



GLOUCESTER  
CATHEDRAL



**The Eucharist of Christmas Day**  
Thursday 25 December, 10.15 a.m.



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For safeguarding, photography and videography are not permitted during services.



An induction loop is available for those using hearing aids. Please turn your hearing aid to the 'T' position.



Large print booklets are available on request. Please ask a steward.

# Introduction

Today, we celebrate with great joy a promise fulfilled. Throughout the season of Advent, we have been listening to the ancient prophecies, which foretold a Messiah who would come to bring healing and peace to a broken world. Today, Christ comes to be with us, as a tiny child.

Today's act of worship takes place in the context of Holy Communion, because in the outward signs of bread and wine, Christ is made present to us in a special way, when the president recalls Jesus' own words, 'This is my body, my blood, which is given for you.' This is the moment when we come to understand more deeply the meaning behind John's famous expression: 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.'

As we begin our Christmas celebrations, remember that whatever is on your heart, whether this season is joyful or tinged with pain and sadness, remember above all things that Christ is very near.



*The service is sung by the Cathedral Choir*

*The musical setting of the Eucharist is*  
MASS IN G MAJOR BY FRANZ SCHUBERT

*The president and preacher is the Bishop of Gloucester*  
*The Right Reverend Rachel Treweek*

Cover image:  
The Mystical Nativity

Sandro Botticelli c.1445-1510

# ¶ *The Gathering*

*The congregation is invited to join in the words printed in **bold**.*

*At 10.15 a.m., the congregation stands to sing the processional hymn*



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:  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord!

God of God,  
Light of Light,  
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
Very God, begotten, not created:

See how the shepherds,  
Summoned to his cradle,  
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with holy fear;  
We too will thither bend our joyful footsteps:

Sing, choirs of Angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
Glory to God in the highest:

*The Dean places the Christ-child in the Nativity Scene.*

*The president says*

Welcome all wonders in one sight!

Eternity shut in a span.

Summer in winter, day in night,

heaven in earth and God in man.

Great little one whose all-embracing birth

brings earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.



**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
Born this happy morning,  
Jesu, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
Now in flesh appearing:**

*Words, Latin 18th century; translated, Frederick Oakeley 1802-80 and others*

*Tune, ADESTE FIDELES; melody probably by J. F. Wade 1711-86*

*Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

*The president greets the people*

✙ In the name of the Father,

and of the Son,

and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

## **The Greeting**

The Lord be with you

*All* **and also with you.**

*The congregation sits and the president gives a welcome.*

## Prayers of Penitence

*The deacon says*

Christ the light of the world has come  
to dispel the darkness of our hearts.  
In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.

God our Father,  
you sent your Son full of grace and truth:  
forgive our failure to receive him.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

Jesus our Saviour,  
you were born in poverty and laid in a manger:  
forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.  
Christ, have mercy.

*All* **Christ, have mercy.**

Spirit of love,  
your servant Mary responded joyfully to your call:  
forgive the hardness of our hearts.  
Lord, have mercy.

*All* **Lord, have mercy.**

*The president gives the absolution*

May the God of all healing and forgiveness  
draw you to himself,  
that you may behold the glory of his Son,  
the Word made flesh,  
✙ and be cleansed from all your sins,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen.**

## Gloria in Excelsis

*The congregation stands and the choir sings*

Gloria in excelsis Deo  
et in terra pax  
hominibus bonae voluntatis.  
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,  
adoramus te, glorificamus te,  
gratias agimus tibi propter  
magnam gloriam tuam.

*Glory to God in the highest,  
and in earth peace,  
goodwill to all people.  
We praise you, we bless you,  
we worship you, we glorify you,  
we give thanks to you  
for your great glory.*

Domine Deus, Rex caelestis,  
Deus Pater omnipotens.  
Domine Fili unigenite,  
Jesu Christe.  
Domine Deus, Agnus Dei,  
Filius Patris,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
suscipe deprecationem nostram,  
qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,  
miserere nobis.

*Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father,  
who takes away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us,  
who takes away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer,  
who sits at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.*

Quoniam tu solus sanctus,  
tu solus Dominus,  
tu solus altissimus,  
Jesu Christe,  
cum Sancto Spiritu  
in gloria Dei Patris.  
Amen.

*For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.*

## The Collect

*The president introduces a period of silent prayer, saying*

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration  
that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

*Silence is kept.*

Lord Jesus Christ,  
your birth at Bethlehem  
draws us to kneel in wonder at heaven touching earth:  
accept our heartfelt praise  
as we worship you,  
our Saviour and our eternal God.

*All* **Amen.**

*The congregation sits.*



# ¶ *The Liturgy of the Word*

## Old Testament Reading

A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,  
who brings good news,  
who announces salvation,  
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'  
Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,  
together they sing for joy;  
for in plain sight they see  
the return of the Lord to Zion.  
Break forth together into singing,  
you ruins of Jerusalem;  
for the Lord has comforted his people,  
he has redeemed Jerusalem.  
The Lord has bared his holy arm  
before the eyes of all the nations;  
and all the ends of the earth shall see  
the salvation of our God.

*52.7-10*

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*The congregation stands to sing*



**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 all  
From heaven'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 heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lowly plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel-sounds  
The blessed angels sing.**

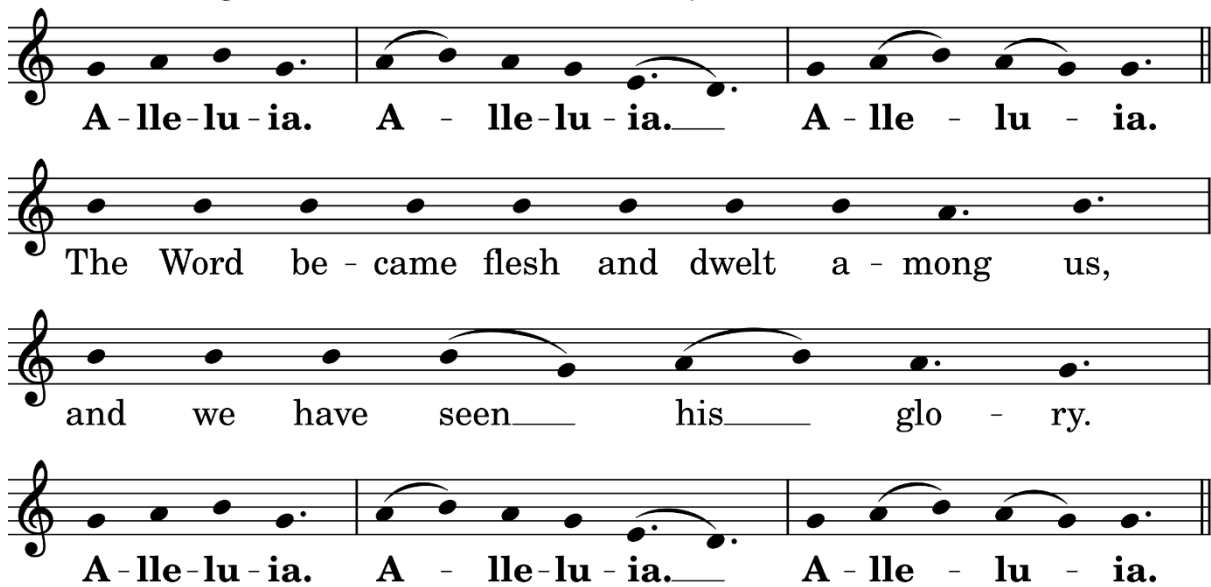
**But with the woes of sin and strife  
The world has suffered long;  
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled  
Two thousand years of wrong;  
And man, at war with man, hears not  
The love-song which they bring; –  
Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife,  
And hear the angels sing!**

**For lo! the days are hastening 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 splendours fling,  
And the whole world give back the song  
Which now the angels sing.**

Words, Edmund Sears 1810-76  
Tune, NOEL; traditional English melody  
adapted by Arthur Sullivan 1842-1900

## Gospel Reading

*The choir sings the Acclamation and all repeat*



A - lle - lu - ia. A - lle - lu - ia. A - lle - lu - ia.

The Word be - came flesh and dwelt a - mong us,

and we have seen his glo - ry.

A - lle - lu - ia. A - lle - lu - ia. A - lle - lu - ia.

The musical notation consists of four staves. The first staff contains three measures of music, each with a dotted quarter note followed by a half note, and a slur over the last two notes. The second staff contains a single measure with a dotted quarter note followed by a half note, and a slur over the last two notes. The third staff contains a single measure with a dotted quarter note followed by a half note, and a slur over the last two notes. The fourth staff contains three measures of music, each with a dotted quarter note followed by a half note, and a slur over the last two notes.

*When the Gospel is announced, the deacon says*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.



Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

The musical notation consists of a single staff with a dotted quarter note followed by a half note, and a slur over the last two notes.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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 in the guest room.

Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

.

2.1-20

This is the Gospel of the Lord.



## Sermon

*The congregation sits.*

## The Affirmation of Faith

*The congregation stands and the president says*

We proclaim the Church's faith in Jesus Christ.

*All* **We believe and declare that our Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Son of God, is both divine and human.**

God, of the being of the Father,  
the only Son from before time began;  
human from the being of his mother, born in the world;

*All* **fully God and fully human;  
human in both mind and body.**

As God he is equal to the Father,  
as human he is less than the Father.

*All* **Although he is both divine and human  
he is not two beings but one Christ.**

One, not by turning God into flesh,  
but by taking humanity into God;

*All* **truly one, not by mixing humanity with Godhead,  
but by being one person.**

For as mind and body form one human being  
so the one Christ is both divine and human.

*All* **The Word became flesh and lived among us;  
we have seen his glory,  
the glory of the only Son from the Father,  
full of grace and truth.**

## Prayers of Intercession

*The president says*

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

*The congregation sits.*

Father, on this holy day your Son our Saviour  
was born in human flesh.

Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day there was no room for your Son in the inn.

Protect with your love those who have no home  
and all who live in poverty.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day Mary, in the pain of labour,  
brought your Son to birth.

Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness.

Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.'

Strengthen those who work for peace and justice  
in all the world.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy.

Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**



On this holy day strangers found the Holy Family,  
and saw the baby lying in the manger.

Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day heaven is come down to earth,  
and earth is raised to heaven.

Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death  
in the hope of your coming kingdom.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

On this holy day Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.

Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God

*All* **hear our prayer.**

*The president says*

Father,

On this holy day angels and shepherds  
worshipped at the manger throne.

Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary,

Joseph and the saints

through him who is your Word made flesh,

our Saviour Jesus Christ.

*All* **Amen.**

# ¶ *The Liturgy of the Sacrament*

## **The Peace**

*The congregation stands.*

*The president says*

This holy day the angels sang,  
‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.’

*Luke 2.14*

The peace of the Lord be always with you

*All* **and also with you.**

*The deacon says*

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

*All may exchange a sign of peace.*

## Preparation of the Table

*As the altar is prepared, the congregation remains standing to sing*



*All*

**Of the Father's heart begotten,  
Ere the world from chaos rose,  
He is Alpha, from that Fountain  
All that is and hath been flows;  
He is Omega, of all things,  
Yet to come the mystic Close,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Upper voices*

**By His Word was all created  
He commanded and 'twas done;  
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,  
Universe of three in one,  
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,  
All that breathes beneath the sun,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Lower voices*

**He assumed this mortal body,  
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,  
That the race from dust created,  
Might not perish utterly,  
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced  
In the depths of hell to lie,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Upper voices*      **O how blest that wondrous birthday,  
When the Maid the curse retrieved,  
Brought to birth mankind's salvation  
By the Holy Ghost conceived,  
And the Babe, the world's Redeemer  
In her loving arms received,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Lower voices*      **This is he, whom seer and sibyl  
Sang in ages long gone by;  
This is he of old revealed  
In the page of prophecy;  
Lo! He comes the promised Saviour;  
Let the world his praises cry!  
Evermore and evermore.**

*All*                      **Sing, ye heights of heaven, his praises;  
Angels and Archangels, sing!  
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,  
Let your joyous anthems ring,  
Every tongue his name confessing,  
Countless voices answering,  
Evermore and evermore.**

*Words, Prudentius 348-c.413*

*tr. J. M. Neale 1818-66*

*Tune, DIVINUM MYSTERIUM; melody from *Piae Cantiones* 1582*

*Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

## **Taking of the Bread and Wine**

*The president says*

Word made flesh, life of the world,  
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:  
by your Spirit may we share in your riches.

*All*    **Amen.**

# The Eucharistic Prayer

*President* *All*  
The Lord be with you and al - so with you.

*President* *All*  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

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

*All*  
It is right to give thanks and praise.

*The president recalls God's mighty acts*

All glory and honour be yours always and everywhere,  
mighty creator, ever-living God.

We give you thanks and praise for your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ,

who for love of our fallen race humbled himself,  
and on this night was born of the Virgin Mary  
by the power of your Spirit,  
and lived as one of us.

In this mystery of the Word made flesh  
you have caused his light to shine in our hearts,  
to give knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ.  
In him we see our God made visible  
and so are caught up in the love of the God we cannot see.

Therefore with all the angels of heaven  
we lift our voices to proclaim the glory of your name  
and sing our joyful hymn of praise:

Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus  
Dominus Deus Sabaoth.  
Pleni sunt cæli et terra gloria tua.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Holy, holy, holy,  
Lord God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

Benedictus qui venit  
in nomine Domini.  
Hosanna in excelsis.

*Blessed is he who comes  
in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

Accept our praises, heavenly Father,  
through your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
and as we follow his example and obey his command,  
grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit  
these gifts of bread and wine  
may be to us his body and his blood;  
who, in the same night that he was betrayed,  
took bread and gave you thanks;  
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
TAKE, EAT; THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU;  
DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

In the same way, after supper  
he took the cup and gave you thanks;  
he gave it to them, saying:  
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.  
DO THIS, AS OFTEN AS YOU DRINK IT,  
IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

Therefore, heavenly Father,  
we remember his offering of himself  
made once for all upon the cross;  
we proclaim his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension;  
we look for the coming of your kingdom,  
and with this bread and this cup  
we make the memorial of Christ your Son our Lord.

Great is the mystery of faith:

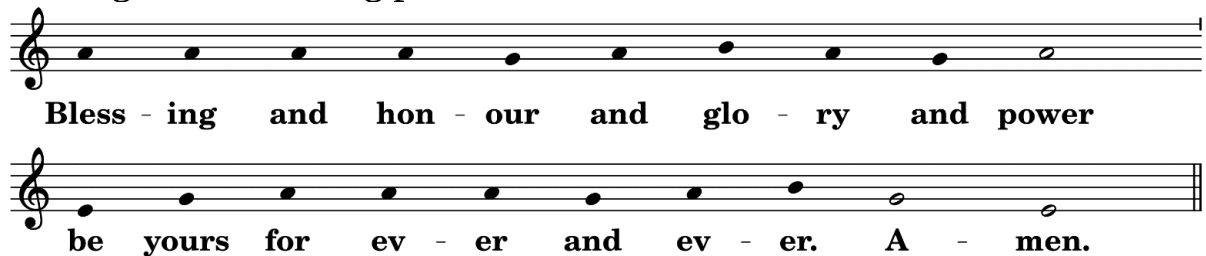


Christ has died: Christ is risen: Christ will come a-gain.



Accept through him, our great high priest,  
 this our sacrifice of thanks and praise,  
 and as we eat and drink these holy gifts  
 in the presence of your divine majesty,  
 renew us by your Spirit,  
 inspire us with your love  
 and unite us in the body of your Son,  
 Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
 in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
 with all who stand before you in earth and heaven,  
 we worship you, Father almighty,  
 in songs of everlasting praise:



*The congregation sits.*

## The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us,  
 let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us,  
 each in our own language

<i>All</i> <b>Our Father,</b>	<b>Notre Père...</b>
<b>who art in heaven,</b>	
<b>hallowed be thy name;</b>	<b>Vater Unser...</b>
<b>thy kingdom come;</b>	
<b>thy will be done;</b>	<b>Onze Vader...</b>
<b>on earth as it is in heaven.</b>	
<b>Give us this day our daily bread.</b>	<b>Padre Nuestro...</b>
<b>And forgive us our trespasses,</b>	
<b>as we forgive those who trespass against us.</b>	<b>Ojcze Nasz...</b>
<b>And lead us not into temptation;</b>	
<b>but deliver us from evil.</b>	<b>Baba Yetu...</b>
<b>For thine is the kingdom,</b>	
<b>the power and the glory,</b>	<b>E to matou Matua...</b>
<b>for ever and ever.</b>	
<b>Amen.</b>	<b>Ein Tad...</b>

## Breaking of the Bread

*The president breaks the consecrated bread, saying*

We break the bread of life,  
and that life is the light of the world.

*All* **God here among us,  
light in the midst of us,  
bring us to light and life.**

## Giving of Communion

*The president says the invitation to communion*

Christ is the true bread which has come down from heaven.

*All* **Lord, give us this bread always.**

*The president and people receive Communion; please follow the direction of the stewards.*

*If it is your custom to receive Communion in your own church, you are welcome to do so today. If you would rather receive a blessing, please bring this order of service with you so that we may know how best to minister to you.*

*Communion is offered in both bread and wine, though you may wish to receive the bread only. For hygiene reasons, intinction (dipping the bread in the wine) is prohibited.*

*If you require a gluten free wafer, please go to the front of the Cathedral.*

*The choir sings the Agnus Dei*

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
miserere nobis.

Agnus Dei,  
qui tollis peccata mundi,  
dona nobis pacem.

*Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
have mercy on us.*

*Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world,  
grant us peace.*

## Prayer after Communion

*The president introduces a period of silent prayer, saying*

Let us pray.

*Silence is kept.*

God our Father,  
in this day you have made known to us again  
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:  
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him  
until the day dawns  
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.

**All To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.**

**All Almighty God,  
we thank you for feeding us  
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.  
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies  
to be a living sacrifice.  
Send us out  
in the power of your Spirit  
to live and work  
to your praise and glory.  
Amen.**

# ¶ *The Dismissal*

*The congregation stands to sing*



**Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born 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 host proclaim,  
Christ is born in Bethlehem:  
*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.***

**Christ by highest heav'n adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
Late in time behold him come  
Offspring of a Virgin's womb!  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,  
Hail the incarnate Deity!  
Pleased as man with us to dwell,  
Jesus, our Emmanuel:  
*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.***

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
Ris'n with healing in his wings;  
Mild He lays his glory by,  
Born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth,  
Born to give us second birth:  
*Hark! The herald angels sing  
Glory to the new-born King.***

*Words, Charles Wesley 1707-88  
Tune, MENDELSSOHN; F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy 1809-47  
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks 1919-2015*

## The Blessing

*The president says*

May the Father,  
who has loved the eternal Son  
from before the foundation of the world,  
shed that love upon you his children.

*All* **Amen.**

May Christ,  
who by his incarnation gathered into one  
things earthly and heavenly,  
fill you with joy and peace.

*All* **Amen.**

May the Holy Spirit,  
by whose overshadowing Mary became the God-bearer,  
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

*All* **Amen.**

And the blessing of God almighty,  
✙ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

## The Dismissal

Go in peace. Proclaim the Word made flesh.

*All* **Glory, thanks and praise to God.**

*The congregation remains standing as the choir and ministers depart.*

*The organist plays*

Toccata from Symphony V

Charles-Marie Widor 1844-1937







