

Liturgy
The Second Sunday after Christmas
Year C

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!

Here I Am to Worship

Light of the world,
You stepped out into darkness,
Opened my eyes let me see
Beauty that made this heart adore You,
Hope of a life spent with You.

Chorus:

So here I am to worship,
Here I am to bow down,
Here I am to say that You're my God.
You're altogether lovely,
Altogether worthy,
Altogether wonderful to me.

King of all days,
Oh, so highly exalted;
Glorious in heaven above;
Humbly You came to the earth You created,
All for love's sake became poor.

CCLI Song #3266032. ©2000 Thankyou Music. Tim Hughes.

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

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 Christmastide. While much of the world has recently observed and celebrated the first day of the chronological new year, and has moved on from the celebration of the birth of Christ, we continue to ponder the mystery and wonder of the Word made flesh.

A note about the liturgical year—in most years there are two Sundays after Christmas, though every so often (every six years or so), the second Sunday after Christmas falls on January 6, the Day of Epiphany. This year (2025), this second Christmas Sunday is January 5, and so some congregations may wish to focus on the Epiphany 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 2C, 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 carols and songs in various places, sometimes just a verse or two, interspersed with readings and prayers, as we worship—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

As With Gladness Men of Old

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed;
There to bend the knee before Him whom heav'n and earth adore;
So, may we with willing feet ever seek the mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee our heav'nly King.

Words: William C. Dix, 1860. Hymn tune: Dix, Conrad Kocher, 1838.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

**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 apart from Him nothing came into being
that has come into being.

In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

*The Light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness did not comprehend it.*

He was in the world,
and the world was made through Him,
and the world did not know Him.

*He came to His own,
and those who were His own did not receive Him.*

But as many as received Him,
to them He gave the right
to become children of God,
even to those who believe in His name,
who were born, not of blood,
nor of the will of the flesh,
nor of the will of man, but of God.

**And the Word became flesh,
and dwelt among us,
and we beheld His glory,
glory as of the only begotten from the Father,
full of grace and truth.**

*From His fullness we have all received,
grace upon grace.
For the law was given through Moses,
but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

**No one has seen God at any time;
the only begotten Son,
who is in the bosom of the Father,
He has made Him known.**

– from John 1:1-18

This familiar carol is particularly suited for an Epiphany Day focus. Another suggestion to conclude this time of prayer is the now-classic, simple chorus Emmanuel (CCLI Song #12949 ©1976 C.A. Music, Bob McGee).

Here are the lyrics:

Emmanuel, Emmanuel,
His name is called Emmanuel.
God with us, revealed in us!
His name is called Emmanuel.

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>

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
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:1-18

THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

Passing of the Peace

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

Joy to the World

Joy to the world! The Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King,
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n, and nature sing.

He rules worlds 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.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1719. Hymn tune: ANTIOCH, trad. arr. Lowell Mason, 1836.

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 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

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