St. Francis
Episcopal Church

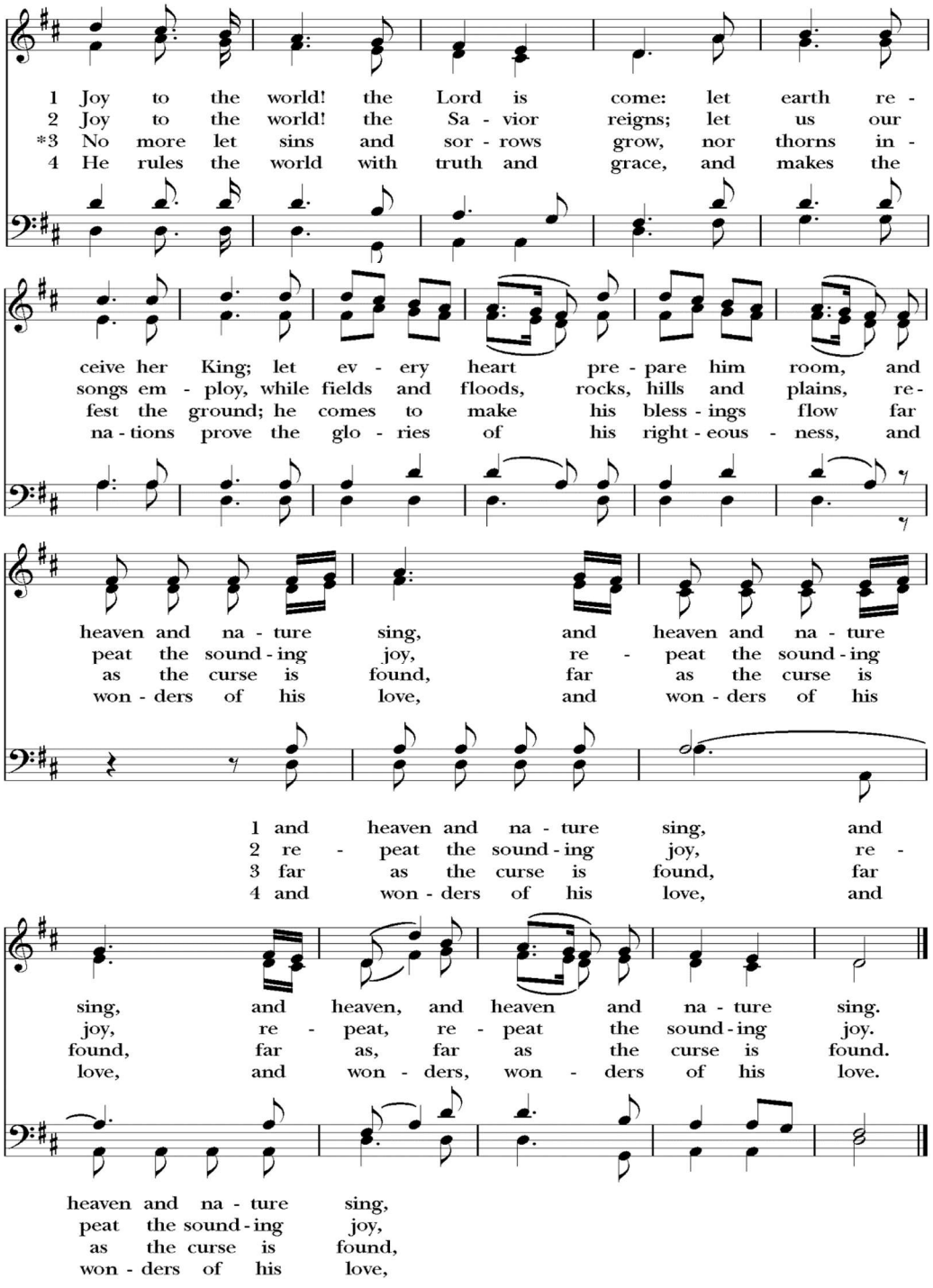
Christmas Day

December 25, 2022

9:30 am

Welcome to St. Francis. *Your presence among us deepens and enriches our worship, and for that we are grateful. In this service leaflet, the people's responses are in* ***bold****. The time prior to the service is set aside for prayerful waiting and reflection. Please be respectful in observing silence at this time. Please silence all electronic devices. If you are a guest this morning and would like to know more about St. Francis, please fill out a visitor card in the pew pocket and place it in the offering plate. The Rev. Toni Belhu would like to sit down with you for a visit. You may reach her at the church office at 828-287-3888 ext. 2 or her cell at 704-215-1882.*

HYMN 100 Joy to the World



Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt. Music: *Antioch,* George Frideric Handel (1685-1759); adapt. and arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Celebrant: The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.
People: **The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.**
Celebrant: And dwelt among us:
People: **Alleluia, alleluia**.
Celebrant: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
People: **The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia**.
Celebrant: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, alleluia.
People: **God is the Lord; he has shined upon us, alleluia.**

THE WORD OF GOD

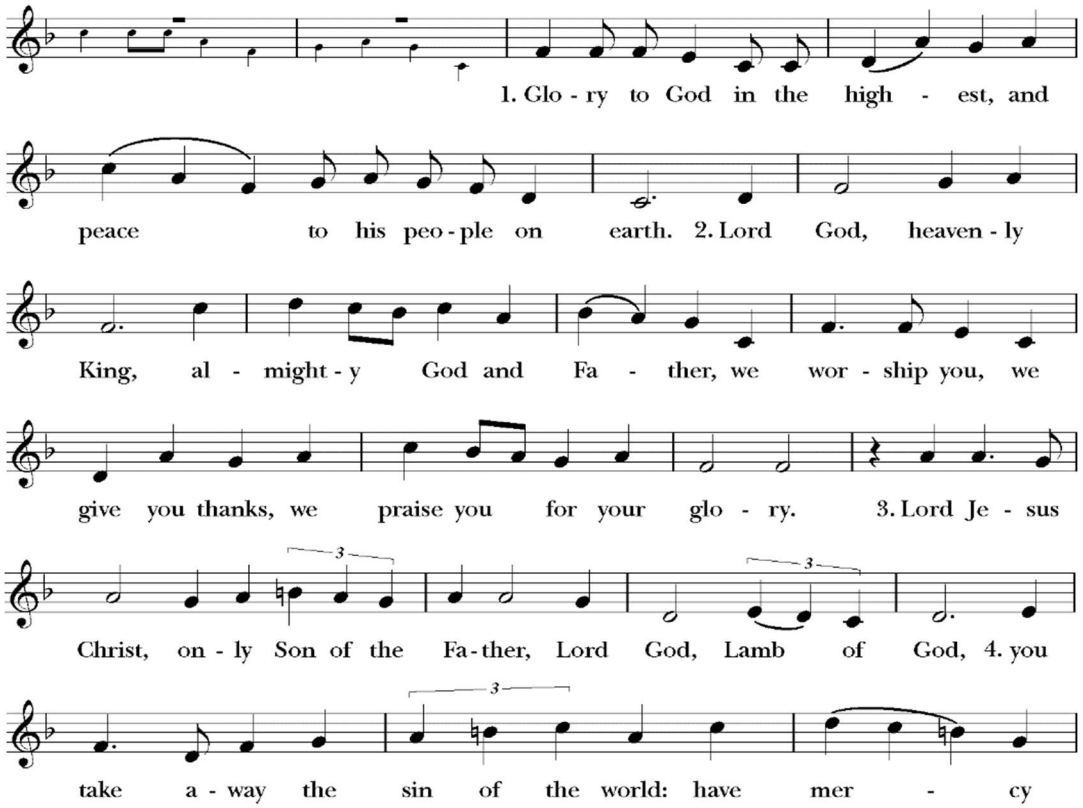
OPENING ACCLAMATION

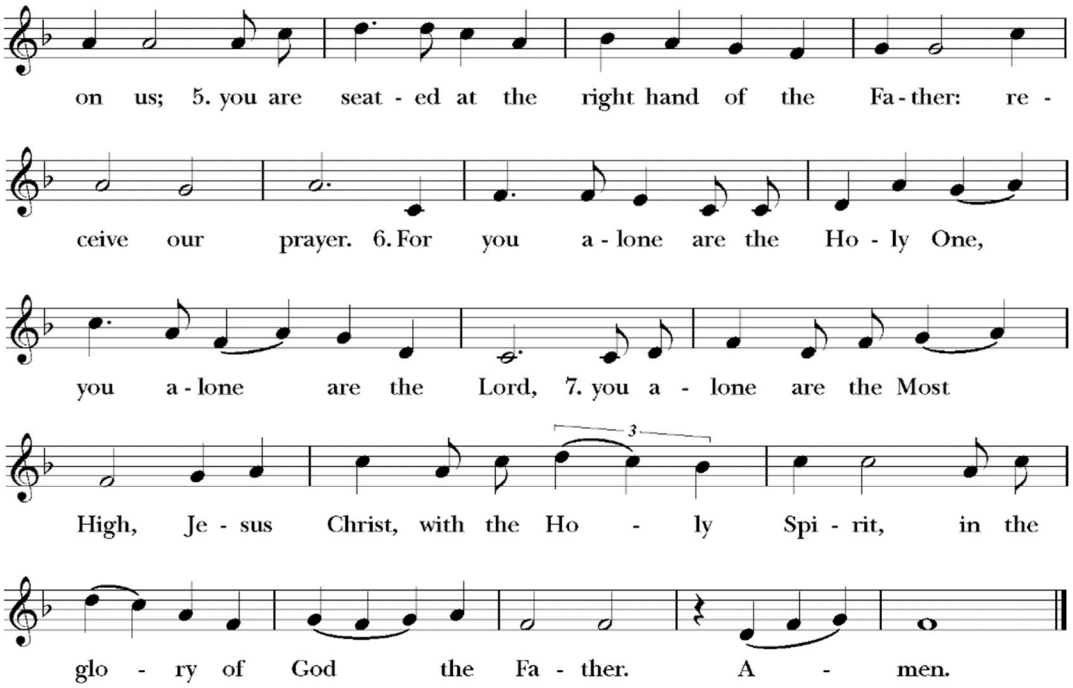
Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF PURITY

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.**

GLORIA





THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born this day of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All sit for the lessons

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 52: 7-10

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Remain seated for the Psalm

PSALM 98

1 Sing to the LORD a new song, *
for he has done marvelous things.

2 With his right hand and his holy arm *
has he won for himself the victory.

3 The LORD has made known his victory; *
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight of the nations.

4 He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the house of Israel, *
and all the ends of the earth have seen the victory of our God.

5 Shout with joy to the LORD, all you lands; *
lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
6 Sing to the LORD with the harp, *
with the harp and the voice of song.
7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
shout with joy before the King, the LORD.
8 Let the sea make a noise and all that is in it, *
the lands and those who dwell therein.
9 Let the rivers clap their hands, *
and let the hills ring out with joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.
10 In righteousness shall he judge the world *
and the peoples with equity.

SECOND LESSON Hebrews 1:1-4, 5-12

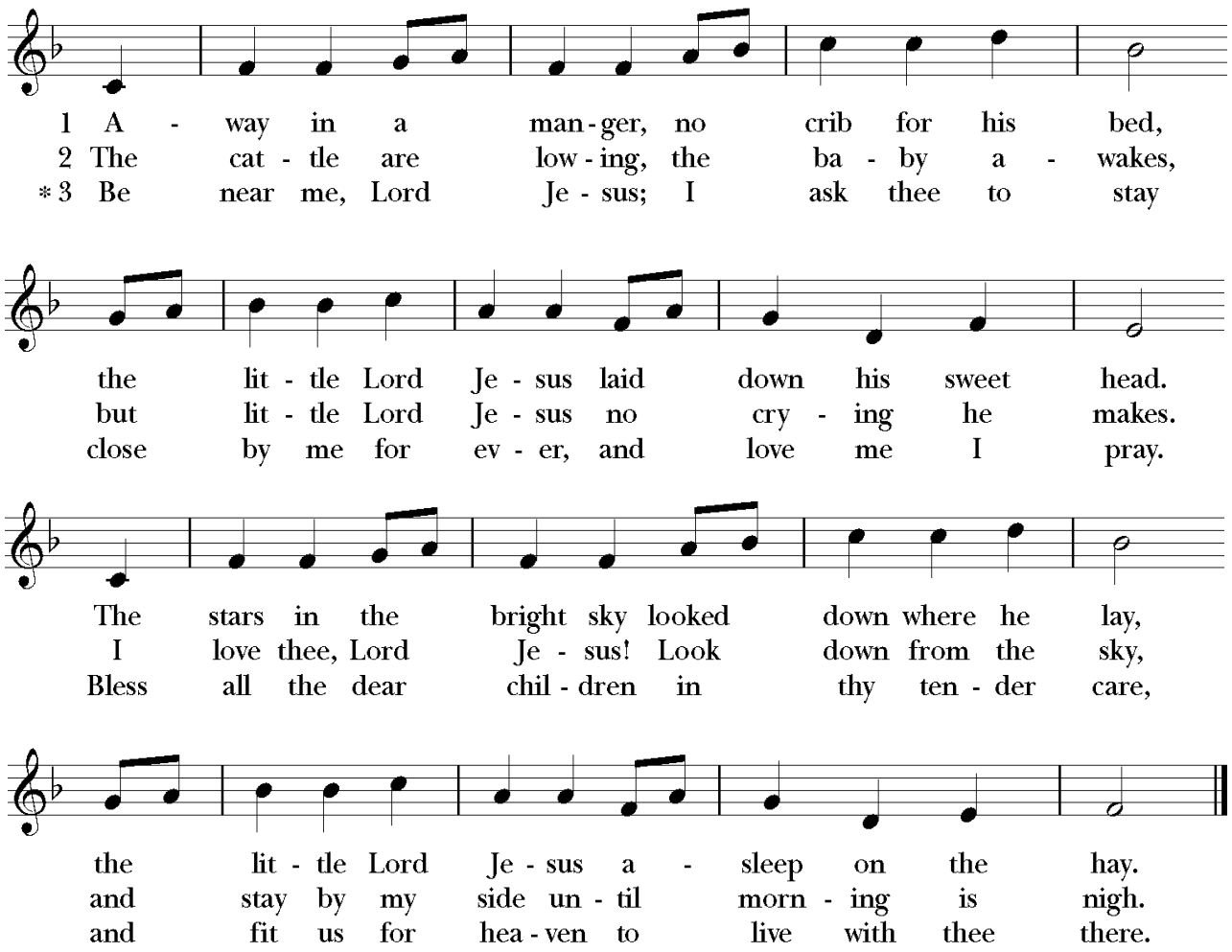
A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Hebrews.

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be his Father, and he will be my Son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his servants flames of fire." But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." And, "In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands; they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing; like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never end."

The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN 101 Away in a Manger



Words: Traditional carol Music: *Cradle Song,* melody William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921); harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) Copyright © by permission of Oxford University Press. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

THE GOSPEL John 1: 1-14

Then, all standing, the Priest reads the Gospel, first saying:

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

THE HOMILY The Rev. Toni Belhu

Silence may be kept after the homily.

All stand, as able

THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The congregation's response during the Prayers of the People this afternoon is "Lord, hear our prayer."

Brothers and sisters, on this most holy day of our Lord's birth, pray that we may find peace, joy, and contentment in this holy season. Let us pray for ourselves and all those in need of our prayers, we pray to you O Lord**,**

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the church of Christ, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and may care for the needs of God's people in all corners of the world. For Michael, our presiding bishop, José, our bishop, Gary our priest, our Vestry, our staff, and our lay people in their respective ministries, we pray to you, O Lord,

Lord, hear our prayer.

For peace in our troubled world, that the darkness of war and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For all those in need of our prayers: those without shelter; the unemployed; the hungry; those who are hospitalized; those who are imprisoned in body or soul; and all those for whom this season is one not of joy but of trial and sadness, we pray to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For those grieving and for others who are in need of our prayers, for all prisoners, and all who are alone, that their illnesses may be turned into health and their sorrow into rejoicing, we pray to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who labor this day on behalf of others: soldiers, doctors and nurses, police officers and firefighters, gas station attendants, bus and taxi drivers, and all those whose work prevents them from sharing today with those they love, we pray to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear our prayer.

In thanksgiving, we remember the lives of those who have gone before us in faith that we, like them, may remain faithful to the end and live forever in the light of your eternal glory, we pray to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear our prayer.

Almighty God, mercifully hear the prayers of the people you have chosen as your own. Give us zeal in our ministries and joy in our work, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE CONFESSION OF SIN
The Deacon or Celebrant says

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept. Minister and People

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

THE ABSOLUTION
Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you**.

The ministers and people greet each other in the name of the Lord.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

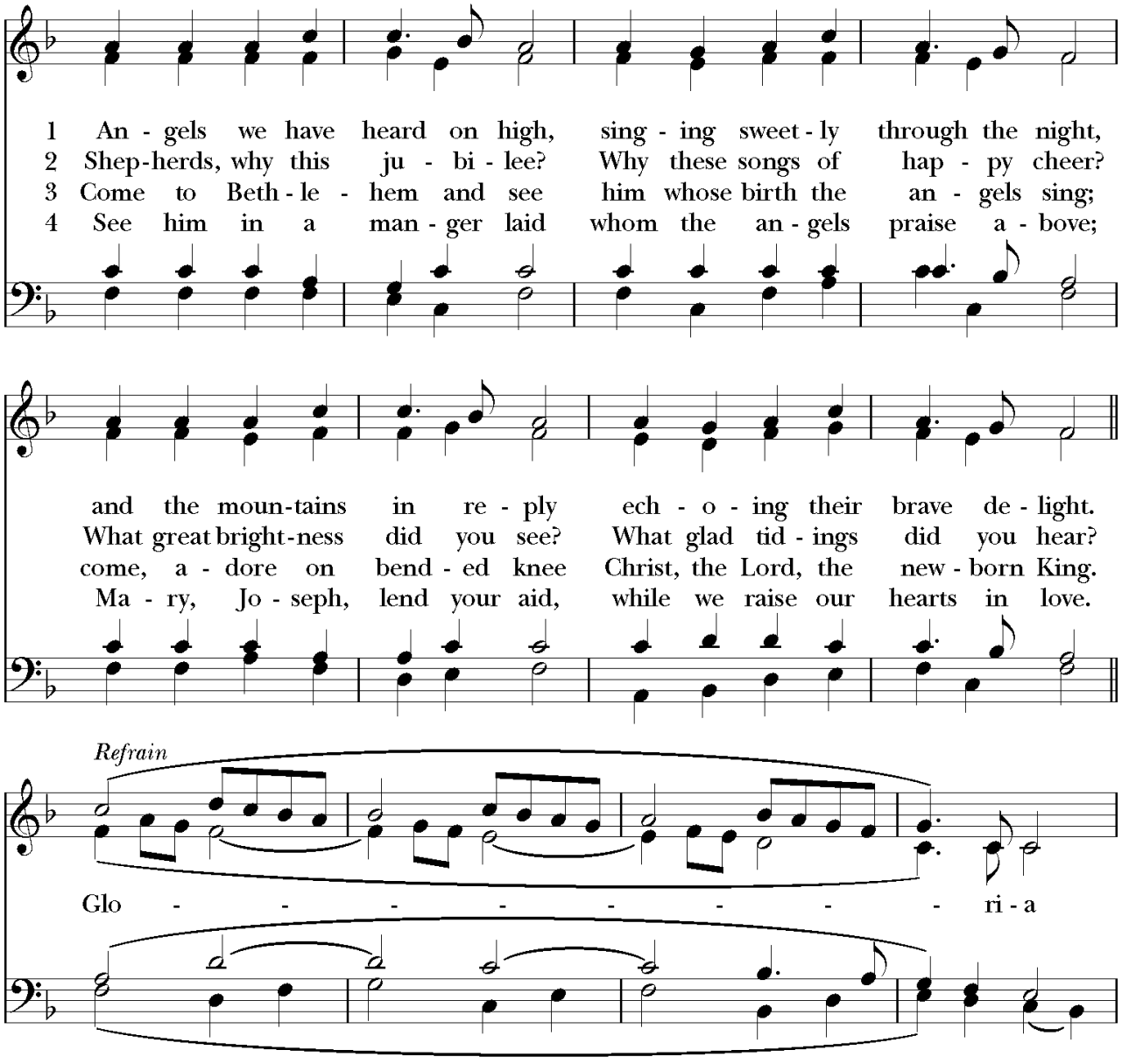
THE OFFERTORY SENTENCE

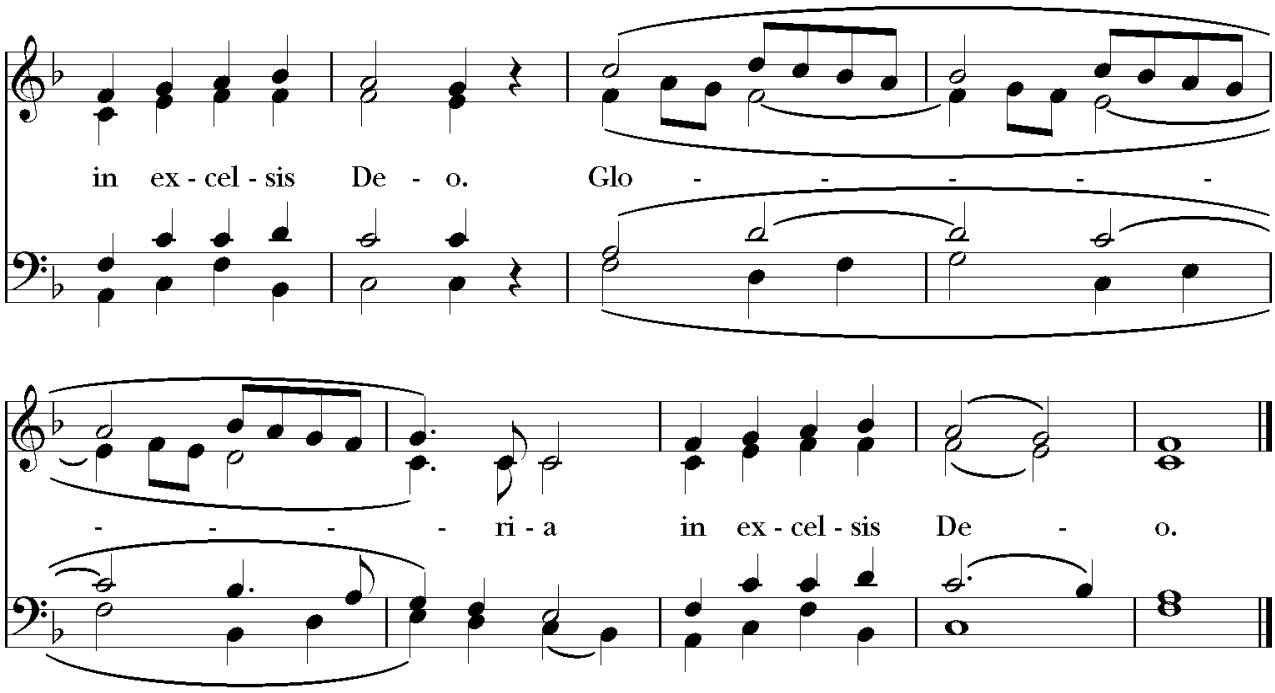
Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

All stand, as able

HYMN 96 Angels We Have Heard on High

(Verses 1-3)





Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt. Copyright © by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Music: *Gloria,* French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

All stand, as able, as the offering is presented, singing together the Doxology.
THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host:
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING - Prayer A

The people remain standing.

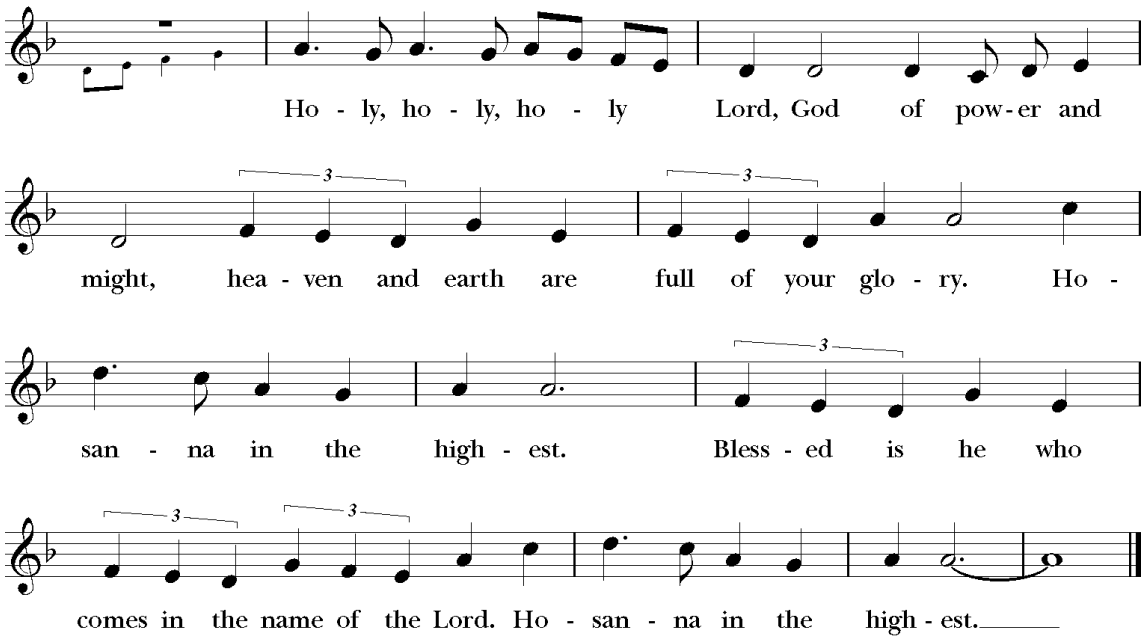
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Then the Celebrant proceeds
It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS (S-129)
Celebrant and People



The people stand or kneel.
Then the Celebrant continues
Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.
He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues
We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to pray,

People and Celebrant
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 BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People: **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**
AGNUS DEI

O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
O Lamb of God, that takes away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT
To receive communion, come to the communion rail. Receive the bread in the palm of your hand. Eat the bread and then drink from the cup when it is offered to you, or, if you wish, you may hold one finger up to indicate to the priest you would prefer intinction.

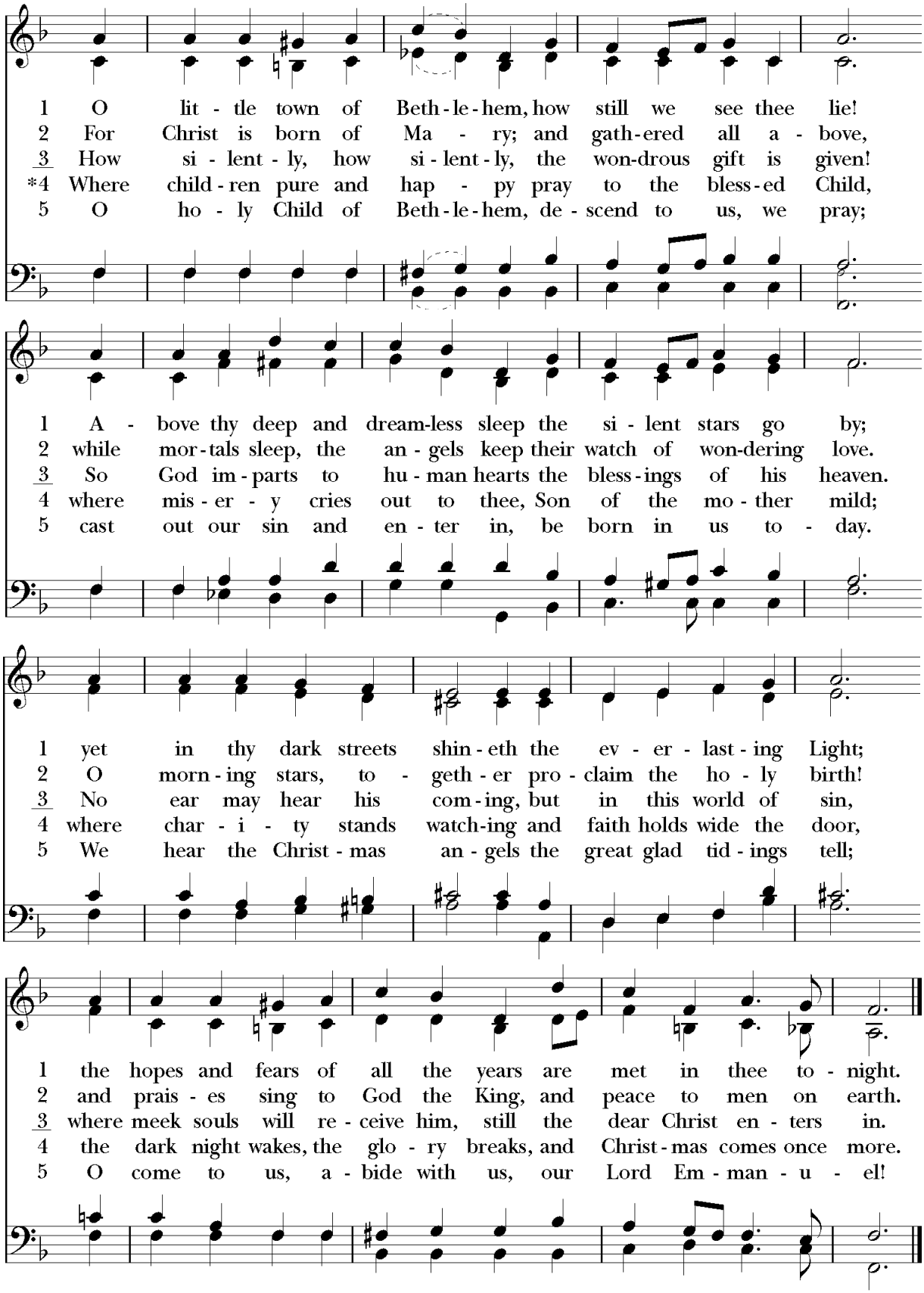
Gluten-free wafers are available. Please make your need known to the priest.

If you wish to receive a blessing rather than receive communion, please join in the movement to the communion rail and cross your arms over the front of your chest. If you do not wish to receive the wine, after receiving the bread, please cross your arms over the front of your chest. This will alert the ministers of your wishes.

HYMN 79

O Little Town of Bethlehem

(Verses 1-3)



Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) Music: *St. Louis,* Lewis H. Redner (1831-1908)

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Celebrant and People:

Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Celebrant:

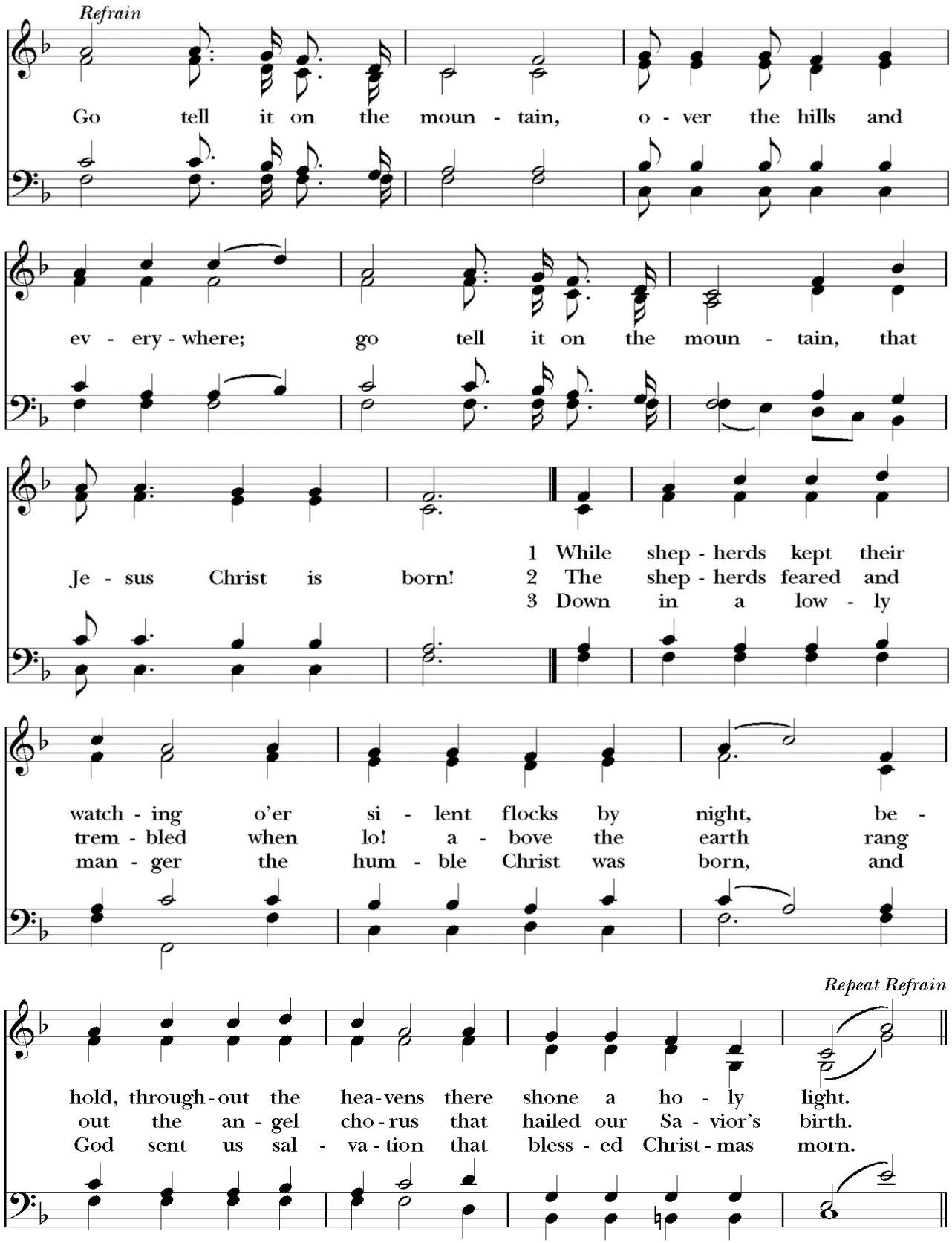
May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in his Word made flesh join heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always.

Go Tell it on the Mountain



Words: Afro-American spiritual, 19th cent.; adapt. John W. Work (b. 1901) Music: *Go Tell It on the Mountain,* Afro-American spiritual, 19th cent.; arr. Horace Clarence Boyer (b. 1935) Copyright ©1984, Horace Clarence Boyer. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

THE DISMISSAL

Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the birth of our Savior. Alleluia! Alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Worship Leaders
9:30 am

Usher – Kenny Ullrich
1st Lesson – Lori Clark
2nd Lesson – Gordon Pendarvis
Chalicist – Dee Ullrich
Acolyte – Gordon Pendarvis
Camera – Stephanie Williams
Lock Up – Stephanie Williams