

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE 2023

WE BEHELD HIS GLORY

AS WE GATHER

Glory is the theme of both John's account and Luke's familiar details of the Savior's birth. They are not mutually exclusive but speak of the same event. The surprise is that glory is not where we would have expected it or what we would have expected it to be. Hidden in the manger is the Word made flesh, the same creating Word that spoke all things into being. Hidden in the flesh of a baby is the glory of the God who becomes His people's Savior. Hidden in the faith that trusts this Word are eyes to see and ears to hear the glory as of the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. In the Word made flesh, God has displayed His glory, and that glory appeared in order to give us the right to become the children of God.

370 WHAT CHILD IS THIS

INVOCATION

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 43:4; 124:8

P I will go to the altar of God,

C **to God my exceeding joy.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Recalling our sin and God's mercy, let us examine our lives and consciences.

Silence for self-examination

C **I confess to God Almighty, before the whole company of heaven and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought, word, and deed by my fault, by my own fault, by my own most grievous fault; wherefore I pray God Almighty to have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and bring me to everlasting life. Amen.**

P The almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all your sins. In the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I, a called and ordained servant of the Word, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace of the Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

HYMN: 383 A GREAT AND MIGHTY WONDER

INTROIT *Psalm 98:1–4; antiphon: Isaiah 9:6*

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,* Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things!*

His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The LORD has made known his salvation; *

He has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel. * All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth; *break forth into joyous song and sing praises!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son* and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, *is now, and will be forever. Amen.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; *and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

HYMN: 380 HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

PRAYER FOR: CHRISTMAS DAY

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING: ISAIAH 52:7–10 *Isaiah* 52:7–10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes

salvation, who says to Zion, “Your God reigns.” ⁸The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The 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.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

EPISTLE: HEBREWS 1:1–12

Hebrews 1:1–12

The Supremacy of God’s Son

¹Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son, today I have begotten you”? Or again, “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son”? ⁶And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.” ⁷Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire.” ⁸But of the Son he says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom. ⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.” ¹⁰And, “You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens

are the work of your hands; ¹¹they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment, ¹²like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL: JOHN 1:1–14

John 1:1–14

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

The Word Became Flesh

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

HYMN: 384 OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN SERMON

OFFERING

“HYMN: 368 ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

For the faith to greet the news of the Word made flesh with joy and peace, for the obedience of faith to walk in the light of His ways, for the strength to be steadfast in this faith, and for speedy feet to proclaim this message to the world, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For voices to proclaim faithfully the Word of God, for listening ears that we grow in knowledge and faith by the preaching of the Word, for those who deliver to us the Means of Grace in which we behold God's glory and receive it with joy and thanksgiving, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the Church, here and throughout the world, for every place where the Word has planted hope and displayed God's saving glory to the nations, and for the homes in which we teach this Word to our children and live it out in holy lives, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For peace in the world, for an end to violence, for justice, for the will to protect life from its beginning to

its natural end, and for those in need, let us pray of the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For grace to believe the Word we hear, for repentant hearts to receive worthily the grace of Christ's body and blood in this Holy Communion, for our strong unity in doctrine, and for our harmony in our life together as the Body of Christ, the Church, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For those who suffer any need of body or soul, for the sick, for the aged, for the grieving, and for those in their last days, [*especially*. . .], that the Lord be their healing, strength, comfort, and peace, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P For the saints who endured in the holy confession of Your name, for the martyrs whose sacrifice inspires us still, and for all the saints who rest from their labors, that we join them on that promised day when Christ shall join the faithful as one in the marriage supper of the Lamb in His kingdom without end, let us pray to the Lord.

C Lord, have mercy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, O Lord.

Silence for meditation

P For all things needful to this body and life and for all things profitable to our salvation, let us pray in the name of Christ, the Word made flesh, in whom we behold the glory of the eternal Trinity, now and to the end of the ages.

C Amen.

SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT

PREFACE

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

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

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord; for in the mystery of the Word made flesh You have given us a new revelation of Your glory that, seeing You in the person of Your Son, we may know and love those things which are not seen. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

SANCTUS: Pg. 195/Divine Setting 3

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

P Blessed are You, O Lord, our God, King of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and have given Your only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

In the beginning You created all things by Your Word; and in the fullness of time Your Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

C **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

C 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.

WORDS OF OUR LORD

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

PAX DOMINI

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C Amen

HYMN: 366 IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

HYMN: 364 AWAY IN A MANGER

HYMN: 367 ANGELS FROM THE REALMS OF GLORY

POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING

P Let us pray.

O Lord, Jesus Christ, the true light who comes into the world to enlighten all people, grant that Your light shine forth in us and through us, that we may carry the holy joy of this day into all eternity; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

BENEDICAMUS

P Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C Amen.

HYMN: 387 JOY TO THE WORLD

DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

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