



THE GIFT OF
GLORY

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A SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS DAY
LEADER'S GUIDE

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CHRISTMAS DAY: THE GIFT OF GLORY

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By Dean Nadasdy and Reed Lessing. Cover design: Lindsay Galvin. © 2016 Creative Communications for the Parish, 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.



A SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

CHRISTMAS DAY: THE GIFT OF GLORY

NOTES AND ORDERING INFORMATION

The gift of glory, found in the only-begotten Son of the Father born on earth from heaven above, is revealed in this holy service of celebration for Christmas Day. Hymns in the service include “Angels From the Realms of Glory,” “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” “Gentle Mary Laid Her Child” and “Let Our Gladness Have No End.” Written by Rev. Dean Nadasdy and Rev. Reed Lessing. Use with the From Heaven Above Advent series or alone.

*Printed bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code **FHAS***

*Blank bulletins (8 1/2" x 11") are available. Code **FHAT***

*Blank bulletins (8 1/2" x 14") are available. Code **FHAU***

Call Creative Communications for the Parish at

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A SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

CHRISTMAS DAY:
THE GIFT OF GLORY

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

NEWSLETTER NOTICE

We invite you to join us for a very special Christmas Day service entitled, “The Gift of Glory,” which is part of our “From Heaven Above” worship series. The gift of glory, found in the only-begotten Son of the Father born on earth from heaven above, will be captured in Scripture, word and song in this triumphant service of celebration.

BULLETIN NOTICE

Welcome to Christmas Day worship! We celebrate today the gift of glory, found in the only-begotten Son of the Father born on earth from heaven, as we join together in Scripture, word song. May our time in this place give glory to God in the highest.



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COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- The **Theme Verse** is read aloud by the pastor at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before worship begins:

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory. John 1:14

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** of the manger scene (purchased by you from istockphoto.com) to symbolize the glory of God is shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

<http://www.istockphoto.com/vector/nativity-scene-gm497149880-78965499?st=6685e98>

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

“From heav’n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

“To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

“He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below,
That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.

“These are the signs that you shall mark: The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid by whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”

- **The Opening Litany** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

P In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Every good and perfect gift is from heaven above,

C Coming down from the Father of lights.

P We gather to celebrate the good and perfect gift of glory.

C Every valley shall be raised up.

P Every mountain and hill made low.

C The rough ground shall become level

P And the rugged places a plain.

C And the glory of the Lord will be revealed.

P And all people will see it together.

C For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

P The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

C And we have seen his glory!

- **The Lighting of the Advent Wreath** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation with hymn verses sung by the congregation to the tune Mendelssohn 77 77 D and refrain, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

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 host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

P On this Christmas Day we light the Christ candle and call it Glory.

(The acolyte lights all of the candles.)

P Because we have been raised with Christ,

C We set our hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

P When Christ, who is our life, appears,

C Then we will appear with him in glory.

P The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

C And we have seen his glory!

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

- The **Confession and Absolution** is read responsively by the pastor and congregation with the hymn verse sung by the congregation to the tune Mendelssohn 77 77 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

P Holy Lord, merciful God, John writes, "We have seen his glory."

C But we have not always looked fully upon it.

P For all too often we only glance at your glory.

C Then our hearts become hard and our words harsh. Forgive us, Father.

P For all too often we only glimpse your glory.

C Then our thoughts become selfish and our judgments sinful. Forgive us, Father.

P For all too often we only preview or peek at your glory.

C Then our minds become darkened and our motives deceitful. Forgive us, Father, and fix, focus and fasten our eyes on Jesus, for he is the Lord of glory.

P I announce to you that, though God sees all of your sin, he also sees Jesus, who was born for you, suffered for you, bled for you, lives for you and forgives you. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

C And we have seen his glory!

Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

- The **Prayer of the Day** is offered by the pastor:

P Heavenly Father, we rejoice in the glory of your Son's birth for us and for our salvation. Open our minds to understand, our hearts to believe, and our mouths to proclaim the glory of him who took on human flesh to suffer and die in our place; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- The **Children's Sermon** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

P Merry Christmas! Please close your eyes and tell me what you see. (*Allow the children to respond.*) Now I need someone who will allow me to put a blindfold on them. (*Place a blindfold on a volunteer.*) Please tell me what you see. (*Allow your volunteer to respond.*) What would happen if we all walked around with our eyes closed or with a blindfold over our eyes? (*Allow the children to respond.*) We would run into things. We would get hurt. And we would probably hurt other people! One of our Bible readings today tells us that Jesus came into the world and though the world was made through him, a lot of people didn't recognize him. (See John 1:10.) They were blind! Sin does that. Sin causes us to miss Jesus. And then we don't see our Savior's glory. What is glory? Glory is God's Love Overflowing—Reaching to You. The first letters of the main words of that sentence sell the word *glory*: G-L-O-R-Y. God's love overflows, reaching to all of you! That's God's glory. To love you. To forgive you. To prepare a place in heaven for you. Think about it. It wasn't enough for the shepherds to see the angels. The night sky filled with light. But that wasn't enough. They wanted to see Jesus. It wasn't

enough for the wise men to see the star. Not that the star wasn't spectacular. Not that the star wasn't brilliant. But the star wasn't enough. They saw the light over Bethlehem, but they wanted to see Jesus. Don't be satisfied with angels. Don't be content with stars in the sky. And don't settle for a tree, a turkey and some toys. I invite you to see Jesus like the shepherds; to see Jesus like the wise men; to say "We have seen his glory!" And glory is God's Love Overflowing—Reaching to You. Amen.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Isaiah 40:1-5, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

- The **Epistle Reading**, Colossians 3:1-4, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

- The **Gospel Reading**, John 1:9-18, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

- The **Sermon Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Adeste Fideles* irregular, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Oh, come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him born the king of angels:
Oh, come, let us adore him, oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God in the highest:
Oh, come, let us adore him, oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given!
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!
Oh, come, let us adore him, oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

- If desired, this **Mini-Movie** (purchased by you from Worship House Media: [worshiphousemedia.com](http://www.worshiphousemedia.com)) is presented on a screen at this time to highlight the John 1 Gospel reading:

<http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/3667/john-11014>

- The **Sermon** is delivered by the pastor:

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

- P** Ever met a famous person? We have a thing about famous people. We want to know all about them. Their celebrity is like a magnetic star riveting our attention, sometimes to the point of our being transfixed. When someone tells us that they know a celebrity personally, our first question is usually, “Wow. What’s she really like?” The tabloid press makes its money off of our desire to know the rich and famous.

That said, many famous people don’t want to be known. They complain about the paparazzi’s relentless intrusion in their lives. They disguise themselves when out in public. They protect the privacy of their families. When asked a very personal question by a reporter, they may end the interview or bolt out of the room.

God wants to be known. Christmas is about the lengths to which God will go to be known and loved. When John says, “The Word became flesh,” he is describing Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, as God’s premier self-revelation in human form. In other words, if you want to know this

Tune.....Vom Himmel Hoch LM,

The image displays a musical score for the hymn 'Vom Himmel Hoch' in C major, 4/4 time. The score is written for piano, with a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 'C' for common time. The first system (measures 1-4) begins with a treble clef and a bass clef, both with a '1' above them. The melody in the treble staff starts on a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the melody and accompaniment. A large, diagonal watermark reading 'Creative Communications Sample' is overlaid across the lower half of the page, partially obscuring the musical notation.

- The **Opening Hymn** is sung by the congregation to the tune Vom Himmel Hoch LM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

“From heav’n above to earth I come to bear good news to ev’ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say and sing:

“To you this night is born a child of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth shall be the joy of all the earth.

“He will on you the gifts bestow prepared by God for all below,
That in his kingdom, bright and fair, you may with us his glory share.

“These are the signs that you shall mark: The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid by whom the heav’ns and earth were made.”

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CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SONG SUGGESTIONS

- The following song suggestions can be used for a more contemporary worship service in place of the more traditional hymns included in this kit. Rights to use these songs in the service must be purchased by your parish through CCLI or other copyright licensing agencies.

“Glorious” by Chris Tomlin and Jesse Reeves

“Shine On Us” by Deborah D. Smith and Michael W. Smith

“In Christ Alone” by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend

“He Is Here” by Kirk Talley

“Noel” by Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash and Matt Redman

“Emmanuel (Hallowed Manger Ground)” by Chris Tomlin and Ed Cash

“Your Name (Christmas Version)” by Glenn Lacklam and Paul Baloche

“Gloria” by Barry Graul, Bart Millard, Brown Bannister, Jim Bryson, Scheuchzer, Nathan Cochran, Robby Shaffer