

Liturgy
The Second Sunday after Christmas
Year A

GATHERING

Lord, open our lips;
And our mouths 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 shall be ages unto ages.
Amen.**

Come, let us worship the LORD,
and consider what wondrous things God has done:
**Alleluia! The Lord is come!
For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given!**
O come, let us adore Him;
let us consider what wondrous things God has done:
**The peoples who dwelt in darkness have seen a great Light!
The glory of the Lord has risen upon us.**
O come, let us bow in worship before the LORD,
and consider what wondrous things God has done:
**Christ, the Word made flesh, unveils to us God's hidden mystery,
that we have become joint heirs of the promise of salvation!**
O come, let us worship the LORD,
for God has done wondrous things!

O Come, All Ye Faithful

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come and behold Him, born the King of angels!

O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him!
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

O come let us adore Him...

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.

O come let us adore Him...

Words: John Francis Wade, c. 1743.
Transl. verses 1-3 from Latin: Frederick Oakley, 1841.
Hymn tune: ADESTE FIDELES. (attribution uncertain)

*LECTIONARY for the second Sunday
after Christmas, Year A:*

*Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18*

*Today is the second Sunday after
Christmas, the second week of the
wonderful, 12-day period of Christ-
mastide. While much of the world has
recently observed and celebrated the
first day of the chronological new
year, and has moved on from the cele-
bration of the birth of Christ, we con-
tinue to ponder the mystery and won-
der of the Word made flesh.*

*A note about the liturgical year—in
most years there are two Sundays af-
ter Christmas, though every so often
(every six years or so), the second
Sunday after Christmas falls on Janu-
ary 6, the Day of Epiphany. This year
(2026), this second Christmas Sunday
is January 4, and so some congrega-
tions may wish to focus on the Epiph-
any lectionary texts, especially the
narrative in Matthew 2 of the coming
of the wise men from the East. This
liturgy uses the texts for Christmas
2A, but the focus works just as well
for an Epiphany-themed service.*

*As in last week's sample liturgy, here
you will see well-loved Christmas car-
ols and songs in various places, some-
times just a verse or two, interspersed
with readings and prayers, as we wor-
ship—sing, tell, pray, and enact God's
story—in this second season of the
Christian year.*

*If you wish to begin the service with a
sung version of Gloria Patri, Ellen's
setting of the "lesser doxology" is
available in the music catalog as a
lead sheet and scored for voice and
piano.*

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/gloria-patri>

*You can hear Gloria Patri in the Audio
Media Studio section of the Music
Room:*

https://clerestorynotes.com/live/content/music_library/gloria-patri-clip

INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

Angels From the Realms of Glory

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.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen His natal star.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Though an Infant now we view Him, He shall fill His Father's throne,
Gather all the nations to Him; every knee shall then bow down.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Public domain. Verse words: James Montgomery, 1816.
Hymn tune: traditional French carol, GLORIA (BARNES).

We are using the more familiar tune and chorus of Angels We Have Heard On High, with the verse lyrics of James Montgomery's anthem. The original refrain of Angels From the Realms of Glory reads, "Come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ the newborn King"—which is also a wonderful text for this Sunday. We sing the final verse of this carol below, to close the service.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**We believe that the Son of God,
the second person of the Trinity,
being truly and eternally God,
of one substance and equal with the Father,
did, when the fullness of time had come,
take upon Himself human nature,
with all its essential properties and common frailties,
yet without sin.**

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
in the womb of the virgin Mary, and of her substance.

*In this way, two whole natures,
the divine and the human, perfect and distinct,
were inseparably joined together
in one person without being changed, mixed, or confused.*

**This person is truly God and truly man,
yet one Christ,
the only mediator between God and man.**

In His human nature, united to the divine nature,
the Lord Jesus was set apart
and anointed with the Holy Spirit beyond measure,
having in Him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

*In Him the Father was pleased to have all fullness dwell,
so that being holy, blameless, and undefiled,
full of grace and truth,
He might be completely equipped
to fulfill the office of a mediator and guarantor.*

**He did not take this office to Himself
but was called to it by His Father,
who put all power and judgment into His hand
and commanded Him to execute it.**

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

When the fullness of time had come,
God sent forth His Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord,
so that He might redeem us,
that we might receive adoption as His children.

*According to His own mercy, He saved us,
and justified us by His grace,
that we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

– from Galatians 4:4-5, Titus 3:5-7

[Silent confessions]

Everlasting and loving God,
You have stooped down to raise and restore fallen humanity.
Yet too often we fail to live as Your redeemed people.

**We confess that we have sinned against You and against others,
in what we have done and what we have left undone.**

Forgive us, we pray.

**Grant that we who have seen Your glory revealed in human nature,
and Your love made perfect in weakness,
may daily be renewed in Your image
and conformed to the pattern of your Son,
Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Blest Are the Pure in Heart

The Lord, who left the heavens our life and peace to bring,
To dwell in lowliness with men, their Pattern and their King.

Still to the lowly soul He doth Himself impart;
And for His cradle and His throne, chooseth the pure in heart.

Lord, we Thy presence seek; may this our blessing be:
Give us a pure and lowly heart, a temple meet for Thee.
Give us a pure and lowly heart, a temple meet for Thee.

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Words: John Keble (1819); *Mitre Hymn Book* (1836).
Music: Ellen Koehler, 2013.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

The word of the Lord, the good news of His salvation:

To all who received Him, who believed in His name,
He gave the right to become children of God.

– John 1:12

**Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ
with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,
just as He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world
to be holy and blameless before Him in love!**

*He destined us for adoption as His children through Jesus Christ,
according to the good pleasure of His will,
to the praise of his glorious grace
that He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.*

In him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses,
according to the riches of His grace that He lavished on us.

– Ephesians 1:3-8

Thanks be to God!

Music for Blest Are the Pure in Heart is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet. This simple hymn, with the newly-composed melody, has four verses. We used verses 2, 3, and 4 here. Including verse 3 here, with the loving encouragement that He chooses the pure in heart as His cradle and His throne, makes it especially fitting for the Christmas season.

Here's a link:

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/blest-are-pure-heart>

Passing of the Peace

TIME OF OFFERING

Words and testimonies of thanksgiving and praise.

God of eternity, we bring these humble offerings,
signs of Your goodness and mercy.
Receive them with our gratitude,
that through us all people may know the riches
of Your love in the Word-made-flesh. **Amen.**

I Wonder As I Wander

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die.
For poor on'ry people, like you and like I,
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,
And the promise of the ages it did then recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
He surely could have it, 'cause He was the King

Appalachian carol. Text and music: John Jacob Miles,
from a folksong fragment collected in 1933 (pub. 1934, *Songs of the Hill-Folk.*)
Setting: Ellen Koehler ©2012.

Fairest Lord Jesus

Fair is the sunshine; fairer still the moonlight,
And all the twinkling starry host.
Jesus shines brighter; Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heav'n can boast.

Beautiful Savior! Lord of the nations!
Son of God and Son of man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2010 Ellen Koehler.
Anonymous German hymn *Münster Gesangbuch*, 1677;
Transl. source unknown, vs 1-3; verse 4, Joseph A. Seiss.
Music *Schleische Volkslieder*, 1842

THE WORD

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalms 147:12-20

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:1-18

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again!

The Lord's Prayer (spoken)

**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 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

Joy Has Dawned

Joy has dawned upon the world, promised from creation:

God's salvation now unfurled, hope for every nation.

Not with fanfares from above, not with scenes of glory;

But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky with the songs of angels;

As the mighty Prince of Life shelters in a stable.

Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in darkness;

Cling now to a mother's breast, vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb, gazing at the glory;

Gifts of men from distant land prophesy the story.

Gold, a King is born today; incense, God is with us;

Myrrh, His death will make a way, by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of heav'n, given as a ransom;

Reconciling God and man, Christ our mighty Champion!

What a Savior, what a Friend, what a glorious mystery:

Once a babe in Bethlehem, now the Lord of history.

SENDING FORTH
The Life of the Body

Angels From the Realms of Glory

All creation, join in praising
God, the Father, Spirit, Son;
Evermore your voices raising
To th'eternal Three in One.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Public domain. Verse words: James Montgomery, 1816.
Hymn tune: traditional French carol, GLORIA (BARNES).

Benediction:

Jesus, from the beginning, is the Word, made flesh in our midst.

May His incarnation fill our hearts with joy and peace.

Jesus is the promised Savior, born of Mary.

May His birth among us renew our hope.

Jesus is the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

May the gift of His presence bring forth rejoicing.

Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

A thought about worship from the Ancient Fathers –

“Stars cross the sky, wise men journey from pagan lands, earth receives its savior in a cave. Let there be no one without a gift to offer, no one without gratitude as we celebrate the salvation of the world, the birthday of the human race. Now it is no longer, ‘dust you are and to dust you shall return,’ but ‘you are joined to heaven and into heaven shall you be taken up.’”
– Basil the Great

Lectionary for next week: Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

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