

# Good News of Great Joy



**GOD BECAME MAN**

Christmas Day

# ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH | Bangor, WI

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*December 25, 2023*

## **WELCOME TO WORSHIP**

In the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, we welcome you to St. Paul's. We especially welcome our guests who have joined us today. We pray that your soul will be strengthened by the good news of God's forgiveness through Jesus.

## **PRAYER IN PREPARATION FOR TODAY'S WORSHIP**

God in heaven, the day is here. Today I praise you for the day the Word became flesh for me. I thank you for fulfilling your promises to come to my rescue. Bless me as I let my voice ring out in praise to you this morning in response to you doing such a wonder for my sake, sending a Savior who is the exact Savior I needed—both God and man. I ask this in the One who is both the Son of God and Son of Mary. Amen.

## **FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN**

Children's activity sheets are available near the entrance to the sanctuary. The church basement is also available with a live feed of the worship service along with a Kids' Corner for parents with children to utilize during the service if needed.

## **THANK OFFERING**

You may leave your offering in the plate in the lobby. The QR code to the right will provide the link to our online giving option. If you're visiting with us today you are welcome to give an offering, but don't feel compelled by guilt or embarrassment to do so. God wants all offerings to be made freely and with joy.



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## **SERVING IN WORSHIP**

**Presiding Minister**

**Accompanist**

**Instrumentalists**

Pastor Brock Groth

Harriet Langrehr

Micah Gray

Josh Stratman

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# CHRISTMAS DAY HYMN FESTIVAL

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*The service for today is a special service of praise and prayer that guides us in our worship of Christ as the One who fulfilled God's promises of a Savior born for the world.*

## CHOIR

*Sequence of Carols*

*followed by*

*Christmas Dawn*

## WELCOME & INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## HYMN

*354 O Come, All Ye Faithful*



- 1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
- 2 God from true God, and Light from Light e - ter - nal,
- 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
- 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

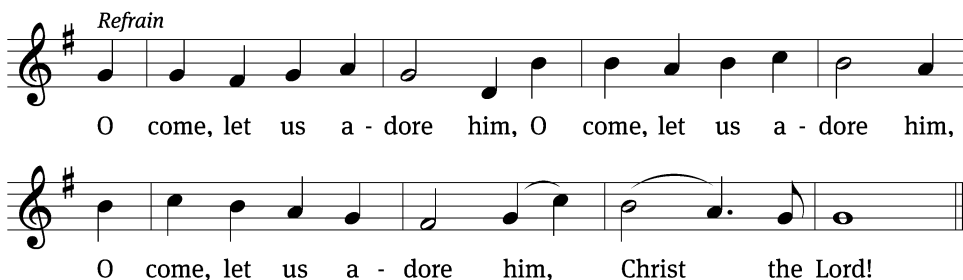


come ye, O come\_ ye to Beth - le - hem!  
born of a vir - gin, to earth he comes!  
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav'n a - bove!  
Je - sus, to thee\_ be all glo - ry giv'n!



Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels:  
On - ly - be - got - ten Son of God the Fa - ther:  
Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est:  
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*continued...*



*Remain seated*

## **BIDDING PRAYER**

Dear people of God, in this Christmas season, it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God after our fall into sin and the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of this place and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

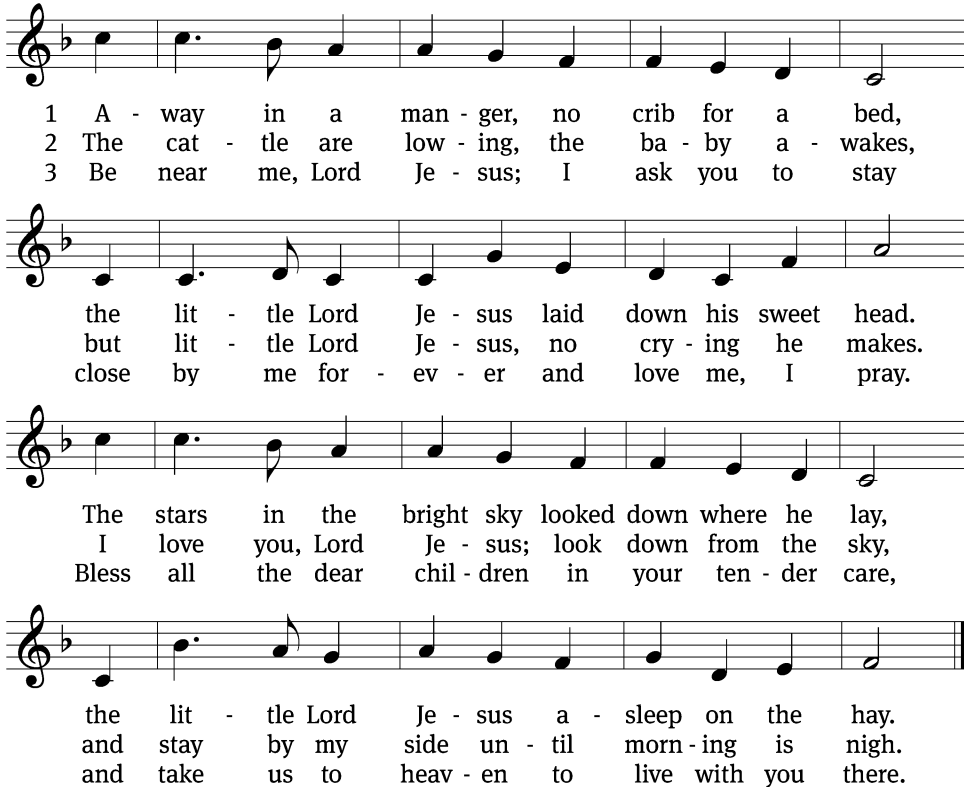
Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

Lord God, grant these petitions for the sake of your reign in people's hearts and to the glory of your heavenly kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

## HYMN

*340 Away in a Manger*



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask you to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.  
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.  
close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
I love you, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in your ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.  
and take us to heav - en to live with you there.

*Text (sts. 1–2): The Myrtle, Boston, 1884; (st. 3): Vineyard Songs, Louisville, 1892, alt.*

*Tune: James R. Murray, 1841–1905*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

## DIALOGUE

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

**His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.**

The LORD has made his salvation known and revealed his righteousness to the nations.

**All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.**

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears?

**If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?**

Restore us again, O God our Savior, and put away your displeasure toward us.

**Show us your unfailing love, O LORD, and grant us your salvation.**

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.

**My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.**

When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

**The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.

**Glory to God in the highest!**



# HYMN

343 Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly  
2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and  
3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own re -  
4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en



cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a  
Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his  
deem - ing love, for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our  
stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er  
cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and  
Lord in heav'n a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren  
God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren



mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
on to the place where he is gone.  
crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

*Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt.*

*Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876*

*Text and tune: Public domain*



## READING

*Micah 5:2–5a*

<sup>2</sup>But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
though you are small among the clans of Judah,  
from you, will go out the one who will be the ruler for me in Israel.  
His goings forth are from the beginning, from the days of eternity.

<sup>3</sup>Therefore the Lord will give them up,  
until the time when the woman who is in labor bears a child.  
Then the remaining survivors from his brothers will return to the people of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>He will stand and shepherd with the strength of the Lord,  
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

They will dwell securely, for at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth.

<sup>5</sup>This one will be their peace.

## HYMN

*333 O Little Town of Bethlehem*



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove  
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!  
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.  
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.  
cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.  
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,  
No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;





The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
and prais - es sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.  
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

*Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835–1893, abr., alt.*

*Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831–1908*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

## READING

*John 1:1–18*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. <sup>5</sup>The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

<sup>9</sup>The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him.

<sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup>They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

<sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>15</sup>John testified about him. He cried out, "This was the one I spoke about when I said, 'The one coming after me outranks me because he existed before me.' " <sup>16</sup>For out of his fullness we have all received grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. The only-begotten Son, who is close to the Father's side, has made him known.



1 What child is this who, laid to rest, on Mar - y's lap is  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox - en now are  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing, whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet while  
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here the  
 own him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is  
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall  
 lov - ing hearts en - throne him. Raise, raise the



Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;  
 pierce him through, the cross be borne for me, for you;  
 song on high, the vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mar - y!  
 joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

*Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.*

*Tune: English, 16th cent.*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup>And everyone went to register, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.

<sup>6</sup>And so it was that while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. <sup>9</sup>An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified! <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people: <sup>11</sup>Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind."

<sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Now let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup>When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. <sup>18</sup>And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup>But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

# HYMN

## 345 Where Shepherds Lately Knelt



1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,  
 2 In that un - like - ly place I find him as they said:  
 3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,  
 4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;  
 sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:  
 his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:  
 its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



but there is room and wel - come there for me,  
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me,  
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,  
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.  
 a still, small voice to cry one day for me.  
 a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.  
 to die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

*Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008*

*Tune: Carl F. Schalk, 1929–2021*

*Text: © 1986 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 736889*

*Tune: © 1986 GIA Publications, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 736889*

## DEVOTION

*Galatians 4:4–7*

<sup>4</sup>But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son to be born of a woman, so that he would be born under the law, <sup>5</sup>in order to redeem those under the law, so that we would be adopted as sons. <sup>6</sup>And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts to shout, “*Abba, Father!*” <sup>7</sup>So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if you are a son, then you are also an heir of God through Christ.

*Stand*

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

*various passages of Scripture*

Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them.

**Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.**

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

**Our eyes have seen his salvation, which he prepared in the sight of all nations.**

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord, **and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

**Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.**

*continued...*

**Though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor, so that we through his poverty might become rich.**

**Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## OFFERING

## HYMN

[illegible]

14



*Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, 1862, alt.; French*  
*Tune: French*  
*Text and tune: Public domain*

## PRAYER

Eternal Father, we give you thanks and praise on this holy day for sending your one and only Son to share our humanity, carry our guilt, and become for us the perfect Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

**Lord, we praise you.**

Keep our faith in your Son alive and strong. Nourish us with your Word and sacraments and by your Holy Spirit give us strength to overcome Satan's power and empty promises. Help us to withstand the temptations the world and our sinful nature put on our path.

**Give us faith and courage.**

Remember ministers of the gospel throughout the world who on this day are proclaiming that a Savior has been born. We especially commend to your care the missionaries we have called as members of the Wisconsin Synod. Since they cannot enjoy the fellowship of their extended families this Christmas, grant to them the inner joy that comes with service in your kingdom.

**Protect all those who proclaim the gospel in our place.**

We pray for our city and countryside, for our neighborhoods and subdivisions, and for all who live and work and find delight here. Give to the leaders of government wisdom to make and uphold laws that promote the good of society. Grant our nation peace, health, and prosperity that we may have the opportunity and resources to spread the good news to all people.

**Govern and prosper your people.**

Fill us with kindness and arouse us to do good to all people, especially those who are less fortunate than we. Bring your healing to those who are sick or diseased in body or mind and comfort those who are mourning the death of someone they love. We especially pray for brothers and sisters who are setting aside their celebration today to care for the sick and stand at the side of the dying.

**Sustain those who endure the troubles of life.**

Be a source of strength to all your people and fill them with your power and peace. If any are among us today who have lost the true meaning of this festival, let them rediscover the joy that comes from Christ alone.

**Let your peace reign in the hearts of all.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

As you sent your Son to bring peace to all people on earth, so we pray for all people, those known and those unknown to us.

**We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**





# HYMN

## 347 Angels from the Realms of Glory



1 An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, wing your  
 2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing  
 3 Ma - gi, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er  
 4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing  
 5 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God the



flight o'er all the earth; once you sang cre -  
 o'er your flocks by night, God with us is  
 vi - sions beam a - far; seek the great de -  
 long in hope and fear, sud - den - ly the  
 Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son, ev - er - more your



a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 now re - sid - ing; yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
 sire of na - tions, you have seen the Sav - ior's star.  
 Lord, de - scend - ing, in his tem - ple shall ap - pear.  
 voic - es rais - ing to th'e - ter - nal Three in One.



*Refrain*  
 Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship,



wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

*Text (sts. 1–3): James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt.; (st. 4): Salisbury Hymn Book, 1857, alt.*

*Tune: Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## LORD'S PRAYER

**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  
forever and ever. Amen.**

## HYMN

*350 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*



- 1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
- 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
- 3 Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Right-eous-ness!



peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of a vir-gin's womb.  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na-tions rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th' in-car - nate De - i - ty!  
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th' an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im-man - u - el!  
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec-ond birth.

*Refrain*



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

*Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.*

*Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847*

*Text and tune: Public domain*

*Stand*

## CLOSING PRAYER

O God our Father, you make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, we may also with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our judge, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## BLESSING

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the † Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

*Be seated*

## CLOSING HYMN

*353 Joy to the World*



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their  
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow nor thorns in -  
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing  
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.