

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

God Calls Us to Worship Him

Call to Worship:

Matthew 11.28-30

Leader: [Jesus said], “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden,
And I will give you rest.

**People: Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me,
For I am gentle and lowly in heart,
And you will find rest for your souls.**

Leader: For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Prayer of Invocation

Hymn of Praise:

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Hark! the herald angels sing, / “Glory to the newborn King:
peace on earth, and mercy mild, / God and sinners reconciled!”
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, / join the triumph of the skies;
with th’ angelic hosts proclaim, / “Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Refrain

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”*

Christ, by highest heaven adored, / Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, / offspring of the Virgin’s womb:
veiled in flesh the Godhead see; / hail the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell, / Jesus, our Emmanuel. ***Refrain***

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! / Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, / risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, / born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth, / born to give us second birth. ***Refrain***

God Cleanses Us by His Grace

Conviction of the Gospel:

Psalms 24.3-5

Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the Lord and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

Confession of Sin

Comfort of the Gospel:

Psalms 130.3-4

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared.

God Consecrates Us by Praise and Prayer

Hymn of Thanksgiving:

Once in Royal David’s City

Once in royal David’s city / Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby / In a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, / Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven / Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable, / And his cradle was a stall:
With the poor, and mean, and lowly, / Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And, through all his wondrous childhood / He would honor and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden / In whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be / Mild, obedient, good as he.

And our eyes at last shall see him, / Through his own redeeming love;
For that Child so dear and gentle / Is our Lord in heav’n above,
And he leads his children on / To the place where he is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable, / With the oxen standing by,
We shall see him, but in heaven, / Set at God’s right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned / All in white shall wait around.

Advent Reading of Love:

Luke 1.57-80

Hymn of Meditation:

O Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem, / How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep / The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth / The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years / Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary / And, gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep / Their watch of wond’ring love.
O morning stars, together / Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, / And peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently / The wondrous gift is giv’n!
So God imparts to human hearts / The blessings of his heav’n.
No ear may hear his coming, / But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still / The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, / Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in, / Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels / The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, / Our Lord Immanuel!

Prayer of Intercession:

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

God Counsels Us through His Word

Scripture Reading: Genesis 28.10-22; Matthew 1.21-23; John 1.14

Sermon:

Jesus, the Ladder

God Commissions Us to Serve Him

Creed:

Philippians 2.5-11

**Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,
Who, though he was in the form of God,**

Did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,

But emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant,

Being born in the likeness of men.

And being found in human form,

He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death,

Even death on a cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him

And bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

In heaven and on earth and under the earth,

And every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,

To the glory of God the Father.

Hymn of Response:

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

It came upon the midnight clear, / that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth / to touch their harps of gold:
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, / from heav’n’s all-gracious King”;
the world in solemn stillness lay / to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, / with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heav’nly music floats / o’er all the weary world:
above its sad and lowly plains / they bend on hov’ring wing,
and ever o’er its Babel sounds / the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life’s crushing load, / whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way / with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours / come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road / and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hast’ning on, / by prophet bards foretold,
when with the ever-circling years / comes round the age of gold;
when peace shall over all the earth / its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world give back the song / which now the angels sing.

Benediction:

Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.