

Morning Prayer

The First Sunday of Christmastide, Year B

December 31, 2023

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=eig4MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3I2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: 782611

Prelude

Opening Sentence

The Presider says

Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. *Luke 2:10, 11*

Opening Carol

Hymnal 109

The first Nowell

The musical score is written for two voices (1 and 2) and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system has two staves: a vocal staff and a piano staff. The second system also has two staves: a vocal staff and a piano staff. The lyrics are as follows:

1 The first No - well the an - gel did say
2 They look - ed up and saw a star

1 was to cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay;
2 shin - ing in the east be - yond them far,

1 in fields as they lay, keep - ing their sheep,
 2 and to the earth it gave great light,

1 on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.
 2 and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.

Refrain

No - well, No - well, No - well, No - well,

born is the King of Is - ra - el.

The Invitatory and Psalter

Presider Lord, open our lips.

People And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

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. Alleluia.

Alleluia. To us a child is born:
O come, let us adore him. Alleluia.

Invitatory Carol

Hymnal 96

Angels we have heard on high

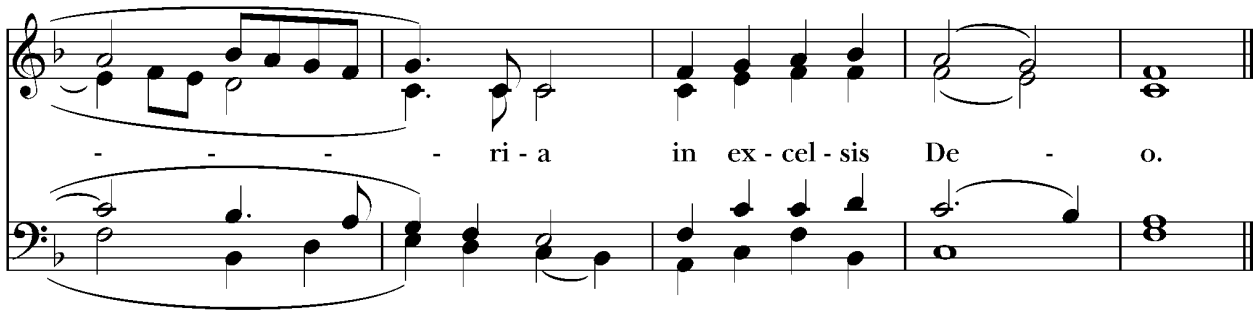
1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why these songs of hap - py cheer?

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.
What great bright - ness did you see? What glad tid - ings did you hear?

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



Psalm 147

¹Hallelujah!

How good it is to sing praises to our God! *
how pleasant it is to honor him with praise!

²**The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; ***
he gathers the exiles of Israel.

³He heals the brokenhearted *
and binds up their wounds.

⁴**He counts the number of the stars ***
and calls them all by their names.

⁵Great is our LORD and mighty in power; *
there is no limit to his wisdom.

⁶**The LORD lifts up the lowly, ***
but casts the wicked to the ground.

⁷Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; *
make music to our God upon the harp.

⁸**He covers the heavens with clouds ***
and prepares rain for the earth;

⁹He makes grass to grow upon the mountains *
and green plants to serve mankind.

¹⁰**He provides food for flocks and herds ***
and for the young ravens when they cry.

¹¹He is not impressed by the might of a horse; *
he has no pleasure in the strength of a man;

¹²**But the LORD has pleasure in those who fear him, ***
in those who await his gracious favor.

¹³Worship 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.

¹⁵He 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.

¹⁷He 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 will be for ever. Amen.**

Presider Alleluia. To us a child is born:

People **O come, let us adore him. Alleluia.**

The Lessons

First Reading

Isaiah 61:10--62:3

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

10 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.

11 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.

62:1 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.

2 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.

3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Canticle 16: The Song of Zechariah

Benedictus Dominus Deus

Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel, *
you have come to your people and set them free.

**You have raised up for us a mighty Savior, *
born of the house of your servant David.**

Through your holy prophets you promised of old
to save us from our enemies, *

from the hands of all who hate us,
**To show mercy to our forebears, *
and to remember your holy covenant.**

This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**Free to worship you without fear, *
holy and righteous before you,
all the days of our life.**

And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,

**To give God's people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.**

In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,

**To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.**

**Glory 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.**

Second Reading

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

A Reading from Paul's letter to the Church in Galatia.

²³Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

^{4:4}But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Carol

Hymnal 79

O little town of Bethlehem

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
5 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

1 A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
5 cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

1 yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
5 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

1 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
5 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

Third Reading

John 1:1-18

A Reading from John.

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 came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵(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.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.



Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

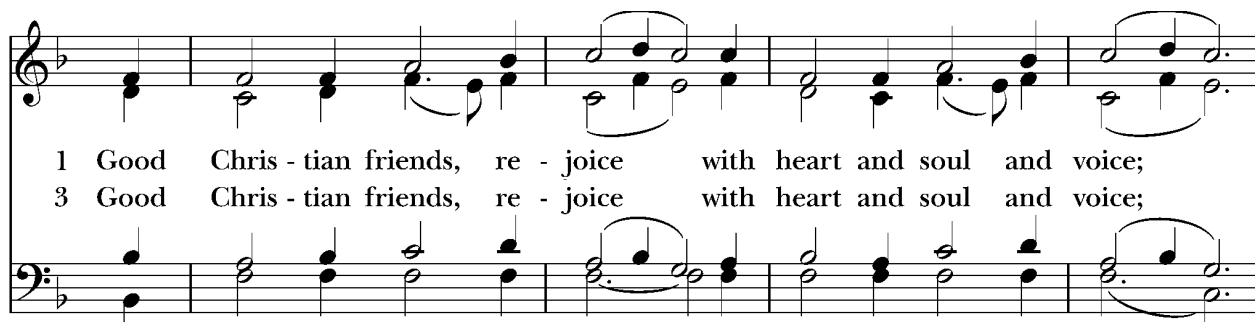
Homily

Marion VanLoo

Musical Response

Hymnal 107

Good Christian friends, rejoice!



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

The Prayers

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider 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.**

V. Help us, O God our Savior;

R. Deliver us and forgive us our sins.

V. Look upon your congregation;

R. Give to your people the blessing of peace.

V. Declare your glory among the nations;

R. And your wonders among all peoples.

V. Do not let the oppressed be shamed and turned away;

R. Never forget the lives of your poor.

V. Continue your loving-kindness to those who know you;

R. And your favor to those who are true of heart.

V. Satisfy us by your loving-kindness in the morning;

R. So shall we rejoice and be glad all the days of our life.

Collect of the Day

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.**

A Collect for Sundays

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Collect for Church Musicians and Artists

O God, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be ever present with your servants who seek through art and music to perfect the praises offered by your people on earth; and grant to them even now glimpses of your beauty, and make them worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Intercessions and thanksgivings

Presider Emmanuel, God-with-us, we are overwhelmed with your presence, humble yet divine. We make our prayer to you with hearts graced with the joy of your Nativity.

Intercessor Our hearts are filled with longing for the day when all people will see your glory, when none of your people will know hunger, loneliness, or fear; when each of us will know the peace of your presence. **Pray for all whom God has made.**

Silence is kept.

Our hope is for peace for all nations, and leaders whose desire is for justice and equality. **Pray for the peace of the world.**

Silence is kept.

Our yearning is for wholeness for those who ache, whose lives are shattered, whose hope is lost. We pray for [_____ and any others you wish to name now]. **Pray for those who suffer and for the end of their suffering.**

Silence is kept.

Our hope is for those who have died and entered that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal. We remember before you [_____ and any others you wish to name now]. **Pray for those who have died.**

Silence is kept.

Our deepest prayer is that we may learn and grow in your love, and bear witness to the world that God is with us. **Pray that the One who has given us these desires, give us also the grace and power to work toward their fulfillment.**

Silence is kept.

Presider Rejoicing in the company of Mary the God-bearer, and of all the witnesses of the incarnation, we offer these prayers and all our life to you, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A General Thanksgiving

The Presider says

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Accept our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God now and forever. **Amen**

Concluding Carol
Go tell it on the mountain

Hymnal 99

Refrain

Go tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills and
ev - ery - where; go tell it on the moun - tain, that
Je - sus Christ is born! 1 While shep - herds kept their
2 The shep - herds feared and
watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night, be -
trem - bled when lo! a - bove the earth rang
Repeat Refrain
hold, through - out the hea - vens there shone a ho - ly light.
out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sa - vior's birth.

Blessing and Dismissal

A priest blesses the people, saying

May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace.

And may the blessing of God Almighty, + the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Presider Let us go forth in the love of the Father who created us, rejoicing in the Son who was born on earth for us, and in the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

People **Thanks be to God!**

Postlude

+++++

This week in prayer

Please remember these persons and congregations in your prayers this week:

Our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises (TEC); Elizabeth, Donald and Craig (ELCA)
and for all priests, deacons, Ministry Teams, and those in formation

Anglican Cycle of Prayer:

December 31 Eglise Anglicane du Rwanda

Diocese of Michigan Cycle of Prayer:

December 31 St Andrew’s, Waterford; Jesus the Pilgrim, Barahona, DR

St Barnabas Cycle of Prayer: Rick, Julie, Grayson, Jim G, Mary G

and our continuing prayers for: Bob, Jim M, Mardi, Pat, Robert, Selenah

+++++

Faith in Action provides leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They are in need of our continuing help. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. If you write a check, please make it to *Faith In Action*. The **next Food Drive at the church is January 21**. Please contribute as generously as you can.

+++++

Upcoming Commemorations

Dec. 31 Frances Joseph Gaudet, Educator and Social Reformer, 1934; and, Samuel Ajayi Crowther: Bishop in the Niger Territories, 1891

- Jan. 01 The Holy Name of our Lord Jesus Christ
- 02 Vedanayagam Samuel Azariah: First Indian Anglican Bishop, Dornakal, 1945
- 03 William Passavant: Prophetic Witness, 1894
- 04 Elizabeth Ann Seton, Vowed Religious and Educator, 1821
- 05 Sarah, Theodora, and Syncletica of Egypt, Desert Mothers, 4th c.
- 06 The Epiphany of our Lord Jesus Christ

+++++



Christmas 1B December 31, 2023

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

The writings of the prophet Isaiah are some of the most prominent as we walk through the teachings of Advent and Christmas, and today’s lectionary cycle begins with an outburst of hope and salvation – not a

bad beginning for our worship on this first day of the Christmas season.

In these words, we hear the kind of hope that many of us may be feeling at this time, looking back on our holiday celebrations and looking forward to the promise of the New Year ahead. But read carefully; the hope in our text is the hope that comes with second chances, the hope that is built on the ashes of failure. It is a second marriage in v. 10; it is a return to fertility from fallowness that fills the garden of v. 11; it is, in fact, the return from exile to the land of Israel. It is the hope born of learning our lessons, licking our wounds and pulling together our inner strength to start again. And yet, it is a song of praise and thanksgiving that invites us all to live into this time, this season, and every day of our lives, fully – full of hope and possibility. Let your praises ring; let your hope fill the air. That is the message of this reading for today.

- Take a minute, and read this passage again along with the “Song of the Vineyard” in Isaiah 5. Compare the condemnation of that passage with the thanksgiving and praise of today’s reading. How far has Israel come from the moment of exile? What lessons are there for us in this? How can we move from our lowest point to reclaim that feeling of hope and praise and thanksgiving that can help us move on and continue our work in this world? Who is the speaker in verses 62:1-3? Is it God? Or is it the unknown writer? Is it meant to be you or me? When have you stepped forward to praise the Lord in a time when things around you did not look necessarily praiseworthy? What does the ability to praise from a place of faith rather than from a place of proof say about the strength of your faith?

Psalm 147

Our psalm for today is part of what is often called the “Hallelujah collection,” a five-psalm set that brings to a close the Psalter and therefore continues the praise and thanksgiving of our reading from Isaiah. In particular, the psalm continues praise and thanks for the blessings granted to Jerusalem. It offers praise for the God who provides, praise for the God who renews and uses nature imagery to weave this hymn of praise. But again, it is a hymn of praise built on the ashes of failure, because like our passage from Isaiah, this song is a song at the end of exile. And we know that the historical truth was that the Jerusalem to which the Israelites returned was smaller, more poor and in many ways a pile of rubble. At the end of the period of exile, the Israelites had nothing; they needed the God that made the grass grow and the water flow. And

they needed the God that would strengthen their gates and grant peace where there had been none. And yet, in that need, they were still able to sing praises and remember the majesty of that God, the God that heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.

- In this season of Christmas, many of us have given and received gifts. And despite the piles of things and gifts that surround us, and the general bounty of the culture in which we live, maybe we too, are empty-handed like the Israelites and in need of the God who provides. The question of this psalm is, can we look past our material surroundings and see what is important? Can we stand empty-handed before God despite our material comforts and sing praises of thanksgiving for all God does for this world? Read carefully v. 7-11 and v. 15-20. There are two types of giving here. What are they? Are there any conditions on that giving? Is there any particular danger in v. 20?
- And finally, this psalm is written completely from the perspective of the receiver, not the giver. What is it like to be the receiver? What is like to need the gift, as did the people of Jerusalem? How does the knowledge that we need the gifts God has to offer change our relationship with our Maker?

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

Our psalm of praise and thanksgiving ends with a statement of Israel's chosen position among all nations, that they are chosen because they alone adhere to God's ordinances or Torah. And our passage from Galatians begins by connecting our obedience to God's laws and faith in the redemptive power of Christ. Here we stand, drained by the Advent journey to Christmas, and Paul offers us a vision of the Pentecost ahead: yes, God sent the child born of woman to lead us from simple obedience to the Law, and now, because we, as children of God, have accepted that greatest gift of all, we receive the blessing of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

- Paul says that the Holy Spirit enters our hearts crying "Abba, Father!" Why? What does this tell us about our relationship with God and with Jesus? In the Greek text, at the beginning of v. 7, the pronoun "you" changes from the plural form used early in the passage to a singular form: the text suddenly becomes less universal and more personal. What does this mean for Paul's message to us?

John 1:1-18

Our gospel passage for the day contains words that are simultaneously among the most comfortable and the most difficult in all the gospel texts. We hear the story told from the creation of the world through the resurrection of Jesus as the Christ. We are offered the Word, who was one with God, who became flesh and walked among us, but we do not know Him. And we hear the echo of Paul's letter to the Galatians in v. 17: "The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." And then, if we believe, the light will dawn and we too will see God through his Son, Jesus Christ.

- Much of this passage is devoted to the unfolding identity of Jesus in the world. What metaphors are used to describe him? What do those metaphors mean to us today?
- Read through the passage and look at all the references to "light." And then, think about the first creation story, in which God creates the world with the words "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). What relationship is there between these two passages?
- In v. 10, we are told that Jesus was here on earth, but the people did not know him: "He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him." What are the ways every day (and in particular during this crazy holiday season) that we miss the presence of Christ in our world and our lives?

Our Mission:

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ,
and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world,
guided by the values of Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



St Barnabas Episcopal Church

20500 W Old US-12
Chelsea MI 48118
stbarnabaschelsea.org