

The Episcopal Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast

# An Order for Worship

The First Sunday After Christmas

December 27, 2020

*Welcome and opening words of introduction about the liturgy.*



Celebrant: Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**People** And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

*Praying 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**

## SONG OF PRAISE ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

1 Angels we have heard on high  
Singing sweetly through the night,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their brave delight.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

2 Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why these songs of happy cheer?  
What great brightness did you see?  
What glad tidings did you hear? [Refrain]

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

4 See him in a manger laid  
whom the angels praise above;  
Mary, Joseph, lend you aid,  
while we raise our hearts in love. [Refrain]

## The Collect for the First Sunday after Christmas

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.**

## The First Lesson: 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 Second Lesson    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 Holy Gospel    John 1:1-18**

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 HOMILY**

**The Right Reverend Russell Kendrick**

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED** *Officiant and People together, all standing*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth;  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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.

## The LORD'S PRAYER

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

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Litanist: In Christ, God's Word has become flesh dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. Let us pray to the true light which enlightens the world, that from the fullness of God all creation may receive grace upon grace, saying: What has come into being in Christ was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Litanist: Gracious God, clothe your Church with the garments of salvation and cover her with robes of righteousness, that we may be your witnesses to testify to the light.

What has come into being in Christ was life,

**People: and the life was the light of all people.**

Inspire the leaders of our nation and all in authority in the ways of grace and truth, that we may no longer be a people enslaved under the law but may know ourselves to be heirs, adopted as God's children.

What has come into being in Christ was life,

**People: and the life was the light of all people.**

Be our light in the darkness for all the world, that the fullness of your heart may be made known for the healing of the earth. What has come into being in Christ was life,

**People: and the life was the light of all people.**

Live among us, O Word made flesh, and reconcile this community to your light.

What has come into being in Christ was life,

**People: and the life was the light of all people.**

May your people be a crown of beauty and a royal diadem in your hand, as we pray in faith for those who suffer from any grief or trouble that we now name. Hear our gratitude for your glory manifest among us, especially for the creative and caring clergy and lay leadership in our congregations during this year. Receive those who have died as heirs of eternal life, especially those whom we name.

What has come into being in Christ was life,

**People: and the life was the light of all people.**

Litanist: Loving and gracious Creator, from the beginning you have brightened our darkness with the light of your life: Let your vindication shine out like the dawn, and your salvation like a burning torch, that your Word made flesh may bring grace upon grace to all the earth, in the power of your Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## SONG IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR

1 It came upon the midnight clear,  
that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth  
to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
from heaven's all-gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
to hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come  
with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still their heavenly music floats  
o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains,  
they bend on hovering wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel sounds  
the blessed angels sing.

3 And ye, beneath life's crushing load,  
whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way  
with painful steps and slow,  
look now! for glad and golden hours  
come swiftly on the wing.  
O rest beside the weary road,  
and hear the angels sing!

4 For lo! the days are hastening on,  
by prophet seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years  
shall come the time foretold  
when peace shall over all the earth  
its ancient splendors fling,  
and the whole world send back the song  
which now the angels sing.

*During this season of separation and fasting from the reception of communion, let us remember our times gathered together at table, how our hearts were warmed, our souls were nourished, our eyes were opened and our lives were consecrated for love and service in God's world. As the Body of Christ, let us pray together this final collect,*

**Lord of the Feast, we thank you for gathering us as your people. We call to remembrance the many times we have been fed at your table and we lament our distance now. Be present Lord Jesus as you were present with your disciples, be known to us in the breaking of the bread, and may your Holy Spirit sustain us and all your Church until we can gather together again. We ask this for the sake of your love. Amen.**

### **The Christmas Blessing**

May our wondrous God who has adopted us as children and heirs of divine life  
fill you with God's light.

May Christ, the Word become flesh,  
fill you with the life which is the light of all people.

May the Spirit whom God has sent into your hearts  
fill you with grace upon grace.

And the blessing of our glorious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
with you and dwell in you always. **Amen.**

Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia. Alleluia.  
*People* **Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.**

SONG            JOY TO THE WORLD

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven and nature sing,  
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

2 Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns;  
Let all their songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat the sounding joy,  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

3 No more let sin and sorrow 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.

4 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.

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