

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE SECOND SUNDAY of CHRISTMAS



Hymn: As With Gladness Men of Old.

1. As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.
2. As with joyful steps they sped, to that lowly manger-bed,
There to bend the knee before Him whom heaven and earth adore,
So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy-seat.
3. As their precious gifts they laid, at thy manger roughly made,
So may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee our heavenly King.
4. Holy Jesu, every day keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.
5. In the heavenly country bright need they no created light,
Thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;
There for ever may we sing alleluias to our King.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Heavenly Father, all hearts are open to you. No secrets are hidden from you. Purify us with the fire of your Holy Spirit that we may love and worship you faithfully, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace is our hearts.

Lord Jesus, you came to gather the nations into your kingdom of peace.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you come in word and sacrament to strengthen us in holiness.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you will come in glory to judge the living and the dead.

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect: Almighty God, in the birth of your Son you have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word, and shown us the fullness of your love: help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love that we may know the fullness of his joy; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah

31. 7-14

For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, 'Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel.' See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour, together; a great company, they shall return here. With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, 'He who scattered Israel will

gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock. 'For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147. 12-20 Response: It is good to sing praises to our God.

Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

For he strengthens the bars of your gates; he blesses your children within you. **(R)**

He grants peace within your borders; he fills you with the finest of wheat.

He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. **(R)**

He gives snow like wool; he scatters frost like ashes.

He hurls down hail like crumbs— who can stand before his cold?

He sends out his word, and melts them; he makes his wind blow, and the waters flow. **(R)**

He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and ordinances to Israel.

He has not dealt thus with any other nation;

they do not know his ordinances. Praise the Lord! **(R)**

A reading from letter of S. Paul to the Ephesians

1. 3-14

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the

first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to Saint John

1. 10-18

Glory to you, O Lord.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ') From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation: Today we continue our celebration of the miracle of the incarnation. With the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, John tells us, the Word became flesh and lived among us." The Son of God became a child among us that we might become children of God. As John says, "to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. The birth of Jesus is a new dawn for the world as the light of God's love brings a new hope to a world darkened by sorrow, hurt, conflict and division. In Jesus Christ, the child of Bethlehem, the glory of God is revealed to us. His glory was witnessed by the shepherds, the first to visit the new-born child. His birth heralded by angels. This week we will celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany and the visit of the Magi to the child Jesus. They too will kneel in adoration before the Christ child, they will see his glory, the glory as of a Father's only Son. John, recognises in his Gospel, that in this child Jesus of Nazareth, Emmanuel has arrived among us, God is with us. He comes to us in love, such is his love for us. He comes

to share our lives, to share our joys, sorrows and sufferings, to support and carry us in the darker times of our lives, in order to give us hope and comfort when we despair and to bring us to our eternal home with our Father in heaven. We are his children, he cares for us deeply and is intimately concerned for us and our well-being and he comes to teach us how to live as children of God so that we know his great love for us. The depth of his love for us will be revealed when Jesus gives himself to the Cross, taking to himself all our sins, all our fears, all our hurts, praying for us as he dies for love of us before rising again, the glorious resurrection of Christ is our assurance that never again can we be separated from him for God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit is with us always. In him alone can we find the love, the hope, the peace we need so much. Today we give thanks that in the new-born Jesus, the Word is made flesh, God is with us, living among us. With the Shepherds and the Magi we too see his glory which brings light to our lives. Amen.

Intercessions

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Mary our Bishop and Andrew our Archbishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own Church and the Churches of our Ministry Area; may the Church be filled with his love and proclaim his continuing presence to the world. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May there be peace throughout the world, may reconciliation overcome conflict and division.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; May the joy of Christmas fill our hearts, may the blessing of Christ fill us all.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our intercession books; may they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and consoled with the love of Christ.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death falls at this time. May they share the eternal glory of heaven in the company of all the saints.

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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,
The power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

Jesus said, Peace I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you; a peace the world cannot give, this is my gift to you.

The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Christ the Son of God, born of Mary, fill you with his grace to trust his promises and obey his will and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Hymn: O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

- 1. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
With Gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,
Kneel and adore him the Lord is his name.**
- 2. Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
High on his heart he will bear it for thee,
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer my prayerfulness,
Guiding my steps as may best for thee be.**
- 3. Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
These are the offerings to lay on his shrine.**
- 4. These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
He will accept for the name that is dear;
Mornings for joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
Trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.**