

*The beginning of the prelude is a call to silent,
personal preparation for the worship of God.*

Gathering around the Word

Prelude

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Johannes Brahms

Introit

“Alleluia, to Us a Child Is Born” Iain Quinn

*Alleluia, to us a child is born:
come, let us adore him. Alleluia.
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.*

*Doxology (*sung*)

Praise God whose dawn transfigures night,
Whose Daystar shines for us on high,
Whose Spirit brings into our sight
the hope which to our world draws nigh. Amen.

*Call to Worship

One: *Along with the shepherds, the magi, and angels,
we too come to Bethlehem.*

Many: We are filled with love
because God has taken on our humanity.

One: *We are filled with hope
because God has offered us life and light.*

Many: We are filled with faith because God has made holy
all that is meek and lowly and humble.

All: Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth, peace and goodwill to all.

*Carol 134 “Joy to the World”

Prayer for the Season of Christmas (*unison*)

God most high, your only Son
embraced the weakness of flesh
to give us power to become your children.
Your eternal Word chose a dwelling among us,
that we might live in your presence.
Grant us a spirit of wisdom and wonder
to know how rich is the glory you made our own
and how great the hope to which we are called
in Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh. Amen.

Concerns of the Church

Listening for the Word

Prayer for Illumination

Psalter (*responsively*)

Psalm 148 Old Testament, page 550

Anthem

“A Child Is Born in Bethlehem” Samuel Scheidt
*A child is born in Bethlehem, alleluia, and joy is in Jerusalem, alleluia.
Rejoice, sing high, sing low, alleluia, benedicamus Domino, alleluia. To thee,
O Lord, be glory paid, alleluia; thou Son of Mary, mother maid, alleluia.
To Holy Trinity give praise, alleluia, with Deo gracias always, alleluia.*

First Lesson

Isaiah 61:10—62:3 Old Testament, page 650

Leader: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Carol 132 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”

Second Lesson

Luke 2:22–40 New Testament, page 55

Minister: *The Word of the Lord.*

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Carol 115 “Away in a Manger”

Sermon

Be Amazed Victoria G. Curtiss

Responding to the Word

*Carol 110 “Love Has Come”

*Affirmation of Faith (*unison*). from the Reformed Church in America

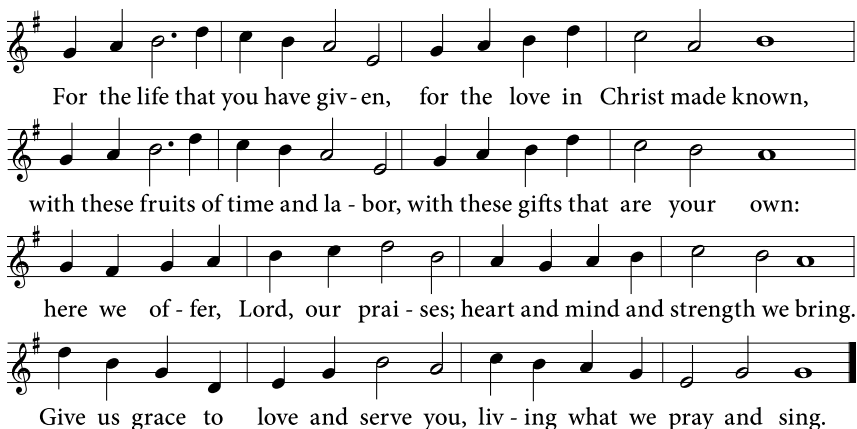
Our only hope is Jesus Christ.
After we refused to live in the image of God,
he was born of the virgin Mary,
sharing our genes and our instincts,
entering our culture,
speaking our language,
fulfilling the will of our God.
Being united to Christ’s humanity
we know ourselves when we rest in him.
Jesus Christ is the hope of God’s world.
In his death,
the justice of God is established,
forgiveness of sin is proclaimed.
On the day of resurrection,
the tomb was empty,
his disciples saw him,
death was defeated, new life had come.
God’s purpose for the world was sealed.

Offering

Offertory Voluntary

What Child Is This? Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Offertory Response



For the life that you have giv - en, for the love in Christ made known,
with these fruits of time and la - bor, with these gifts that are your own:
here we of - fer, Lord, our prai - ses; heart and mind and strength we bring.
Give us grace to love and serve you, liv - ing what we pray and sing.

Sealing the Word

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation

Great Thanksgiving

Minister: *The Lord be with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: *Lift up your hearts.*

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Minister: *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Prayer

Minister: *It is truly right and our greatest joy . . .*

. . . who forever sing to the glory of your name:

Ho- ly, ho- ly, ho- ly Lord, God of po- wer and might,
hea- ven and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho-san-na in the high-est. Bles-sed is the
One who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho- san- na in the high- est.

The Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

Our Father who art in heaven,

hallowed by 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 debts,

as we forgive our debtors;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom

and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The Communion

Communion Anthem

“Infant Holy, Infant Lowly” Polish carol
arr. David Willcocks

*Infant holy, infant lowly,
for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing,
nowells ringing, tidings bringing,
Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Flocks were sleeping,
shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new;
saw the glory, heard the story,
tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow;
praises voicing, greet the morrow;
Christ the babe was born for you!*

*Closing Prayer

One: *God, you have given us your child,
and his name is called:*
Many: **Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**
One: *Once we were no people.
Now you have made us your people.*
Many: **Once we walked in darkness.
Now we have seen a great light.**
All: **Grant that we may live
as people of your light and love. Amen.**

*Carol 136. “Go, Tell It on the Mountain”

Bearing the Word into the World

*Benediction and Response

Postlude

Angels We Have Heard on High. French carol
arr. Christopher Uehlein

Worship Leaders

Matt Helms, Victoria G. Curtiss

The Music Today

The Chancel Choir

John W. W. Sherer, Organist and Director of Music

Worship Notes

THIS MORNING, COMMUNION IS SERVED BY INTINCTION. The congregation comes forward by the center aisle to receive the bread, which they then dip into the chalice of grape juice. (Gluten-free bread is available in a small tumbler in each basket of bread.) Worshipers return to their pews by the side aisles.

The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of eating and drinking in communion with the crucified and risen Lord. In this act, we remember that during his earthly ministry, Jesus shared meals with his followers and sat at dinner tables as a sign of acceptance of the sinner and the outcast.

The invitation to the Lord's Supper is not just for Presbyterians or "members of the church." All who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may receive the bread and grape juice (in place of wine) in order to be assured of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

THE COVER IMAGE depicts the flowers carved into panels on the sides of the chandeliers in the Sanctuary.

SOURCES AND CREDITS: Hymn tune names—as well as composers of the music and authors of the text—are listed in the hymnal with each hymn. The words to "For the Life that You Have Given" are by Carl P. Daw Jr. © 1987; music is by Morgan Simmons © 1990, 1992 by Hope Publishing Co. The music for "Holy, Holy, Holy" is by John Sherer © 1997.

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