

We say together the words in bold

WELCOME AND GREETING

O Lord, open our lips

and our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Reveal among us the light of your presence

that we might behold your power and glory.

The Advent candles are lit

**God our Father,
the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary that she
was to be the mother of your Son.
Though Mary was afraid, she responded to
your call with joy. Help us, whom you call to
serve you, to share like her in your great work
of bringing to our world your love and healing.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
the light who is coming into the world.**

Amen.

Christ, whose glory fills the skies
Christ, the true, the only light,
Sun of righteousness, arise,
Triumph o'er the shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near,
Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn
Unaccompanied by thee;
Joyless is the day's return,
Till thy mercy's beams I see,
Till thou inward light impart,
Glad my eyes and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine,
Pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
Fill me, radiance divine,
Scatter all my unbelief;
More and more thyself display,
Shining to the perfect day.

Charles Wesley

CONFESSION

When the Lord comes, he will bring to light the things hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Therefore, in the light of Christ let us confess our sins. A voice cries out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.' So, let us listen, and turn to the Lord in penitence and faith.

Silence is kept

Turn to us again, O God our saviour,
and let your anger cease from us:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Show us your compassion, O Lord,
and grant us your salvation:
Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Your salvation is near for those that fear you,
that glory may dwell in our land:
Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
who in his great mercy
has promised forgiveness of sins
to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true
faith turn to him: have mercy on you;
pardon and deliver you from all your sins;
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness;
and bring you to everlasting life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE COLLECT

Almighty God,
purify our hearts and minds, that when your Son
Jesus Christ comes again as judge and saviour
we may be ready to receive him, who is our Lord
and our God.

Amen.

2 Samuel 1-11, 16 (NIV)

After the king was settled in his palace and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, he said to Nathan the prophet, 'Here I am, living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God remains in a tent.'
Nathan replied to the king, 'Whatever you have in mind, go ahead and do it, for the Lord is with you.' But that night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying:
'Go and tell my servant David, "This is what the Lord says: are you the one to build me a house to dwell in? I have not dwelt in a house from the day I brought the Israelites up out of Egypt to this day. I have been moving from place to place with a tent as my dwelling. Wherever I have moved with all the Israelites, did I ever say to any of their rulers whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, 'Why have you not built me a house of cedar?'"
'Now then, tell my servant David, "This is what the Lord Almighty says: I took you from the pasture, from tending the flock, and appointed you ruler over my people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone, and I have cut off all

your enemies from before you. Now I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men on earth. And I will provide a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they can have a home of their own and no longer be disturbed. Wicked people shall not oppress them any more, as they did at the beginning and have done ever since the time I appointed leaders over my people Israel. I will also give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord declares to you that the Lord himself will establish a house for you.'

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

*Gaudete! Gaudete!
Christus est natus
Ex Maria virgine, gaudete! (Repeat)*

Now the time of grace is here
Seen in shepherd gazes
God has put an end to fear
Let us sing his praises!

God as human in this birth
Deity made lowly
Jesus comes to cleanse the Earth
And to make us holy.

Gate of Heaven opened wide,
Ending our damnation.
Christ the Lord is on our side
Bringing us salvation

Therefore let us all rejoice,
Songs of triumph singing.
Jesus Christ is born to us
Hear the heavens ringing.

Trad. tr. Kevin Grumball

Reading: Mark 1:1-8 (New International Version)

Alleluia, alleluia.
Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths
straight,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Alleluia.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you.'

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son

of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants for ever; his kingdom will never end.'

'How will this be,' Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?'

The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.'

'I am the Lord's servant,' Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled.' Then the angel left her.

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

REFLECTION

HYMN

Hark! A thrilling voice is sounding;
"Christ is nigh," it seems to say,
"Cast away the works of darkness,
O ye children of the day."

Wakened by the solemn warning
Let the earthbound soul arise;
Christ, her Sun, all ill dispelling,
Shines upon the morning skies.

Lo, the Lamb, so long expected,
Comes with pardon down from Heaven;
Let us haste, with tears of sorrow,
One and all to be forgiven.

That when next he comes in glory,
And the world is wrapped in fear,
With his mercy he may shield us,
And with words of love draw near.

Honour, glory, might, and blessing
Be to God: the Father, Son
And the everlasting Spirit,
While eternal ages run.

Latin 6th Century; tr. Edward Caswall

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us declare our faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ:

**Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures; he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures; afterwards he appeared to his followers, and to all the apostles: this we have received, and this we believe.
Amen.**

PRAYERS concluding with the LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

THE PEACE

In the tender mercy of our God, the dayspring from on high shall break upon us, to give light to those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

The peace of the Lord be always with you:
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

HYMN

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
great David's greater Son!
Hail in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.

He comes with succour speedy
to those who suffer wrong;
to help the poor and needy,
and bid the weak be strong;
to give them songs for sighing,
their darkness turn to light,
whose souls, condemned and dying,
are precious in his sight.

He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth;
love, joy, and hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth.
Before him on the mountains,
shall peace, the herald, go,
and righteousness, in fountains,
from hill to valley flow.

To him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.
The tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand forever;
that name to us is love.

James Montgomery

Lord our God, on the first day of creation you made the light that scatters the darkness. Let Christ, the light of lights, hidden from all eternity, shine at last on your people and free us from the darkness of sin.

Fill our lives with joy as we go out to welcome your Son at his coming. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen

BLESSING

May God himself, the God of peace,
make you perfect and holy,
and keep you safe and blameless, in spirit, soul
and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus
Christ;
And the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son
and Holy Spirit be among you and remain with
you always.

Amen.

