

**Prelude** I wonder as I wander

John Barr

**A Visit to the Christmas Crib** Away in a manger

Hymnal # 101

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and the Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

*As the statue of Joseph is placed in the crèche*

O Joseph, heavenly hosts thy worthiness proclaim, and Christendom conspires to celebrate thy fame, thou who in purest bonds went to the virgin bound; how glorious is thy name renowned. **Amen.**

*As the statue of Mary is placed*

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. **Amen.**

*As the baby Jesus figure is placed*

O Divine Redeemer Jesus Christ, humble before thy crib, I believe that thou art the God of infinite majesty, even though I see thee here as a helpless babe. Humbly I adore and thank thee for having so humbled thyself for my salvation as to will to be born in a stable. I thank thee for all thou didst wish to suffer for me in Bethlehem, for thy poverty and humility, for thy nakedness, tears, cold and sufferings. **Amen.**

Sweet Babe of Bethlehem, I praise thee, I bless thee, I thank thee. I love thee with all my heart. I desire to worship thee, and to be like thee in all Thy holy and blessed ways. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. **Amen.**

**Processional** O Come all ye Faithful

Hymnal # 83

### **The Word of God**

#### **Opening Sentences**

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

**And we beheld His glory.**

#### **A Collect for Purity** *in unison*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you 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 Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### **Gloria in Excelsis** (*Mathias* setting) **Hymnal S-280**

#### **A Collect for Christmas**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

#### **The Lighting of the Christ Candle**

God of love, Father of all, the darkness that covered the earth has given way to the bright dawn of your Word made flesh. Make us a people of this light. Make us faithful to your Word that we may bring your life to the waiting world. Grant this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **First Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm 96 Cantate Domino**

- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song; \*  
sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD and bless his Name; \*  
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations \*  
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; \*  
he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; \*  
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.
- 6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! \*  
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples; \*  
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name; \*  
bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; \*  
let the whole earth tremble before him
- 10 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."
- 11 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.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the LORD  
when he comes,  
\*when he comes to judge the earth.
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness \*  
and the peoples with his truth.

### **The Epistle: 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.

**The Word of the Lord.** Thanks be to God.

### **The Gradual**

### **The Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20**

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. Luke  
**...Glory to you Lord Christ.**

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 behold—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 Saviour, 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 favours!' 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.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Sermon:** The Rev. Dr. Susan Claytor

### **The Nicene Creed**

Page 358 in the *Book of Common Prayer*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. **Amen.**

### **The Prayers of the People**

*from Intercessions for a Christian People*

Brothers and sisters, on this most holy night of our Lord's birth, that we may find peace, joy, and contentment in this holy season, let us pray for ourselves and all those in need of our prayers, saying: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the church of Christ, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and may care for the needs of God's people in all corners of the world, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For peace in our troubled world, that the darkness of war and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all those in need of our prayers: the homeless, the unemployed; the hungry; those who are hospitalized, those who are imprisoned in body or soul; and all those for whom this season is not one of joy but of trial and sadness, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the sick, that their illnesses may be turned into health and their sorrow into rejoicing, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who labor this night on behalf of others: doctors and nurses, police officers and firefighters, gas station attendants, bus and taxi drivers, and all those whose work prevents them from sharing this evening with those they love, we pray to you, O Lord.

**Lord, hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving we remember the lives of those who have gone before us in the faith, that we, like them, may remain faithful to the end and live forever in the light of your eternal glory, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, mercifully hear the prayers of the people you have chosen as your own. Give us zeal in our ministries and joy in our work, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

The peace of Christ be always with you. **And also with you.**

**Offertory music** Angels' Carol

**John Rutter**

**Doxology** *God Rest ye Merry Gentlemen*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow on every hill and coast, praise God above all angels who comprise the heavenly host, praise to the Father and the Son and to the Holy Ghost, O tidings of comfort and joy...

**The Great Thanksgiving, Eucharistic Prayer A**

page 361 in the *Book of Common Prayer*

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.  
**People** **And also with you.**  
*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.  
**People** **We lift them to the Lord.**  
*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**People** **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

**Sanctus** (*Proulx* setting) Hymnal S-125

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours,

Almighty Father, now and for ever. **Amen.**

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And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say *in unison*

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.

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

**Fraction Anthem** *in unison* tune: Greensleeves

O Lamb of God, O holy child who takes the sins of the world away, have mercy on us, Lamb of God, the babe, the Son, of Mary. This, this is Christ's own blood and body given the gift from heaven; take, eat for we are one, in Christ, the Son, of Mary.

#### **Invitation to Communion**

*The music during communion is provided by our organist Donna Burnside or the choir could sing another hymn here*

*Spiritual communion prayer*

**Post Communion Prayer** *in unison* (kneeling as you are able)

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: in this night you have made known to us again the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ through the gift of the Sacrament of His body and Blood, confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him so the light of faith may illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. Amen.  
*from the Irish Anglican Church*

**Gospel Reading: John 1:1-14** (*stand as you are able*)

The 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.

The Gospel of the Lord...**Praise to you, Lord Christ**

**Hymn "Silent Night"** *kneeling if able*

Hymnal 111

Silent night, holy night	all is calm, all is bright
round yon Virgin, mother and child	Holy infant, so tender and mild
sleep in heavenly peace,	sleep in heavenly peace
Silent night, holy night,	shepherds quake at the sight
glories stream from heaven above	heavenly hosts sing alleluia
Christ the Savior is born	Christ the savior is born
Silent night, holy night	Son of God, loves pure light
radiant beams from they holy face	with the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus, Lord at thy birth	Jesus, Lord at thy birth

**Benediction**

**Recessional** Hark the herald angels

Hymnal 87

**Dismissal** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

*The gift of our poinsettias were given to the glory of God and....*

*In memory of Malcolm "Mac" and Marion Johnson MacAulay and Robert "Bob" and Thelma Hildebrand Brown by their sons Brian and Matthew*

*In memory of Dr. John & Margaret Vargo; Dr. Charlie and Ann Vargo*

*Rogers; Lenox Profitt; Jess and Nadine Foster, Martha Rucker (entered heaven on 3/25/22);*

*Dr. Paul and Mabs Loflin; Dr. Richard and Betty Starr; Dr. Ed and Gene Neil by Dr. James and Lori Vargo*

*In thanksgiving for St. Stephen's Episcopal Church; Mother Susan and Parr Claytor; Dr. Chris and Chelsea Vargo Zsoldos; Christian and Kyleigh Vargo; Roberta Profitt by Dr. James and Lori Vargo*

*In memory of John and Harriet Willis by Douglas Willis*

*In thanksgiving and gratitude for the life and works of Ryan Pilkington by Debbie Ventura*

*In memory of Charlie, Richard, Henry and Claire Klein by Nancy Meador*

*In thanksgiving for Katherine and grandchildren by Nancy Meador*

*Our wreaths were given by John and Pat Lostetter*