

Festival
of the
Incarnation
of
Our Lord



Vespers Upon Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020

Morgantown, West Virginia

Candles are lit during the singing of the opening carol. (Isaac)

Carol: "Joy to the World"

Antioch

1) Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King!
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

3) 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,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

2) Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!
Let men their songs employ,
while fields & floods, rocks, hills, & plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

4) He rules the world with truth & grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of His righteousness
and wonders of His love,
and wonders of His love,
and wonders, wonders of His love.

Opening Verse

Confession

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.

Psalter

O God, make speed to save us.

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen.

Alleluia!

Psalm 72

Of Solomon.

- 1 *Give the king your justice, O God,*
and your righteousness to the royal son!
- 2 *May he judge your people with righteousness,*
and your poor with justice!
- 3 *Let the mountains bear prosperity for the people,*
and the hills, in righteousness!
- 4 *May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,*
give deliverance to the children of the needy, and crush the oppressor!
- 5 *May they fear you while the sun endures,*
and as long as the moon, throughout all generations!
- 6 *May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, **
like showers that water the earth!
- 7 *In his days may the righteous flourish,*
and peace abound, till the moon be no more!
- 8 *May he have dominion from sea to sea,*
and from the River to the ends of the earth!
- 11 *May all kings fall down before him,*
all nations serve him!
- 12 *For he delivers the needy when he calls,*
the poor and him who has no helper.
- 13 *He has pity on the weak and the needy,*
and saves the lives of the needy.
- 14 *From oppression and violence he redeems their life,*
and precious is their blood in his sight.
- 17 *May his name endure forever,*
his fame continue as long as the sun!

*May people be blessed in him,
all nations call him blessed!*

18 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel,
who alone does wondrous things.*

19 *Blessed be his glorious name forever;
may the whole earth be filled with his glory!*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and shall be forever. Amen.

Lessons

Prayer for Illumination

Epistle Lesson

The Epistle lesson is Titus 2:11-15.

Hear the word of God!

Our ears are open!

Titus 2:11-15 (Stephen)

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol: “God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

1) God rest ye merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas Day;
To save us all from Satan’s power when we were gone astray.
 O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
 O tidings of comfort and joy.

2) In Bethlehem, in Israel, this blessed Babe was born,
And laid within a manger upon this blessed morn;
The which His mother Mary did nothing take in scorn.
 O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
 O tidings of comfort and joy.

3) Now to the Lord sing praises all you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas all others doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Gospel Lesson

The Gospel lesson is Luke 2:1-21

Let us hear the gospel!

Glory be to you, O Lord!

Luke 2:1-14 (Eli)

Carol: “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Mendelssohn

1 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!”
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”

3 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.
Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King”

2 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 th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Immanuel.

Public Domain

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

Luke 2:15-21 (Amelia)

Praise Christ for His glorious gospel!

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Carol: “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Forest Green

1) 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.

2) 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 men on earth.

3) 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.

4) 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 Emmanuel!

Meditation

Creed

I believe in God the Father almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Collect of the Day

Christmas Litany

Heavenly Father, thank you for remembering your promises and sending your Son, Jesus our Lord, to save us from our sins.

Thank you, that when the world was full of despair, you sent the Wonderful Counselor to bring us hope.

Save those who are suffering, our Father!

Thank you, that at a time when children were abused and mistreated, you came as a Child to save the weak.

Save the poor and helpless, our Father!

Thank you, that when peace was maintained at the edge of a sword, you came as the Prince of Peace to break the iron grip of oppression.

Save those caught in warfare, persecution, and oppression, our Father!

Thank you, that when the earth was filled with demons, you came with the gospel of salvation.

Save all nations, our Father!

Extemporaneous Prayers

Closing Prayer

Hymn: “How Bright Appears the Morning Star”

Nicolai

- 1) How bright appears the Morning Star,
with mercy beaming from afar;
the host of heav'en rejoices.
O Righteous Branch, O Jesse's Rod,
the Son of Man and Son of God,
we too will lift our voices:
Jesus, Jesus,
holy, holy, yet most lowly, come, draw near us;
great Emmanuel, come and hear us.

2) Though circled by the hosts on high,
He deigned to cast a pitying eye
 upon His helpless creature.
The whole creation's Head and Lord,
by highest seraphim adored,
 assumed our very nature;
 Jesus, grant us,
through Your merit, to inherit Your salvation.
Hear, O hear our supplication!

3) Rejoice, O heav'ns, and earth, reply;
with praise, Ye sinners, fill the sky
 for this, His incarnation.
Incarnate God, put forth Your pow'r;
ride on, ride on, great Conqueror,
 till all know Your salvation.
 Amen, amen!
Alleluia, alleluia! Praise be given
evermore by earth and heaven.