The First Sunday After Christmas

Christmas Festival of Lessons and Carols, and Holy Eucharist

The Word of God

Prelude

Sheep may safely graze

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Opening Hymn

88 Sing, O sing, this blessed morn

1. Sing, O sing, this blessèd morn,  
   unto us a Child is born,  
   unto us a Son is given,  
   God Himself comes down from heaven.

Refrain:  
Sing, O sing, this blessèd morn,  
Jesus Christ today is born.

2 God from God, and Light from Light,  
comes with mercies infinite,  
from high heaven he comes to earth,  
one with us in human birth. (Refrain)

3 God with us, Emmanuel,  
deigns forever now to dwell;  
he on Adam’s fallen race  
sheds the fullness of his grace. (Refrain)

4 God comes down that we may rise,  
lifted by him to the skies;  
Christ is born for us that we  
born again in him may be. (Refrain)

5 O renew us, Lord, we pray,  
with thy Spirit day by day,
that we ever one may be
with the Father and with thee. (Refrain)

A Bidding Prayer

First Reading   Genesis 3:1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, `You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, `You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you among all animals
and among all wild creatures;
upon your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will strike your head,
and you will strike his heel."
Collect of the Incarnation  Book of Common Prayer,  p. 252

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Second Reading  Isaiah 7:10-15

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.'

Collect of the Annunciation  BCP, p. 240

Pour your grace into our hearts, O Lord, that we who have known the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, announced by an angel to the Virgin Mary, may by his cross and passion be brought to the glory of his resurrection; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Third Reading  Luke 1:39-56

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name.
His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."
And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Hymn 110 The snow lay on the ground

1. The snow lay on the ground, the stars shone bright,
when Christ our Lord was born on Christmas night.
Venite adoremus Dominum.
Venite adoremus Dominum.

Refrain:
Venite adoremus Dominum.
Venite adoremus Dominum.

2. 'Twas Mary, daughter pure of holy Anne,
that brought into this world the God made man.
She laid him in a stall at Bethlehem;
the ass and oxen shared the roof with them. (Refrain)

3. Saint Joseph, too, was by to tend the child;
to guard him, and protect his mother mild;
the angels hovered round, and sang this song,
Venite adoremus Dominum. (Refrain)

4. And thus that manger poor became a throne;
for he whom Mary bore was God the Son.
O come, then, let us join the heavenly host;
to praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (Refrain)
Collect of the Visitation  

Father in heaven, by your grace the virgin mother of your incarnate Son was blessed in bearing him, but still more blessed in keeping your word: Grant us who honor the exaltation of her lowliness to follow the example of her devotion to your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Fourth Reading  

Luke 2:21-38

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

when the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.
1. Dost thou in a manger lie,
who hast all created,
stretching infant hands on high,
Savior, long awaited?
If a monarch, where thy state?
Where thy court on thee to wait?
Scepter, crown, and sphere?
Here no regal pomp we see,
nought but need and penury:
why thus cradled here?

2. "For the world a love supreme
brought me to this stable;
all creation to redeem
I alone am able.
By this lowly birth of mine,
sinner, riches shall be thine,
matchless gifts and free;
willingly this yoke I take,
and this sacrifice I make,
heaping joys for thee."

3. Christ we praise with voices bold,
laud and honor raising;
for these mercies manifold
join the hosts in praising:
Father, glory be to thee
for the wondrous charity
of thy Son, our Lord.
Better witness to thy worth,
purer praise than ours on earth.
angels' songs afford.

Collect of the Holy Name  BCP, p. 213

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Fifth Reading  John 1:1-18

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

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. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, “This was he of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’”) From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.

Hymn  84  Love came down at Christmas

1 Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas: star and angels gave the sign.

2 Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine;
worship we our Jesus, but wherewith for sacred sign?
3 Love shall be our token; love be yours and love be mine; love to God and neighbor, love for plea and gift and sign.

**Collect of Christmas I**  *BCP, p. 213*

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**Prayers of the People**

*Intercessor*  I ask your prayers for the church universal, founded by the Babe of Bethlehem…

  For unto us a child is born.

*People*  **O come, let us adore him.**

*Intercessor*  I ask your prayers . . .

  For unto us a child is born.

*People*  **O come, let us adore him.**

*Celebrant*  The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People*  **And also with you.**

**The Great Thanksgiving**

**Offertory Hymn**  98 (vs. 1, 2, 4, 5)  Unto us a boy is born

1. Unto us a boy is born!
   The King of all creation,
   came he to a world forlorn,
   the Lord of every nation.

2. Cradled in a stall was he
   with sleepy cows and asses;
   but the very beasts could see
   that he all men surpasses.

4. Now may Mary's son, who came
   so long ago to love us,
   lead us all with hearts aflame
   unto the joys above us.
5. Unto us a boy is born!
The King of all creation,
came he to a world forlorn,
the Lord of every nation.


Celebrant: We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have
made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your
Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh,
Jesus, your Son….Therefore according to his command, O Father,

All: We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;

The Celebrant continues
And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all;
presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. . . . By him,
and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is
yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. Amen

The Lord’s Prayer

Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
All: 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.

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Communion of the People

The Postcommunion Prayer

Celebrant: Let us pray.
All: Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living
members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Recessional Hymn 93 Angels, from the realms of glory

1. Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth; ye, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth: come and worship, come and worship worship Christ, the new-born King.

2. Shepherds in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night, God with you is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light: come and worship, come and worship worship Christ, the new-born King.

3. Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar; seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star: come and worship, come and worship worship Christ, the new-born King.

4. Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear, suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear: come and worship, come and worship worship Christ, the new-born King.

The Dismissal

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People Thanks be to God.

Postlude Jesu, joy of man's desiring J.S. Bach (1685-1750)