

Morning Prayer: Rite Two

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

Christmas Eve

With material from “Christmas Eve” by Amy Hunter
from The Abingdon Worship Annual 2024

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Advent and Christmas with their customary busyness of preparation and celebration invite us to make the service on Christmas Eve a welcome moment of quiet, wonder, and receiving. We hear again the story of Jesus’ birth, our savior born as hope for peace, justice, and righteousness for all the people of the earth. This great event is God’s doing. Mary and Joseph head to Bethlehem because the Roman government demands it and they comply. The shepherds are in the field doing their job. In the midst of this ordinary human living God, full of zealous love for humanity, comes to us.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Officiant 1 All people are welcome here to hear again or to hear anew the story of Jesus’ birth.

If you know what it is to walk in darkness,

Come, see a great light.

If you are waiting in hope to see God,

Come, see the glory of our Savior Jesus Christ.

If you are simply living your life, doing what is yours,

Come, see that God brings you good news.

As we gather together—whatever brings you to this place, come and see.

Rejoice before God in the light and glory of this coming night.

Come, exult that God’s grace has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

A Prayer of Yearning

Officiant 1 Loving God, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of your son Jesus Christ, we yearn for light, joy, and peace in the world and in our own lives. We yearn to see you and your love for all people in the joy of the coming holy night. We know that these yearnings may get lost as we prepare and celebrate and wish for holiday happiness. May we have faith like Mary and Joseph who accepted the demands of government and of their child ready to be born. May we have faith like the shepherds who accepted God’s unexpected message and went to see God’s gift with their own eyes. May we have faith like your people throughout the history of the Church who long to see the glory of Jesus manifest to all people. Amen.

Officiant 2 People beloved of God, Jesus Christ has been born for us. He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. The baby lying in a manger is the promise of God’s peace and favor, given to all. Amen.

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant 1 Lord, open our lips.

Officiant 2 And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Officiant 1 Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

Officiant 2 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

Officiant 1 Alleluia. To us a child is born:

Officiant 2 Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

Jubilate *Psalm 100* *Said responsively breaking at the half verse*

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; *
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.
Know this: The Lord himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving; go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.
For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

Officiant 1 Alleluia. To us a child is born:

Officiant 2 Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

Psalm 96 *Said responsively breaking at the half verse*

Sing to the Lord a new song; *
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.
Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; *
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations *
and his wonders among all peoples.
For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *
he is more to be feared than all gods.
As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.
Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; *
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.
Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; *
let the whole earth tremble before him.

Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King! *
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea
thunder and all that is in it; *

let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord
when he comes, *

when he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness *

and the peoples with his truth.

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

The Lessons

Officiant 1 **A Reading from the letter to Titus** *Titus 2:11-14*

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,
training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the
present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and
godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of
the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who
gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and
purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good
deeds.

Officiant 1 The Word of the Lord

Officiant 2 Thanks be to God

Canticle **A Song of Christ's Humility** *Philippians 2:6-11*
Said responsively breaking at the half verse

Though in the form of God, *

Christ Jesus did not cling to equality with God,

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

and was born in human likeness.

Being found in human form, he humbled himself *

and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

Therefore, God has highly exalted him *

and given him the name above every name,

That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall 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.

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

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Officiant 2 **A Reading from the Gospel according to Luke**
Luke 2:1-20

In those days a decree went out from Emperor 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 for them in the inn.

In that 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 Savior, 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
favors!"

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. But 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, as it had been told them.

Officiant 2 The Word of the Lord

Officiant 1 Thanks be to God

The Apostles' Creed

Officiant 1

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.

The Prayers

Officiant 2 The Lord be with you.

Officiant 1 And also with you.

Officiant 2 Let us pray.

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

Suffrages (from A New Zealand Prayer Book)

V. Make your ways known upon earth, O God,

R. **your saving power among all peoples.**

V. Renew your Church in holiness,

R. **and help us to serve you with joy.**

V. Guide the leaders of this and every nation,

R. **that justice may prevail throughout the world.**

V. Let not the needy, O God, be forgotten,

R. **nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

V. Make us instruments of your peace,

R. **and let your glory be over all the earth.**

Officiant 1 Son of God,
light that shines in the dark,
child of joy and peace,
help us to come to you
and be born anew this holy night.
Hear this prayer for your love's sake. Amen.

The Collect of the Day, A New Zealand Prayer Book

Officiant 2 Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Collect for Guidance

Officiant 1 O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayer for Mission

The Peace and Greetings

Officiant 2 The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

Officiant 1 **And also with you**

The worshippers exchange the Peace and greet one another.

One of the Officiants prays Thanksgivings and Intercessions shared in Chat.

Closing Prayers

Officiant 2 Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to your service,
and by walking before you in holiness and righteousness all our
days; through Jesus Christ our Lord,
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory throughout all ages. *Amen.*

The General Thanksgiving

Officiant 1 Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time
with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and
you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two
or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst
of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be
best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and
in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Officiant 1 God's word promises us light, joy, and peace through
the coming of Jesus Christ. As we celebrate Jesus' birth, may we
rejoice that it is God's passion and purpose to give us the
Kingdom. The zeal of the Lord of hosts establishes God's
Kingdom;

Officiant 2 May we live as God's own people, zealous for good
deeds in Jesus Christ.