

First Sunday after Christmas

Octave of the Nativity



Nativity by Shane Guinn

A Service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas

Prelude

Congregational Carol – *Good Christian Friends*, # 107

Then, the officiant shall address the congregation in these words:

Beloved in Christ, this day it is our delight to hear again the message of the angels, and to go in heart and mind to Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, and the Babe, lying in the manger. Therefore let us hear again from Holy Scripture the story of God's love in choosing to take a human form and to live our life. Let us bring to this time a spirit of prayer and praise and so welcome the Don of God. But first, let us consider this world for which Jesus came to die and rise again and let us pray to him for the needs of the whole world, and all his people; for peace upon the earth he came to save, for love and unity within the one Church he did build; for goodwill among all peoples. And particularly at this time, let us remember the poor, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and let us pray for all who know not our Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love. Let us remember in a special way those who have succumbed to the worldly pandemic, and for their families and loved one who find themselves wrapped in sorrow during this Christmas season. Lastly let us remember all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude who no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are

one. These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words that Christ himself has taught us.

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

The Blessing

May the almighty God bless us with divine grace, may Christ give us the joy of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above, may the Angels bring us all. Amen.

Anthem

The Wexford Carol

First Lesson

Doug Dolan

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

GENESIS 3: 8-15, 17-19

⁸They 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. ⁹But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' ¹⁰He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.' ¹¹He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' ¹²The man said, 'The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.' ¹³Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this that you have done?' The woman said, 'The serpent tricked me, and I ate.' ¹⁴The 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.

¹⁵I 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.'

¹⁶To the woman he said,

'I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children,
yet your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.'

¹⁷And to the man^b he said,

'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife,
and have eaten of the tree
about which I commanded you,
"You shall not eat of it",
cursed is the ground because of you;
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread
until you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
you are dust,

and to dust you shall return.' *Thanks be to God.*

The Collect

*O God, who didst wonderfully create, and yet more
wonderfully restore, the dignity of human nature:*

Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, thy Son Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Congregational Carol *In the Bleak Mid Winter* # 112

Second Lesson Fawn O'Hara

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.
ISAIAH 11: 1-4, 6-9

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

²The 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.

³His 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;

⁴but 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.

⁵Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶The 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.

⁷The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's
den.

⁹They 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. ***Thanks be to God.***

Anthem *O Holy Night*

Third Lesson John Gregory

The Messiah will be born in Bethlehem.
MICAH 5: 2-4

² 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.

³Therefore 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.

⁴And 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;

⁵and he shall be the one of peace. ***Thanks be to God.***

Congregational Carol *O Little Town, omit v. 4* # 78

Fourth Lesson **Kate Witosky**

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.
ST LUKE 1: 26-35, 38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.'^u ²⁹ But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹ And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.'^u ³⁴ Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?'^u ³⁵ The angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born^u will be holy; he will be called Son of God. ³⁶ And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.'^u ³⁸ Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her. *Thanks be to God.*

THE COLLECT.

WE beseech thee, O Lord, pour thy grace into our hearts; that, as we have known the incarnation of thy Son Jesus Christ by the message of an angel, so by his

cross and passion we may be brought unto the glory of his resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregational Carol Lo How a Rose # 81

Fifth Lesson **Gary Witosky**

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.
ST LUKE 2: 1-7

² In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴ 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. ⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷ 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.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem: *I Sing of a Maiden* *(Haiden)*

Sixth Lesson **Cindy Lorenczi**

The shepherds go to the manger.
ST LUKE 2: 8-16

⁸ In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord

shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ 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: ¹¹ to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah,^[a] the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host,^[b] praising God and saying,

¹⁴ 'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'^[c]

¹⁵ 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.' ¹⁶ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

The Collect

O GOD, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come again to be our Judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and ever. Amen.

Anthem *The Huron Carol*

Seventh Lesson **Carolyn Dolan**

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.
ST MATTHEW 2: 1-11

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^[a] from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.'^[b]"

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. *Thanks be to God*

Collect

O GOD, who by the leading of a star didst manifest thy only-begotten Son to the Gentiles: Mercifully grant, that we, who know thee now by faith, may be led onward through this earthly life, until we see the vision of thy heavenly glory; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ, who with thee and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen.

Anthem: *We three Kings* (sing along) #128

Eighth Lesson Fr Chris McCann

Jesus is presented in the Temple.

ST Luke 2. 22-40

²² When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), ²⁴ and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon;^[a] this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah.^[b] ²⁷ Guided by the Spirit, Simeon^[c] came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸ Simeon^[d] took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

²⁹ “Master, now you are dismissing your servant^[e] in peace, according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹ which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.”

³³ And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon^[f] blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵ so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna^[g] the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸ At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child^[h] to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

Thanks be to God.

THE COLLECT.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, we humbly beseech thy Majesty, that, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple in substance of our flesh, so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts, by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Congregational Carol: *Angels from the Realms # 93*

Prayer and Blessing

Minister: The Lord be with you

People: And with thy spirit.

Minister: Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end.

All: Amen

Minister: May he who by his Incarnation, gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always.

All: Amen

Congregational Carol *O Come All Ye Faithful # 83*

Dismissal

POEM FOR REFLECTION

Luminary

My luminary,
my morning and evening
star. My light at noon
when there is no sun
and the sky lowers. My balance
of joy in a world
that has gone off joy's
standard. Yours the face
that young I recognised
as though I had known you
of old. Come, my eyes
said, out into the morning
of a world whose dew
waits for your footprint.
Before a green altar
with the thrush for priest
I took those gossamer
vows that neither the Church
could stale nor the Machine
tarnish, that with the years
have grown hard as flint,
lighter than platinum
on our ringless fingers.

RS Thomas