



**Christmas Day (Zoom) Blessing service  
December 25, 2020**

**Preparation:** *For those joining via Zoom, please **mute** your microphones for all those times when we are speaking in unison. We will be also be streaming live on Facebook*

*Topic: Christmas Day*

*Time: Dec 25, 2020 10:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)*

*Join Zoom Meeting*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89010266630?pwd=VCtVUThvMzNiUm5yUEljeGsxNTlsZz09>

*Meeting ID: 890 1026 6630*

*Passcode: 449319*

*One tap mobile*

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## WELCOME

### PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Many ages after God created the heavens and the earth,  
when we were formed in God's own image;  
long after the great flood, when God set the rainbow in the clouds as a sign of the covenant;  
twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah;  
thirteen centuries after Moses led God's people to freedom;  
eleven centuries from the time of Ruth and the judges;  
a thousand years from the anointing of David as king;  
in the sixty-fifth week as Daniel's prophecy takes note;  
in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;  
the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the founding of the city of Rome;  
the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus;  
in the sixth age of the world, all earth being at peace,  
Jesus Christ, eternal God, Son of the eternal Father,  
willing to hallow the world by his coming in mercy,  
was born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem of Judea.  
Today is the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, Word of God made enfleshed.

**Thanks be to God!**

God, we can wait our whole lives for it to look like Christmas.

**We can rely on tinsel and twinkle lights,**

We can conjure up nostalgia with cookies,

**We can spray cans of snow on trees,**

We can fill stockings with miscellany.

**We think we can buy Christmas.**

But this is what real Christmas looks like:

**Mother laboring in a barn;**

Babe in manger, sticky from birth;

**Stink of cattle, dung, and hay.**

Starlight shining on crisp plains;

**Exhaustion, and milk-drunk sleep.**

And the lingering question:

**What do we do now?**

Now that the world has become quiet,

**Now that everything is changed,**

Now that we have seen a Great Light,

**Now that we have Wonder?**

Christmas is sweaty work,

**And joyful,**

A long push,

**And glorious,**

Traveler's grit,

**And graceful.**

Christmas is subtle things reverberating,

**Past, present, future re-made.**

Christmas is small things making meaning,

**Hopeful waiting and arrival.**

Christmas is homeless finding refuge.

**That is the Gloria the angels sing. Amen**

### **HOLY GOSPEL: *John 1:1-14***

The Holy Gospel according to John, the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

*<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.*

*<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.*

*<sup>14</sup> 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. **Praise to you, O Christ**

### **REFLECTION**

#### **SHARING OUR BLESSINGS**

*(We will begin in conversation about our various holy-day traditions – particularly our trees and their ornaments and our nativity scenes. We will then offer up each of these blessings together – please be on mute when we do so)*

#### **BLESSING OF OUR NATIVITY/CRECHE:**

- 1)** *Where did you get your nativity?*
- 2)** *Do you have any particular memories connected to it?*
- 3)** *If you could put yourself into this scene, who would you want to be and why?*

**READING: Luke 2**

*After arriving in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary 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.*

*Meanwhile, shepherds keeping watch in the fields were amazed at angels who announced to them the birth of the Messiah. 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.*

**BLESSING: *O Lord our God, with Mary and Joseph, angels and shepherds, and the animals in the stable, we gather around your Son born for us. Bless us with your holy presence and inspired us to help those who have no place to dwell. Be with us that we might share Christ's love with all the world, for he is our light and our salvation. Glory in heaven and peace on earth, now and forever. Amen.***

**BLESSING OF OUR CHRISTMAS TREE:**

- 1) *When do you put up your tree? Was it at a different time this year?*
- 2) *What is your favorite ornament and why?*
- 3) *What is meaningful to you about having a Christmas tree in your home?*

**READING: Genesis 2:8-9**

*And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.*

**BLESSING: *God our Creator, we praise you for this Christmas tree, gift of the earth and sign of your evergreen presence. As we illumine this tree, let your blessing come upon us. Send us your Son, the tender branch of Jesse, who brings us light and life. May we who stand in it light eagerly welcome the true Light which never fades, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

**BLESSING OF ONE ANOTHER:**

- 1) *What is your favorite memory from past Christmases?*
- 2) *How do you plan to connect with those who you are unable to be with this year?*
- 3) *What is your prayer for others?*

**READING: Philippians 4:4-9**

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, beloved,<sup>u</sup> whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about<sup>u</sup> these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.*

**BLESSING: O Lord of heaven and earth, you created us in your image and made us to be in relationship with each another. We mourn that we are not able to gather in the ways that we would like; yet, we know that You are not limited by time and space. Your Spirit moves amidst us, filling us with peace and joy. Bless all of our gatherings, no matter the means by which we connect. May we know always that you have made us to be the Body of Christ wherever we may be. We pray this in the most holy name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*(Additional prayers of blessing may be offered by those gathered. You may either type them in the comments/chat, share them aloud (remember to un-mute) or in the silence of your heart.)*

Bless the Lord, my soul and all that is in me. We pray that these blessings may echo in our hearts, filling us with the fullness of your love and grace revealed in the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(You may un-mute your mikes)

#### **SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE**

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

#### **BLESSING AS WE DEPART**

Come Holy Child  
greet us on our streets,  
meet us at home and at work,  
teach us to pray and do not hide from our need.  
May your chuckle bring us hope,  
may your tears make us long for peace,  
may your arrival be the joy of the world. **Amen**

The Worship has ended, let us go forth to bless the world

**Thanks be to God!**

*The live stream will end. If anyone wants to stay longer to visit, you are invited to do so (a kind of "coffee hour")*

**Worship notes:** Opening Litany (Call and Response: Litanies for Congregational Prayer, Fran Pratt). Final Blessing (A Star filled grace, Rachel Mann)