

Ante Communion Service: January 2, 2022 Epiphany

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Hymn:

Angels from the Realms of Glory

Acapeldridge

*1 Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth:*

Refrain: Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn king.

*2 Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing; yonder shines the infant light: [Refrain]*

*3 Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: [Refrain]*

*4 Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear. [Refrain, twice]*

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: **O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;
but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72:1-7,10-14

Deus, iudicium

1 Give the King your justice, O God, *
and your righteousness to the King's Son;
2 That he may rule your people righteously *
and the poor with justice;
3 That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people, *
and the little hills bring righteousness.
4 He shall defend the needy among the people; *
he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.
5 He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure, *
from one generation to another.
6 He shall come down like rain upon the mown field, *
like showers that water the earth.
7 In his time shall the righteous flourish; *
there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.
10 The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute, *
and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.
11 All kings shall bow down before him, *
and all the nations do him service.
12 For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress, *
and the oppressed who has no helper.
13 He shall have pity on the lowly and poor; *
he shall preserve the lives of the needy.
14 He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence, *
and dear shall their blood be in his sight.
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**Ephesians 3:1-12**

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel**Matthew 2:1-12**

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

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

`And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon

1 *The first Noel the angel did say, was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.*

Refrain: Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

2 *They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night. [Refrain]*

3 *And by the light of that same star, the Wise Men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]*

4 *Then let us all with one accord, sing praises to our heavenly Lord
Who hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with his blood mankind hath bought. [Refrain]*

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 Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light to the world;
and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be in you, and among you,
and remain with you always. Amen.

Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High

Acapeldridge

*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....*