Lessons & Carols

Order of Service & Prayers

PRELUDE – Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme

PROCESSION – Once in Royal David's City

OPENING PRAYER

In the name of the Father, ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.
The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent,
let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves
to hear again the message of the Angels,
and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem,
to see the Babe lying in a manger.
Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture
the tale of the loving purposes of God
from the first days of our disobedience
unto the glorious Redemption
brought to us by his holy Child;
and let us look forward
to the yearly remembrance of his birth
with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world;
for peace and goodwill over all the earth;
for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died,
and especially in this country, within this city,
and within this diocese.

And because this, of all things, would rejoice his heart,
let us at this time remember, in his name,
the poor and the helpless;
the hungry and the oppressed;
the sick and those who mourn;
the lonely and the unloved;
the aged and the little children;
and all those who know not the Lord Jesus,
or who love him not,
or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother,
and all those who rejoice with us,
but upon another shore and in a greater light,
that multitude which 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 which Christ himself has 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 those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

May the Lord guide us into the way of peace,
give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,
and kindle in us the fire of his love,
that when he comes,
he may find us watchful in prayer
and waiting with steadfast courage and love,
now and forever. Amen.

Be seated for the first reading.

FIRST LESSON – Genesis 3:1-15

FIRST CAROL – Creator of the Stars of Night

FIRST PRAYER

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that we, who are weighed down from of old
by slavery beneath the yoke of sin,
may be set free by the newness
of the long-awaited Nativity
of your Only Begotten Son.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

SECOND LESSON – Isaiah 9:1-6

SECOND CAROL – The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

SECOND PRAYER

May the splendor of your glory dawn in our hearts,
we pray, almighty God,

that all shadows of the night may be scattered
and we may be shown to be children of light
by the advent of your Only Begotten Son.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

THIRD LESSON – Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

THIRD CAROL – Comfort, Comfort, O My People

THIRD PRAYER

O God, who have shown forth your salvation
to all the ends of the earth,
grant, we pray,
that we may look forward in joy
to the glorious Nativity of Christ.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

FOURTH LESSON – Isaiah 7:10-14

FOURTH CAROL – O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

FOURTH PRAYER

Come quickly, we pray, Lord Jesus
and do not delay,
that those who trust in your compassion
may find solace and relief in your coming.
Who live and reign with God the Father
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

FIFTH LESSON – Luke 1:26-38

FIFTH CAROL – The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

FIFTH PRAYER

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son,
grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from every stain
by virtue of the death of your Son, which you foresaw,

so, through her intercession,
we, too, may be cleansed and admitted to your presence.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

SIXTH LESSON – Luke 2:1-14

SIXTH CAROL – It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

SIXTH PRAYER

O God, who see how your people
faithfully await the feast of the Lord's Nativity,
enable us, we pray,
to attain the joys of so great a salvation
and to celebrate them always
with solemn worship and glad rejoicing.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

SEVENTH LESSON – John 1:1-5, 9-14

SEVENTH CAROL – The Father's Love

SEVENTH PRAYER

Grant, we pray, almighty God,
that, as we are bathed in the new radiance of your incarnate Word,
the light of faith, which illumines our minds,
may also shine through in our deeds.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, forever and ever.
Amen.

Acknowledgements and invitation to reception.

CLOSING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

May the God of infinite goodness,
who by the Incarnation of his Son
has driven darkness from the world
and by that glorious Birth
has illumined this most holy night,

drive far from you the darkness of vice
and illumine your hearts with the light of virtue.
Amen.

May God, who willed that the great joy of his Son's saving Birth
be announced to shepherds by the Angel,
fill your minds with the gladness he gives
and make you heralds of his Gospel.
Amen.

And may God, who by the Incarnation
brought together the earthly and heavenly realm,
fill you with the gift of his peace and favor
and make you sharers with the Church in heaven.
Amen.

And may Almighty God bless you, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.
Go in peace.
Thanks be to God.

FINAL CAROL – Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

POSTLUDE – In Dulci Jubilo (J.S. Bach)