CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
December 24, 2024

PRELUDE Marvel of this Night Steven Noll & Choir

STATION AT THE CHRISTMAS CRÉCHE

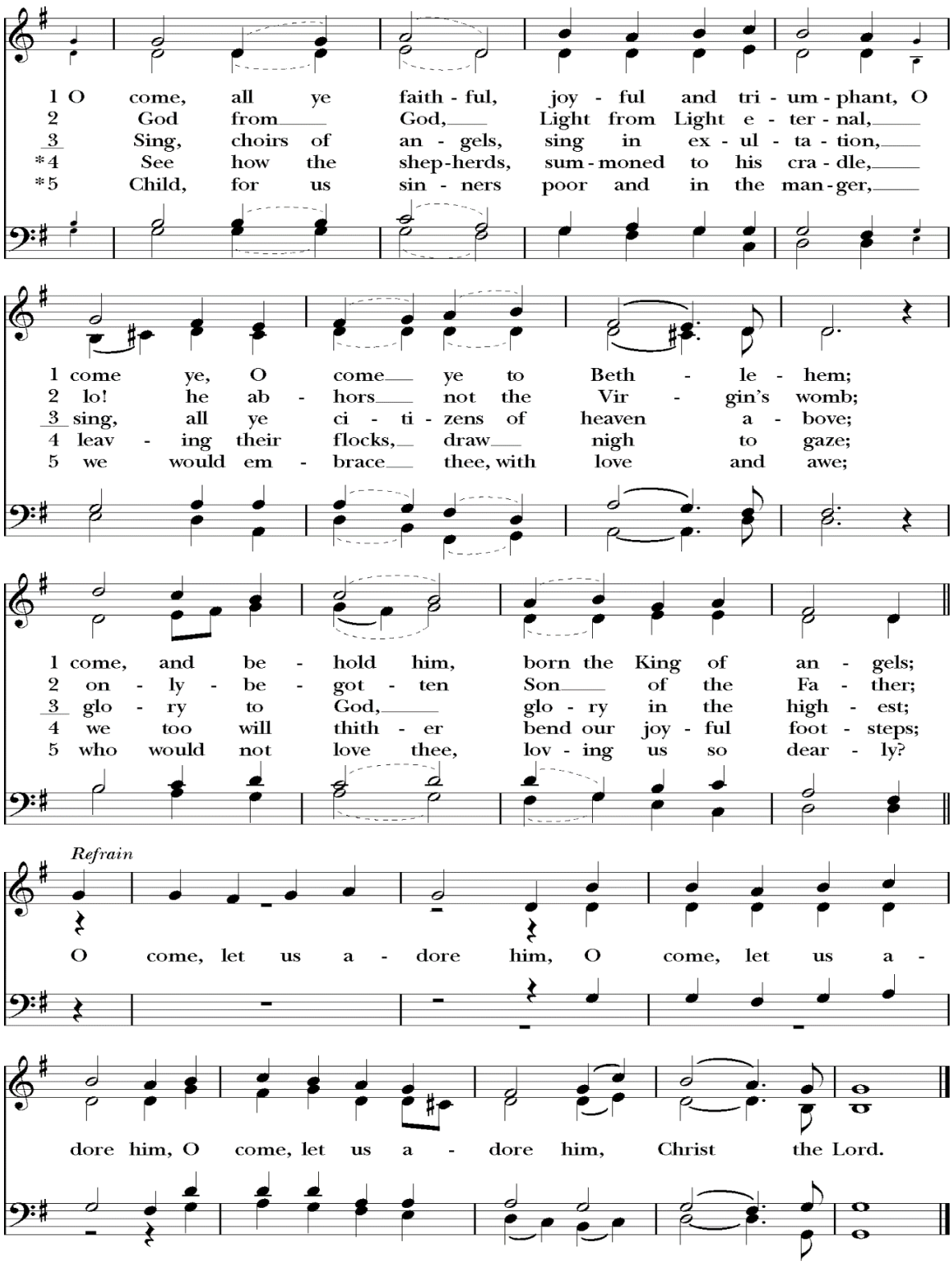
Celebrant: The word was made flesh and dwelt among us;

People: **And we beheld his glory, full of grace and truth.**

Celebrant: Let us pray: Most merciful and loving God, you have made this day holy by the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, and by the child-bearing of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Grant that we your people may also rejoice for ever as your adopted sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **AMEN.**

HYMN 83

O Come all ye Faithful



6 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing;

Refrain

Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880) and others
Music: *Adeste fideles,* present form of melody att. John Francis Wade (1711-1786); harm. *The English Hymnal,* 1906

All stand, as able

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Reader: The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.

People: **The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.**

Reader: And dwelt among us:

People: **Alleluia, alleluia**.

The Christ candle is lit.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

People: **The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia**.

Reader: Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, alleluia, alleluia.

People: **God is the Lord; he has shined upon us, alleluia, alleluia.**

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

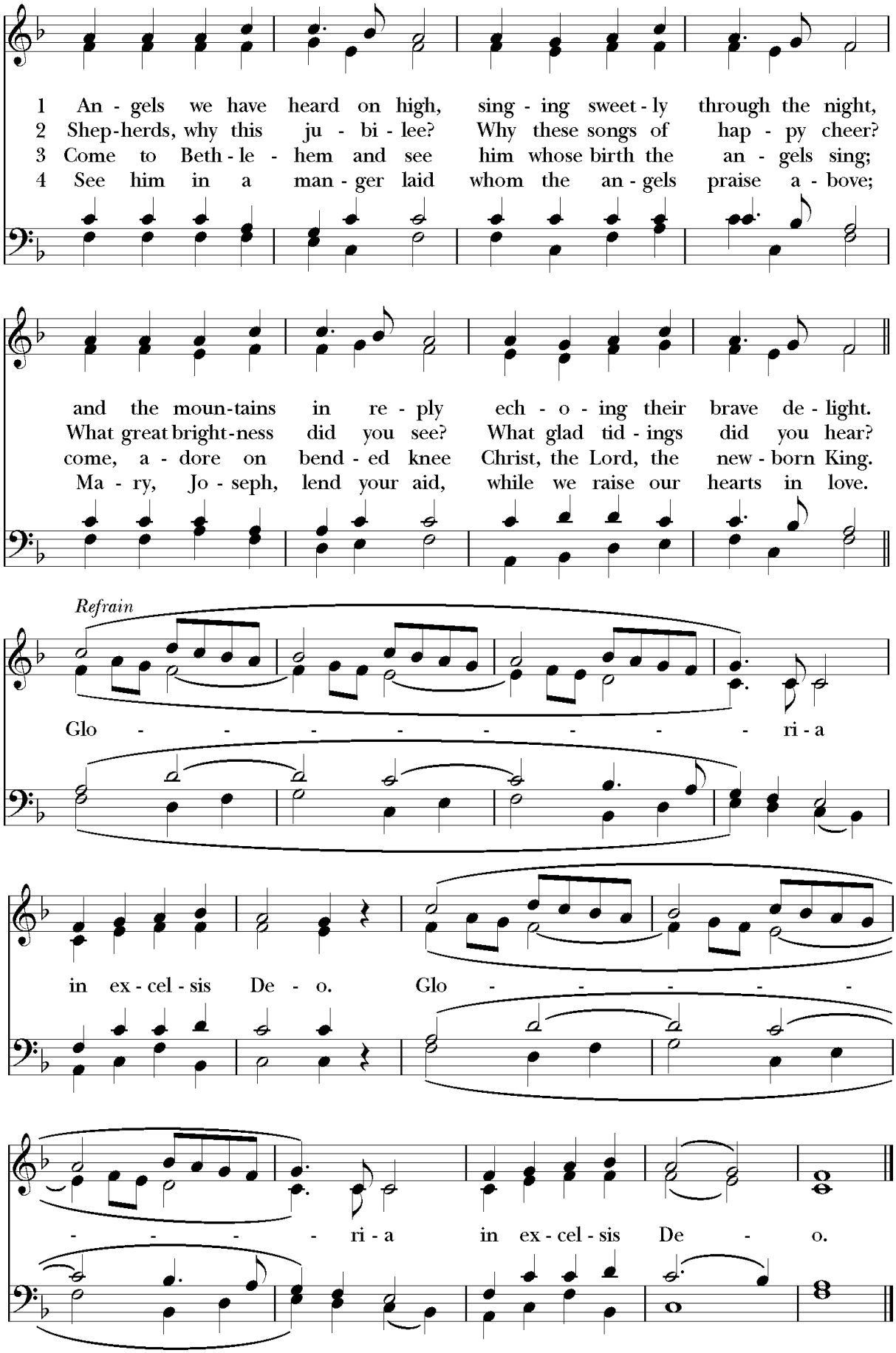
People: **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR 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.**

HYMN 96

Angels we have heard on high



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)

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Celebrant says to the people

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

The congregation may be seated for the lessons

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from the Book of the Prophet 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 Counselor, 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.

The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Remain seated for the Psalm

PSALM 96

1 Sing to the Lord a new song; *
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

2 Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; *
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the nations *
and his wonders among all peoples.

4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *
he is more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.

6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!

7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; *
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.
9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; *
let the whole earth tremble before him.
10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King! *
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."
11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; *
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes, *
when he comes to judge the earth.
13 He will judge the world with righteousness *
and the peoples with his truth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

SECOND LESSON Titus 2:11-14

A reading from the Letter of Paul to Titus.

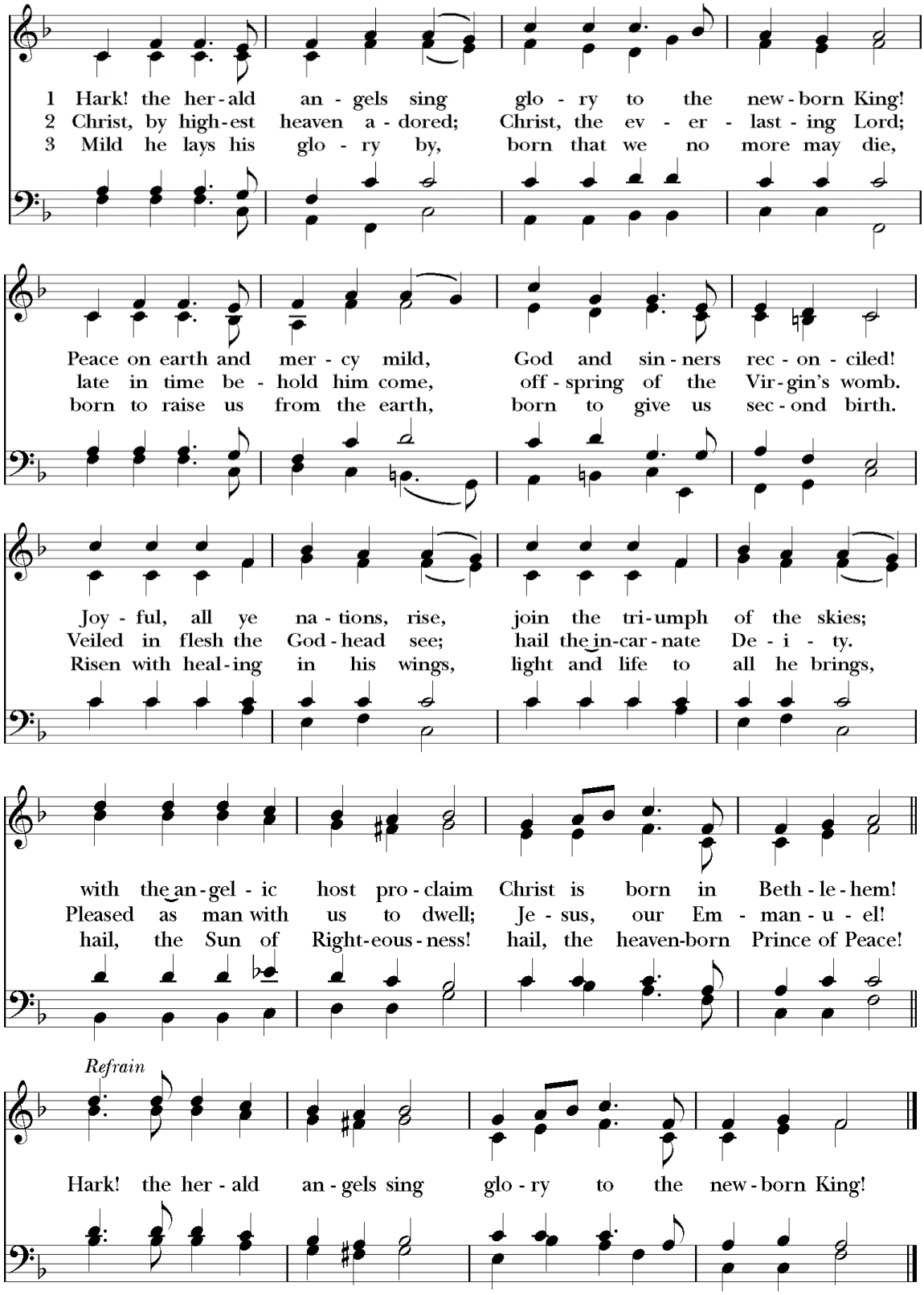
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

All stand, as able

HYMN 87 Hark the Herald Angels Sing



Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: *Mendelssohn,* Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

THE GOSPEL Luke 2:1-20

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

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

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. 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 Savior, 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 favors!" When the ang els 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.

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 eve 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, Toni 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 night 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 AND ABSOLUTION
Celebrant: 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 Priest, stands and says
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
All stand, as able. The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

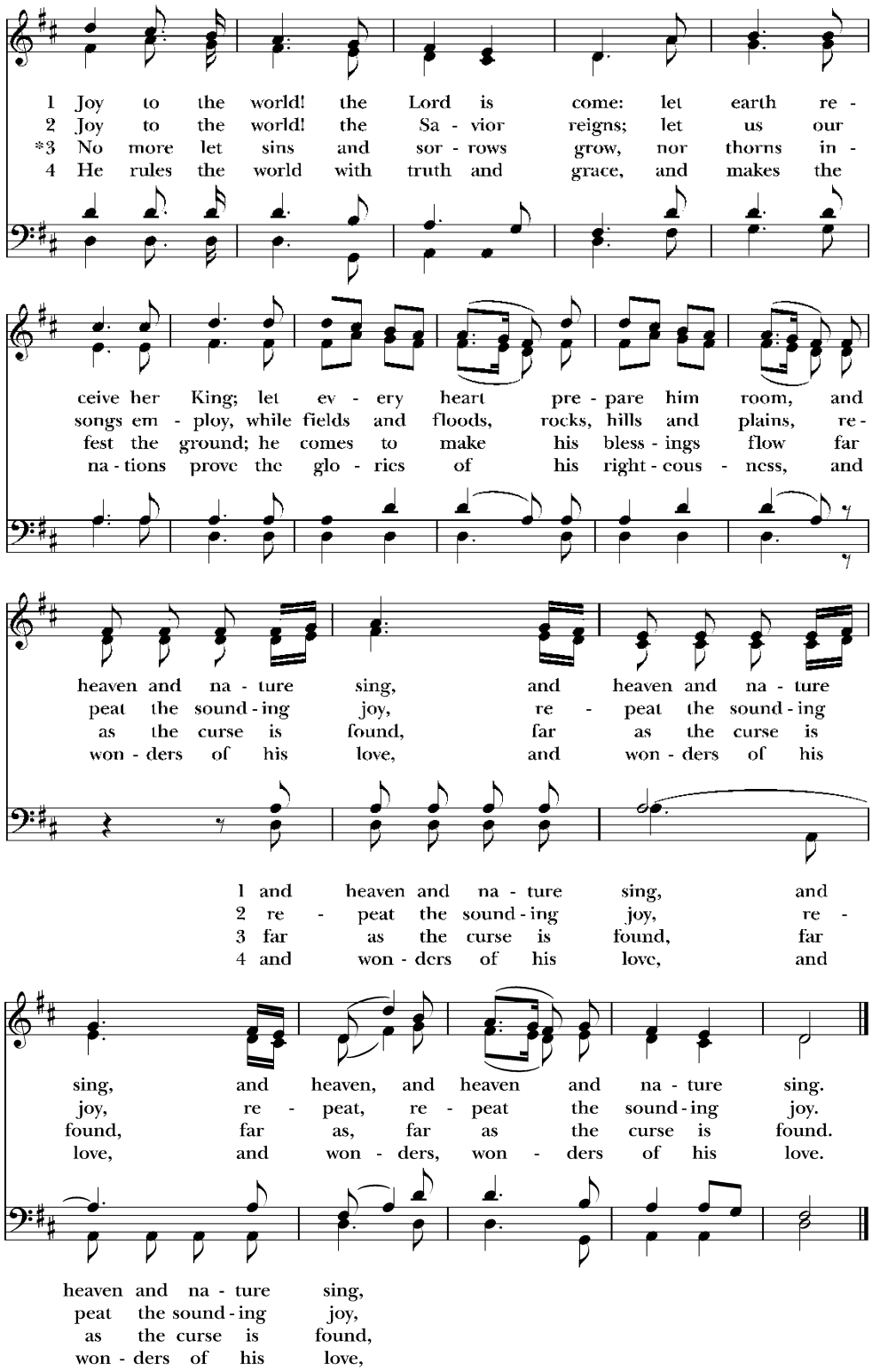
THE HOLY COMMUNION

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 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).

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.

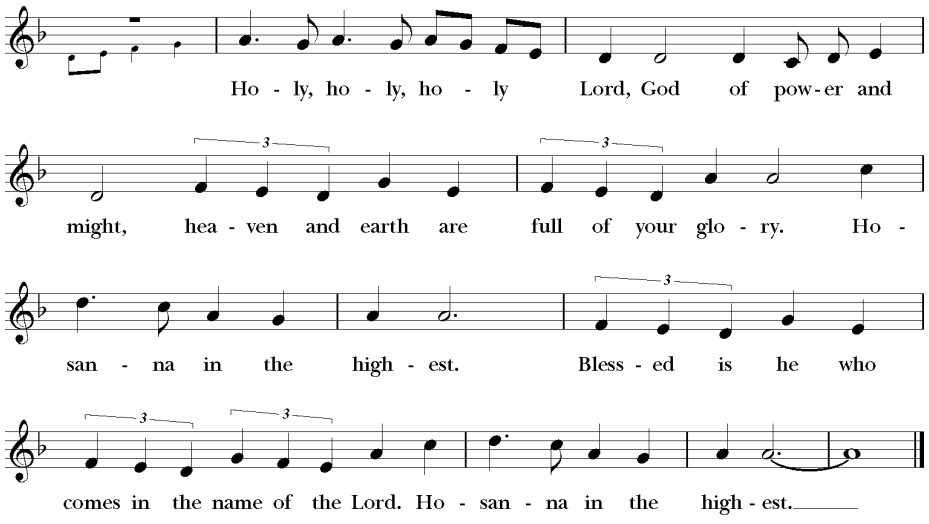
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**
Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.
People: **We lift them to the Lord.**
Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

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 has taught us, we are bold to say,

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

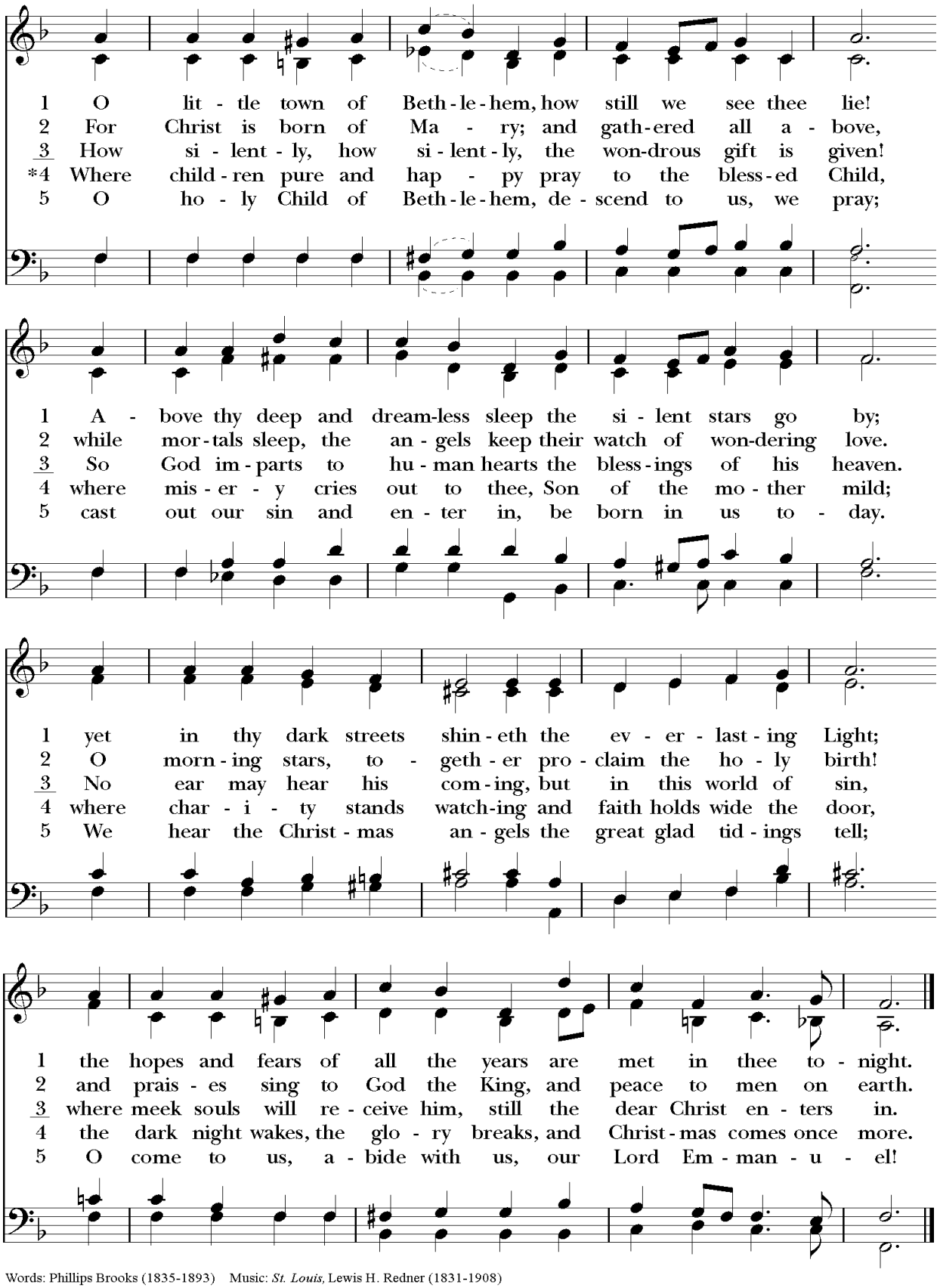
To receive communion, come to the communion rail. Receive the bread in the palm of your hand. Eat the bread and then drink from the cup when it is offered to you, or, if you wish, you may hold one finger up to indicate to the priest you would prefer intinction.

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

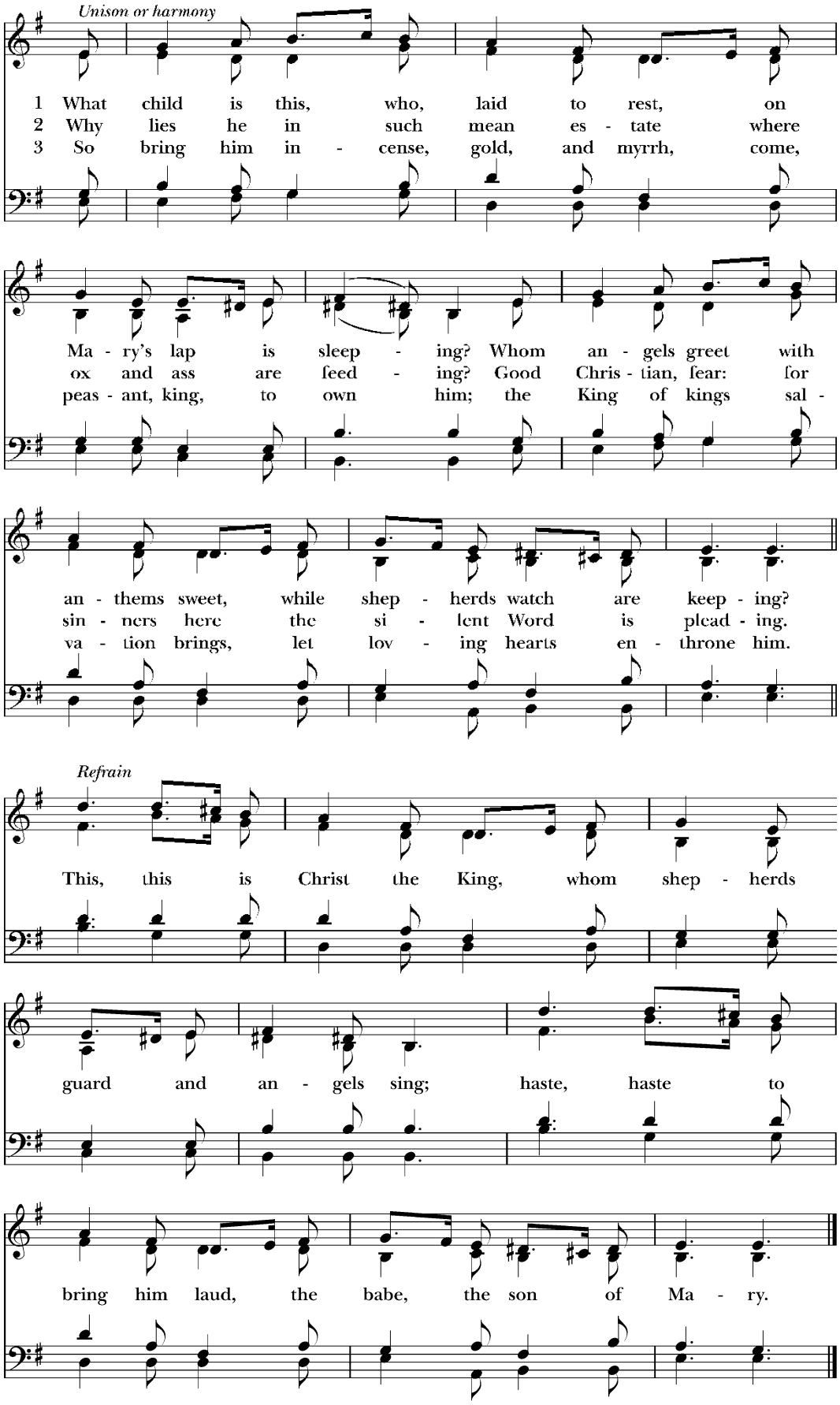
O Little Town of Bethlehem



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

HYMN 115

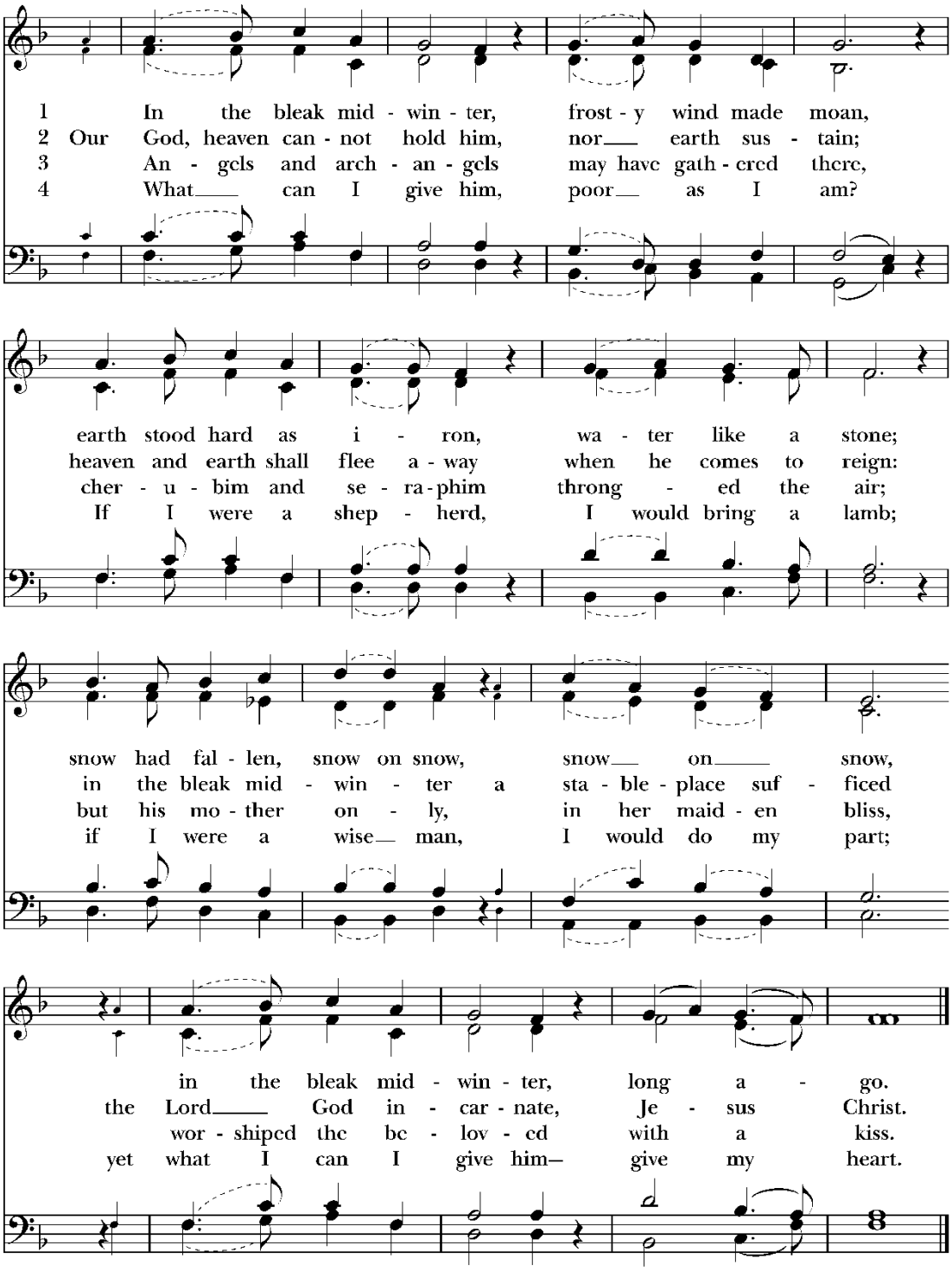
What child is this?



Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898). Music: *Greensleeves*, English melody; harm. *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871.

HYMN 112

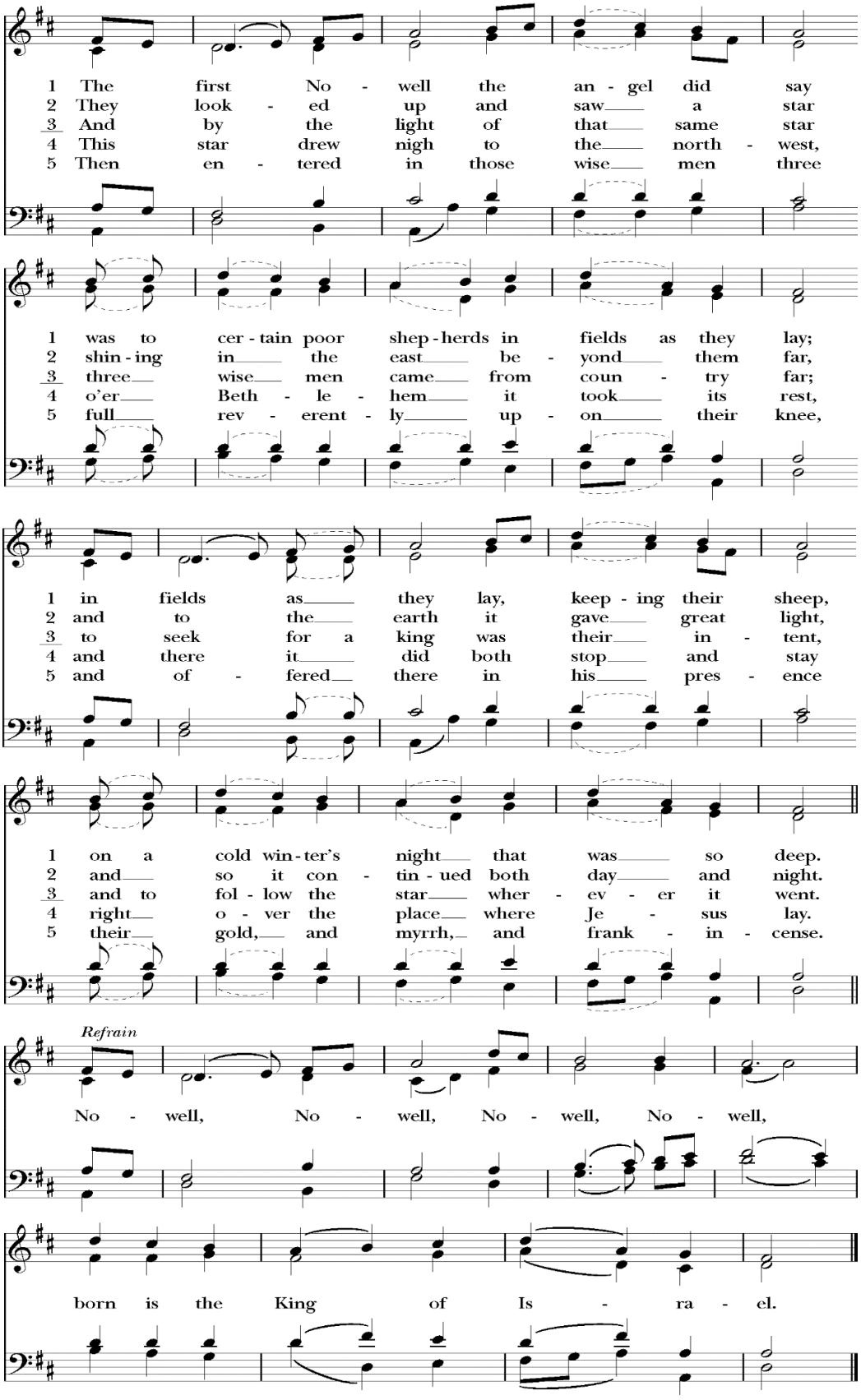
In the bleak mid winter



Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894). Music: *Cranham*, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934).

HYMN 109

The First Nowell



6 Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain

Words: English carol, 18th cent. Music: *The First Nowell,* English carol, 17th cent.; harm. John Stainer (1840-1901)

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

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.**

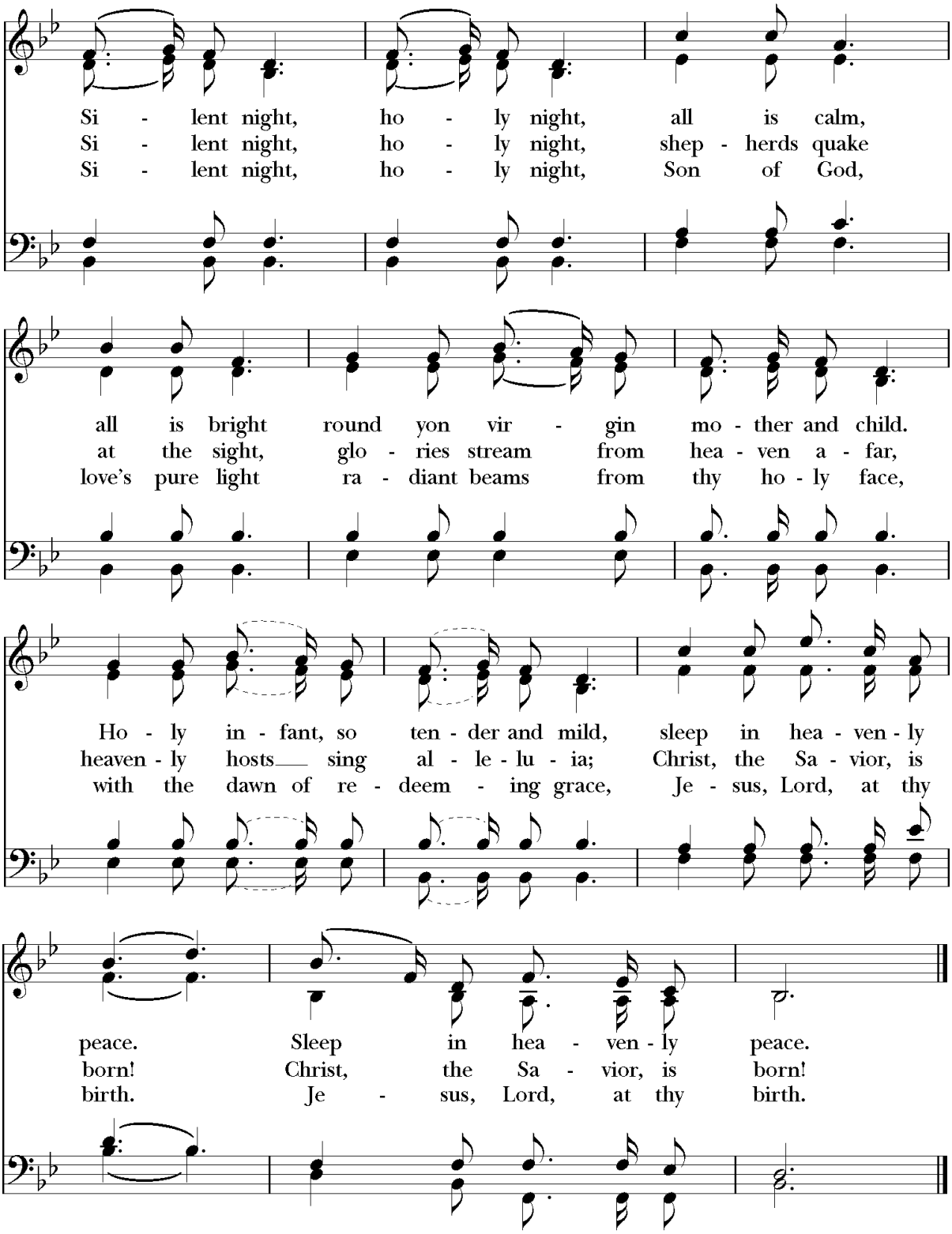
May God, who in his Word made flesh join heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

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

Following the blessing, the ushers will light the candles of the people sitting at the aisle. As your candle is lit, please pass the flame on to the next person. When most of the candles are lit, we will begin to sing "Silent Night." The congregation will follow the altar party and process out of the church. Please continue singing as you carry your light of Christ into the world, gathering outside the church for the dismissal.

HYMN 111

Silent Night



Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885)
Music: *Stille Nacht,* melody Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863); harm. Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910)

Dismissal

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

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

The Christmas Poinsettias have been given to the Glory of God and in ...

In Loving Memory of...

Judy Scott
By The Scott Family

Jesse McKinney
By the family of Jesse

Dickinson Gustafson
By Judi Gustafson

Dr. David Lloyd & our parents
By Sue Lloyd

Robert Cunningham
By the Cunningham & McMahon Families

Mary Taylor
By the Cunningham & McMahon Families

Danny Taylor
By the Cunningham & McMahon Families

Patti Weikel Fleenor
By Sandra Weikel Miller

Jane Callahan Bezold
By June Callahan

Joan Nagle Callahan
By June Callahan

Martha & Jerry Ruff
By June Callahan

Polly Watson
By Drew & Logan Watson

Family & Friends
By Bud & Anita Quinley

Betty Dickey
By Oscar Paquette

Roy Ross
By Steve & Allison Ross

Cheryl & Randy
Stephen & Risë Williams

Rob Bole
By Nancy Bole

David Belhu
By The Rev. Toni Belhu

Fred, Ruth, & Terri Lowery
By The Rev. Toni Belhu

Ruth & Max Reger
By Nancy Bole

Dottie & Dick Bole
By Nancy Bole

Bill Coxe
Anne Coxe

Kathy Coxe
Anne Coxe

Scott Geffert
By Darlene & John Geffert

In Thanksgiving for...

Our blessings of family & friends
By Anne & Richard Stanley

My Family
By The Rev. Toni Belhu

Ruth Henson
By Her Children & Grandchildren

The People of St. Francis
By The Rev. Toni Belhu & Kathryn McGowan

For our children & grandchildren
By Bud & Anita Quinley

St. Francis & St. Gabriel's
By Judi Gustafson

Emory & Ashton Koch
By Walt & Mary Ann Joyce

Beverly McKinney
By Kathryn McGowan & family

In Honor of...

Bobby Johnson
By June Callahan

Jacque Yacobucci
By Michéle & Tom Parsons

All Young children and young parents who bring them
By Linda Jeanne Harrill

Worship Leaders
5:30 pm

Usher – Anita Quinley
Greeter – Bud Quinley
1st Lesson – Linda Jeanne Harrill
2nd Lesson – Anita Quinley
Chalicist – Ben Hopkins
Acolyte – Stella Turner
Camera – Rebecca Melton

Worship Leaders
10:30 pm

Usher – Doug Tribou, Richard Stanley
Greeter – Harold Morgan
1st Lesson – Kathy Demas
2nd Lesson – Doug Tribou
Chalicist – Rebecca Melton
Acolyte – Owen McDaniel
Thurifer – Richard Williams
Camera – Rob McDaniel