

Ante Communion Service: December 26, 2021, Christmas 1C

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Hymn: Joy to the World

*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.*

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

*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.*

*He rules the world with truth and 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. Amen, Amen*

Celebrant Blessed be the Holy Trinity, one God, who creates, redeems, and sustains us and all creation. **Amen.**

Celebrant Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A moment of silence for self-reflection

Celebrant Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

People **Gracious God, have mercy on us.**

**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 have not loved all Creation with the love of the Creator.**

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.

Celebrant Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Celebrant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People **And also with you.**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For our holy house, and for all who offer their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Let us pray together: **Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 147:13-21

Laudate Dominum

13 Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; *
praise your God, O Zion;
14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *
he has blessed your children within you.
15 He has established peace on your borders; *
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
16 He sends out his command to the earth, *
and his word runs very swiftly.
17 He gives snow like wool; *
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
who can stand against his cold?
19 He sends forth his word and melts them; *
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
20 He declares his word to Jacob, *
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
21 He has not done so to any other nation; *
to them he has not revealed his judgments. Hallelujah!
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit!
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.

Second Reading

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed.
Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith.
But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.
But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.

And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

John 1:1-18

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

Hymn

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

*I heard the bells on Christmas day, their old familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet the words repeat, of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along th'unbroken song, of peace on earth, good will to men.*

*And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,
"For hate is strong, and mocks the song, of peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men."*

*Till, ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from night to day
A voice, a chime, a chant sublime, Of peace on earth, good will to men.*

Apostles' Creed

Said by all.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, 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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will 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 of the People

Celebrant With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church,
those in need, and all of God's creation. In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. *Silence*

For this community, the nation, and the world; **For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.**

For the peace and unity of the world; **That a spirit of respect may grow among nations and peoples.**

For the just and proper use of your creation; **For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.**

For all bishops and other ministers; **For all who serve God in his Church.**

For all who love and trust in God, that divisions may cease;
And that all may be one, as you and the Father are one.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For wisdom in this time of pandemic; **That our actions may protect the health of ourselves and others.**

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence. The People may add their own petitions.

Hear us, Lord; **For your mercy is great.**

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. *Silence.*

We will exalt you, O God our King; **And praise your Name for ever and ever.**

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Silence. Lord, let your loving kindness be upon them. **May they rest in your peace eternally.**

Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, 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, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

We pray together for Christ's presence:

**My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the bread and wine.
I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my heart. I embrace you
and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.**

Celebrant: While we long to receive the sacrament of Christ's Body,

People: **We become the sacrament of Christ's Body.**

Celebrant: Let your lives be manna to feed our hunger for communion.

People: **The love we share becomes bread for the world.**

Blessing May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn Angels We Have Heard On High

*Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.*

Refrain:

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.*

*Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be, which inspire your heav'nly song? [Refrain]*

*Come to Bethlehem and see, him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the newborn King. [Refrain]*

Dismissal Go in peace and hope and joy to love and serve God's creation. Alleluia. Alleluia.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.

The Lord Bless You and Keep You [Lutkin]

*The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord lift his countenance upon you and give you peace.
The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. Amen....*