

Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
And blessed be His Kingdom, now and forever.

Almighty God, unto 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 Thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy Holy Name; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Decalogue

God spake these words and said:

I am the Lord thy God who brought Thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Honor thy father and thy mother.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt do no murder.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not steal.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.***

Thou shalt not covet.

***Lord have mercy upon us,
and write all these Thy laws in our hearts, we beseech Thee.***

Lord, Have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men.
We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee,
we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory,
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.
O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ;
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord;
Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

The Lord be with you.

And with Thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us;
and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful
grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ
our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and
glory, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lessons

A Reading from Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion— to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory. They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.

For I the LORD love justice, I hate robbery and wrongdoing; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their descendants shall be known among the nations, and their offspring among the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

Psalm 126

1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion,
then were we like those who dream.

**2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

3 Then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."

**4 The LORD has done great things for us,
and we are glad indeed.**

5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the watercourses of the Negev.

**6 Those who sowed with tears
will reap with songs of joy.**

7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

A Reading from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

The Word of the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory be to Thee, O Lord!

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, “I am not the Messiah.” And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the prophet?” He answered, “No.” Then they said to him, “Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’” as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

The Gospel of the Lord!

Praise be to Thee, O Christ!

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.*

*We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.*

Through Him all things were made.

*For us and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit*

*He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.*

*For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried.*

*On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.*

*He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.*

*With the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.*

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

*We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.*

Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and ever living God, who in Thy Holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto Thy divine Majesty, beseeching Thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess Thy Holy Name may agree in the truth of Thy Holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth Thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer Thy Holy Sacraments. And to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive Thy Holy Word, truly serving Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech Thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold Thy gracious hand in all Thy works, that, rejoicing in Thy whole creation, they may honor Thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of Thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech Thee, of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor all those who in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless Thy Holy Name for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear beseeching Thee to grant them continual growth in Thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of all Thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom. Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate.

Amen.

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matthew 11:28*

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3:16*

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *1 Timothy 1:15*

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the perfect offering for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. *1 John 2:1-2*

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

*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.*

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love.; and the blessing+ of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always.

Amen.



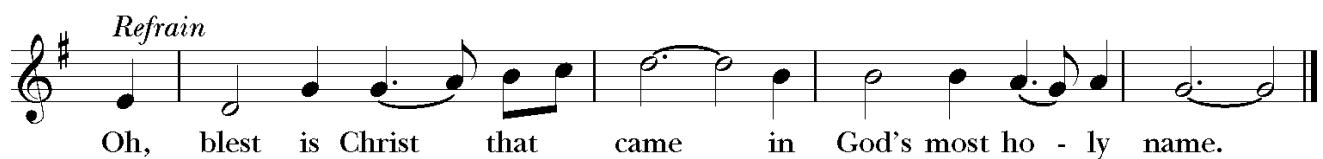
1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!
2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sa - vior's rule em - brace.



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
His rule is peace and free-dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
His tid - ings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.
Lift high your praise re - sound-ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.
All lands will bow be - fore him, their voic - es will a - dore him.



Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most ho - ly name.

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