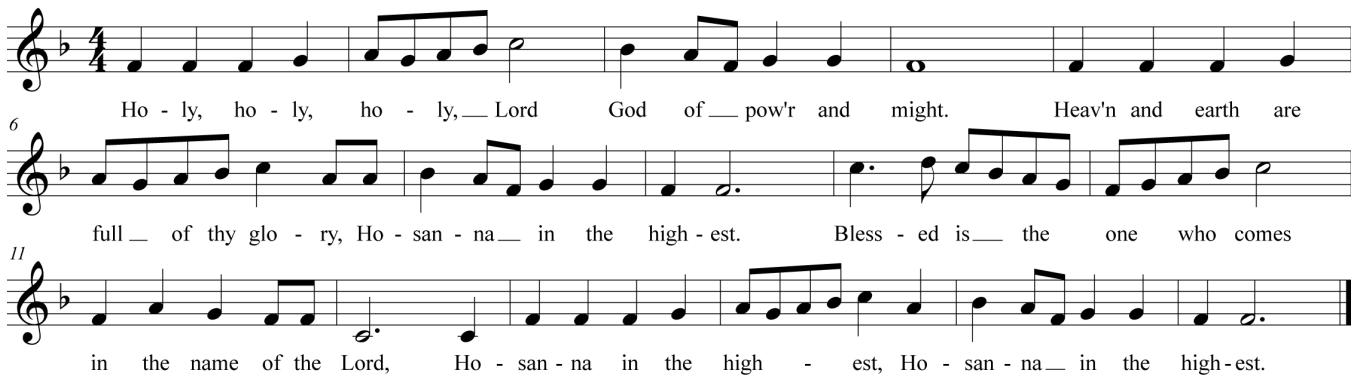
It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

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:

### The Sanctus

**Forest Green**



6 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, \_\_ Lord God of \_\_ pow'r and might. Heav'n and earth are  
full \_\_ of thy glo - ry, Ho - san - na\_\_ in the high - est. Bless - ed is\_\_ the one who comes  
11 in the name of the Lord, Ho - san - na in the high - - est, Ho - san - na\_\_ in the high-est.

Music: "Forest Green," Traditional English folk melody; adapt. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

*Please kneel or stand as able as the Celebrant continues.*

Holy and gracious Father: 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 Father of all.

He 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 Lord 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 he 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:

*All*           **Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his 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 him. 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 your Son Jesus Christ. 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 for ever. *AMEN.*

*Celebrant*   And now, as Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

*All*           **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, forever and ever. Amen.**

### The Breaking of the Bread

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

*Celebrant*   Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

*People*       **Therefore let us keep the feast, Alleluia.**

# The Fraction Anthem Sussex Carol: On Christmas Night All Christians Sing

On Christ - mas night all Christ - ians sing, To  
 Then why should men on earth be so sad, Since  
 When sin de - parts be - fore his grace, Then  
 All out of dark - ness we have light, Which

3  
 hear the news the an - gels bring, On Christ - mas night all  
 our Re - deem - er made us glad, Then why should men on  
 life and health come in its place, When sin de - parts be -  
 made the an - gels sing this night, All out of dark - ness

6  
 Christ - ians sing, To hear the news the an - gels bring,  
 earth be so sad, Since our Re - deem - er made us glad,  
 fore his grace, Then life and health come in its place,  
 we have light, Which made the an - gels sing this night:

9  
 News of great joy, news of great mirth, News of our  
 When from our sin he set us free, All for to  
 An - gels and men with joy may sing,  
 'Glo - ry to God and peace to men,  
 News All for to  
 for Now and for -

13  
 mer - ci - ful King's birth. \_\_\_\_\_  
 gain - our li - ber ty? \_\_\_\_\_  
 see - the new - born King, \_\_\_\_\_  
 ev - er - more. A - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Words: English carol, 17th cent. Music: Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958).

## The Invitation

*Celebrant* The gifts of God for the people of God, Holy gifts, for Holy people.

*For our online community: an invitation to pray together the spiritual communion prayer from the National Cathedral. A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.*

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.** (St. Alphonsus de Liguori, 1696-1787)

*If you have come with a particular prayer concern today, after receiving Communion you may come to the Nason Prayer Chapel to the right of the altar rail where you may light a candle and, if you wish, someone will be available to pray with you.*

### **The Communion of the People**

*All are invited to receive Holy Communion. Please follow the directions of the ushers. If you do not wish to receive, we encourage you to come forward to receive a blessing. Simply fold your hands across your chest when you come forward. The clergy will carry Communion to anyone in the congregation who is unable to come forward. Please notify an usher if you wish Communion to be brought to you. Gluten-free Communion wafers are available. If you require one of these, simply ask.*

### **The Communion Song**

#### **Away in a Manger**

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down  
where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

#### **Hymnal #101 (Lyrics)**

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me for ever, and love me I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

### **The First Noel**

The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds  
in fields as they lay;  
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.

#### **Hymnal #109 (Lyrics)**

They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.

You are invited to light your candle during the singing of *Silent Night*. When the song is finished, please carefully extinguish your candle.

Kneel or sit as able and join in singing.

### The Candle Lighting

#### Silent Night, Holy Night

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.

Hymnal #111 (Lyrics)

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.

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

### The Post-Communion Prayer

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

*All* Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### The Blessing

*Celebrant* Lord, make us instruments of your peace.

*People* 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.

*Celebrant* And, the blessing of God Almighty, **+** The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit be with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

### The Sending Forth

*Celebrant* Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia!

*All* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

*Please stand as able and join in singing.*

The Closing Hymn  
Joy to the World

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;  
let us our songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,  
repeat the sounding joy.

Hymnal #100 (Lyrics)

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
and wonders of his love.

*The Postlude*

*Toccata - Creator of the Starry Heights*

*Pietro A. Yon*

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