



## Traditional Service, Sunday December 27th

### Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high  
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply  
Echo back their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

Shepherds why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be,  
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

Come to Bethlehem and see  
Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come adore, on bended knee,  
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo

### Luke 2:22-40 (NRSV)

“When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they 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 turtle-doves 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.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.”

### Exodus 13: 13a-15

Every firstborn male among your children you shall redeem. When in the future your child asks you, “What does this mean?” you shall answer, “By strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. When Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, the LORD killed all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human firstborn to the firstborn of animals. Therefore I sacrifice to the LORD every male that first opens the womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.” It shall serve as a sign on your hand and as an emblem on your forehead that by strength of hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.’

## Isaiah 40:1

“Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.”

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Israel’s consolation and the salvation of the Gentiles will not be without great cost. Jesus will bring truth to light and in so doing throw all who come into contact with him into a crisis of decision. Jesus precipitates the centrally important movement of one’s life, toward or away from God. ... anyone who turns on light creates shadows.” Fred Craddock

Interpretation Bible Commentary Series on The Gospel of Luke

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”*Tell me how it is with you and Jesus, and I’ll tell you who you are.*” Karl Barth

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“Overthrowing the Emperor,” *The Orthodox Heretic and Other Impossible Tales*, Peter Rollins

## It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

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, goodwill to men,  
From heaven’s all gracious King”:  
The world in solemn stillness lay  
To hear the angels sing.

And ye, beneath life’s crushing load,  
Whose forms are bending low,  
Who toil along the climbing way,  
With painful steps and slow,  
Look now! For glad and golden hours,  
Come swiftly on the wing:  
O rest beside the weary load,  
And hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on,  
By prophet seen of old,  
When, with the ever circling years,  
Shall come the time fore-told,  
When the new heaven and earth shall own  
The Prince of Peace their King,  
And the whole world send back the song,  
Which now the angels sing.