



Welcome

We have come together as the family of God, in our Father's presence, in joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Once in Royal David's City

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the early remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise...

...As we gather together in the name of Christ, we pray for the world he came to save: for the Church, that it may be enabled in our generation to

We commend all whom we love, or who have asked for our prayers, to the unfailing mercy of our heavenly Father, and say together, as Christ himself taught us:

**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,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all.
Amen.

Genesis 3:1-19

Adam and Eve rebel against God

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not

eat from any tree in the garden’?”
The woman said to the serpent,
“We may eat of the fruit of the trees
in the garden; but God said, ‘You
shall not eat of the fruit of the tree
that is in the middle of the garden,



nor shall you touch it, or you shall
die.’”

But the serpent said to the woman,
“You will not die; for God knows
that when you eat of it your eyes
will be opened, and you will be like
God, knowing good and evil”.
So when the woman saw that the
tree was good for food, and that it
was a delight to the eyes, and that
the tree was to be desired to make
one wise, she took of its fruit and
ate; and she also gave some to her
husband, who was with her, and he
ate. Then the eyes of both were
opened, and they knew that they
were naked; and they sewed fig
leaves together and made loincloths
for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord
God walking in the garden at the
time of the evening breeze, and the
man and his wife hid themselves
from the presence of the Lord God
among the trees of the garden. But
the Lord God called to the man, and
said to him, “Where are you?” He
said, “I heard the sound of you in
the garden, and I was afraid,
because I was naked; and I hid
myself”. He said, “Who told you
that you were naked? Have you
eaten from the tree of which I
commanded you not to eat?”

The man said, “The woman whom
you gave to be with me, she gave
me fruit from the tree, and I ate”.
Then the Lord God said to the
woman, “What is this that you have
done?” The woman said, “The
serpent tricked me, and I ate”. The
Lord God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures; upon
your belly you shall go, and dust you
shall eat all the days of your life. I
will put enmity between you and
the woman, and between your
offspring and hers; he will strike
your head, and you will strike his
heel”.

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Isaiah 9:2-7

Christ's birth and role of peace and justice are foretold by Isaiah

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 Counsellor, 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.



What Child is this

Isaiah 11:1-9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear. But with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the

breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.



The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together. And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain. For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

**Lo He Comes with Clouds
Descending**

Micah 5:2-4

**The prophet Micah foretells the
glory of little Bethlehem**

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labour has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-7

Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

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.

Silent Night

Luke 2:8-20

The shepherds go to Bethlehem

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 see—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.

**Angels from the realms of glory
Revelation 21.1-4, 22-27; 22.1-5**

The New Heaven and the New Earth

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”



I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. People will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations. But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of

lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Joy to the World

Prayers

Collect

God our Father,
whose Word has come among us
in the Holy Child of Bethlehem:
may the light of faith illumine our
hearts
and shine in our words and deeds;
through him who is Christ the Lord.
Amen.

The Blessing

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son from
before the foundation of the world,

shed that love upon you his
children. **Amen.**

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered
into one, things earthly and
heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.
Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing Mary
became the God bearer,
give you grace to carry the good
news of Christ.
Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy
Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you
always.
Amen.

