

Once in royal David's city,
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ, her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall:
With the poor and meek and lowly
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all His wondrous childhood
Day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless;
Tears and smiles like us He knew:
And He feeleth for our sadness,
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him
Through His own redeeming love;
For that child, so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

Blessing of the Crib

On this holy night heaven and earth embraced in the stable of Bethlehem. On this holy night God gave himself to us in the weakness of Mary's new born baby. Heavenly Father the crib is your sign to us of a love we can barely imagine. As the shepherds brought their wonder and the wise men their gifts let us lay before you the gift of our lives, be born in us again that all who pray here may find healing, joy and the peace that the world cannot give. We ask that you bless this crib and all who pray before it and all those we carry in our hearts, in the name of Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen

Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see Him, but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars His children crowned,
All in white shall wait around.

Collect

Eternal God,
who made this most holy night
to shine with the brightness of your one true light:
bring us, who have known
 the revelation of that light on earth,
to see the radiance of your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Old Testament Reading Isaiah 62.6-12

Thus says the LORD: ⁶Upon your walls, O
Jerusalem,

 I have posted sentinels;
all day and all night
 they shall never be silent.

You who remind the LORD,
 take no rest,
⁷and give him no rest
 until he establishes Jerusalem
 and makes it renowned throughout the
earth.

⁸The LORD has sworn by his right hand
 and by his mighty arm:
I will not again give your grain
 to be food for your enemies,
and foreigners shall not drink the wine
 for which you have laboured;
⁹but those who garner it shall eat it
 and praise the LORD,
and those who gather it shall drink it
 in my holy courts.

¹⁰Go through, go through the gates,
 prepare the way for the people;
build up, build up the highway,
 clear it of stones,
 lift up an ensign over the peoples.

¹¹The LORD has proclaimed
 to the end of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,

‘See, your salvation comes;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.’
¹²They shall be called, ‘The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the LORD’;
and you shall be called, ‘Sought Out,

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

New Testament Reading Titus 3.4-7

⁴When the goodness and loving-kindness of God our Saviour appeared, ⁵he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. ⁶This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, ⁷so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

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.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Saviour, is born!
Christ, the Saviour, is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

Gospel Luke 2.1-20

When the Gospel is announced the reader says

Hear the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

All Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.
²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph 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. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And 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.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see – I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.'

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom
he favours!'

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All **Praise to you, O Christ.**

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 thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my bedside till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus: I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold;
“Peace on the earth, good will to men,
From Heaven’s all gracious King.”
The world in solemn stillness lay,
To hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come
With peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats
O’er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains,
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o’er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel strain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;
O hush the noise, ye men of strife
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophet-bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendours fling,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Post Communion

God our Father,
in this night you have made known to us again
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:
confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him
until the day dawns
and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.
To him be glory both now and for ever
Amen

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.

God of God, Light of Light,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created;
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 heaven above;
glory to God, 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;
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
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.