

Christmas Eve Outdoor Liturgy
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, North Andover

Opening Sentences

Celebrant: The people who walked in darkness

People: have seen a great light.

Celebrant: For to us a child is born

People: to us a Son is given.

Celebrant: His name will be called Wonderful counselor, mighty God,

People: the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Celebrant: Glory to God in the highest

People: and peace to his people on earth.

Hymn of Praise: 83 (v. 1, 2, 3,6) O Come All Ye Faithful

1. 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;

*Refrain - O come, let us adore him, o come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

2. God from God, Light from Light eternal, lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb; only
begotten Son of the Father. *Refrain.*
3. Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation, sing, all ye citizens of heaven above; Glory to
God, glory in the highest. *Refrain.*
6. Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus to thee be glory given; Word of
the Father, now in flesh appearing; *Refrain.*

Collect for the Nativity of Our Lord

Remain standing

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

*The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.*

Sequence Hymn: 79 (v. 1—3, &5) O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel
2. For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.
3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him,
still the dear Christ enters in.
5. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;

The Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke

***People:* Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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

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 Savior, 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." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

***People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The 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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn 111

Silent Night

1. Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.
2. Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!
3. Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

The Blessing

May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise men, the obedience of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ child be yours this Christmas; And may the blessing of God Almighty: Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you, and those you love, this day and always. *Amen.*

Joy to the World

1. Joy to the world! The Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
2. Joy to the world! The Savior reigns; let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.
4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders, of his love.

Dismissal