

## A Liturgy of the Word Christmas Day Service



Ven. Moses Thabethe



Rev. Matthew Wright



Rev. Sharmain James



Rev. Margaret Place



Rev. Alison Thabethe

**The full service or the sermon can be viewed on the website.**

### Opening Carol

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:  
"Glory to God, all glory in the highest!"  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him,*  
*O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord!* Author (attributed to): John Francis Wade



### Call to Worship

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light  
**Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them a light has shone.**

Oh come, let us worship and bow down  
**Let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!**

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us  
**And we have beheld his glory;**  
**glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.**

## Lighting of Christ Candle

Today we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Lord

### Thanks be to God

Today is Christmas, the day on which we celebrate the gift to us of the birth of Jesus and recall the hope we have in Christ. Today we light our last candle to remember the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ which we celebrate this Christmas Day.

### Luke 2

*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 Saviour, 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.'* (NRSV)

*(Light the white Christ Candle)*

God our Father, today the Saviour is born and those who live in darkness are seeing a great light. Help us, who greet the birth of Christ with joy, to live in the light of your Son and to share the good news of your love. We ask this through Jesus Christ, the light who has come into the world. **Amen.**

*Let us pray*

**Holy God you left the glory of heaven to take upon yourself our fragile humanity. You came to us in love and yet we denied you room and you were laid in a manger. We have lit candles of hope, peace, love and joy, may these virtues shine brightly in our lives as we welcome you into our hearts this Christmas. Amen.**

## Introductory Rite

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

Praise the Lord:

**Praise God, you servants of the Lord.**

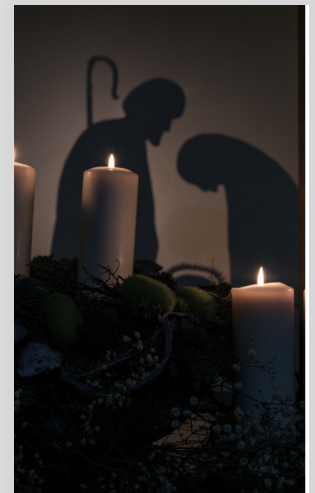
Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

**Blessed be God's Name, now and forever.**

## The Gloria

*Sung by: Ven. Moses Thabethe*

Glory to God on high,  
Let praises fill the sky!  
Praise ye His Name.  
Angels His Name adore,  
Who all our sorrows bore,  
And saints cry evermore,  
"Worthy the Lamb!"



All they around the throne  
Cheerfully join in one,  
Praising His Name.  
We who have felt His blood,  
Sealing our peace with God,  
Spread His dear Name abroad—  
"Worthy the Lamb!"

To Him our hearts we raise—  
None else shall have our praise;  
Praise ye His Name.  
Him our exalted Lord,  
By us below adored,  
We praise with one accord—  
"Worthy the Lamb!"

Join all the human race,  
Our Lord and God to bless;  
Praise ye His Name!  
In Him we will rejoice,  
Making a cheerful noise,  
And say with heart and voice,  
"Worthy the Lamb!"

### *Collect for Purity*

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom 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**

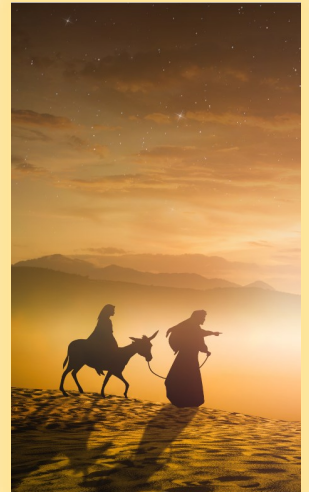
### *The Kyrie*

*sung by Ven Moses Thabethe*

Hosi, Hosi hi tsetselele  
Hosi, Hosi hi tsetselele

Kriste, Kriste hi tsetselele  
Kriste, Kriste hi tsetselele

Hosi, Hosi hi tsetselele  
Hosi, Hosi hi tsetselele



## *The Penitence*

Whoever does what is true comes to the light,  
so that it may be clearly seen that their works have  
been carried out in God. This Christmas,  
let us bring ourselves and our consciences before God,  
that we may be cleansed and purified by the light of Christ.

**Almighty God, our heavenly Father,  
In penitence we confess  
That we have sinned against you  
Through our own fault  
In thought, word and deed  
And in what we have left undone.  
For the sake of your Son, Christ our Lord  
Forgive us all that is past  
And grant that we may serve you  
In newness of life  
To the glory of your name. Amen.**

## *Absolution*

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy on you:  
pardon your sins and set you free from them; confirm and strengthen  
you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life; through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. **Amen.**

## *The Collect*

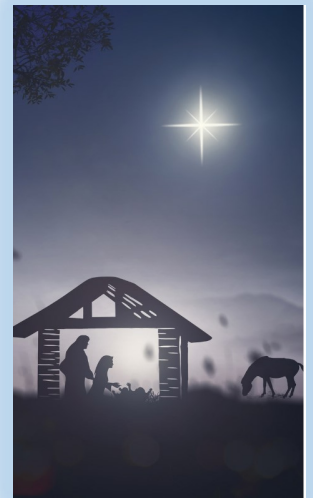
**O Christ, light of the world,  
born into human pain and joy:  
let our celebration of your birth  
make us bold witnesses of your love;  
to the glory of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

## *The Word of God*

Isaiah 52: 7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1: 1-4, (5-12)



## Carol

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky  
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with you there.



## Gospel Reading

Luke 2: 1 - 20

## The Sermon

Ven Moses Thabethe

## Affirmation of Faith

*Let us declare our faith in God.*

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life,  
the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature,  
died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,  
who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church.

**This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

This Christmas time we are joined in hearts and minds. As we celebrate our Saviour let us bring before him the needs of our world.

Saviour of the world, you deigned to be enfleshed in mortal skin, shedding yourself of your power and your glory. And yet in the form of an infant, we came to see something of your image and likeness. Break old and limiting perceptions of ourselves, of others, and of you that, this Christmas, we may each realise who we are in Christ. Help us to offer our care to all who are vulnerable in our society – the widow, the orphan, the poor and the destitute.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Two thousand years ago, you entered a world which you created at the beginning of time. Remind us of our fleeting and tentative places in this world. Grant us humility and grace as we inhabit this space with our fellow brothers and sisters. All powers and principalities are subject to you, Lord of all creation. We pray for your universal and sovereign reign, that your kingdom may come on earth.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Today, we see once more, the Church as the stable or strawy manger which shelters not just the Christ-child, but all who are rejected, despised, and forgotten. May the Church be a haven for those who seek refuge, whether from persecution, or simply from the trials of this life. We uphold our own Archbishop, Thabo, and our diocesan bishop, Steve. May the beacon of the Church this Christmas time, draw to it, from near and far, all who would worship the Christ-child.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

In the incarnation we see the miracle: not us ascending to God, but God condescending to us, taking our own form, being emersed in our culture and context, sharing our earthly limitations and the fragility of human life. We commit into your hands Lord, our country and its people. For all who struggle to celebrate Christmas this year, whether separated from family, whether suffering the loss of loved ones, personal livelihoods or belongings, may your mercy and kindness be shown to them and, collectively, may we help to realise a more just and equitable world.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

For this congregation and all those served by it, may your grace and heavenly comfort be upon us. May you grant us all a blessed Christmas time with health and happiness. As we look with thanksgiving over the year that lies behind us, may your grant safe passage to the year that lies ahead. Strengthen the bonds of fellowship between us. We pray for those who are part of Christ's Body here and who are experiencing illness or suffering of any kind: may your healing and comfort be upon them.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer.**

Jesus Christ, you are the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench. We remember before God all those who have perished this Advent, praying for the repose of their souls and for your light and heavenly countenance to be upon them. We thank you for the witness borne by the lives of your faithful servants throughout the ages.

Lord in your mercy, **Hear our prayer**

Finally Lord, this Christmas may our hearts and our hearths overflow with the joy of receiving your Son, the Christ-child. For with him we know that the darkness is no darkness at all – the night is as bright as day. This Christmas and always, may we be heralds of hope, and of the salvation of your Son, Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## *Prayer for Offering*

Since we have received, once more, the Gift of infinite worth, the value of which nothing can surpass, let our hearts be filled with thanksgiving. The Magi brought gold, frankincense and myrrh, over two thousand years ago, as tokens of their homage and gratitude. Though perhaps less precious, nevertheless may our gifts be worthy signs of our worship and devotion to you our Lord and Saviour. In the name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## *The Lord's Prayer*

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray as our Saviour taught us:

**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 them that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
For ever and ever. Amen.**

## *Prayer of Thanksgiving*

The Lord be with you  
**And also with you**

This Christmas, may you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## *Dismissal*

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen**



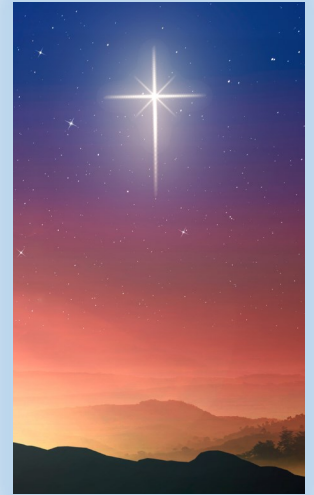
## Final Carol

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel.  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth,  
born to give us second birth.  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King"*

Author: Charles Wesley (1739)



## Giving

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