

Behold A Branch is Growing



A Christmas Catechization

Recitation from the back, lights are down.

Isaiah 11:1-5

- 1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse,
And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.
- 2 The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him,
The Spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The Spirit of counsel and might,
The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.
- 3 His delight *is* in the fear of the LORD,
And He shall not judge by the sight of His eyes,
Nor decide by the hearing of His ears;
- 4 But with righteousness He shall judge the poor,
And decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth,
And with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked.
- 5 Righteousness shall be the belt of His loins,
And faithfulness the belt of His waist.

ELH 121 (Lights Dark-Children have not entered yet)

Behold, a Branch is growing
Of loveliest form and grace,
As prophets sung, fore-knowing;
It springs from Jesse's race
And bears one little Flow'r
In midst of coldest winter,
At deepest midnight hour.

Isaiah hath foretold it,
In words of promise sure,
And Mary's arms enfold It,
A Virgin meed and pure.
Through God's eternal will
This Child to her is given
At midnight calm and still.

Opening Prayer (Pastor Enters and prays from the Communion Rail)

Opening Hymn (Lights up. Children Enter)

Oh, come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant;
O come ye, o 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!

God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo, He comes forth from the Virgin's womb.
Our Very God,
begotten not created,
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,
all glory 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, all glory be giv'n;
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!

Confession of Sin

Absolution

Matthew 1:18-25

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. ²⁰But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

²²So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

²⁴Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, ²⁵and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

Luke 2:1-7

¹ And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. ⁶So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

ELH 121

The shepherds heard the story
proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of glory
was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped
and in the manger they found Him,
As angel heralds said.

Luke 2:8-14

⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And behold, ^[2] an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."

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

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

ELH 121

This Flower, whose fragrance tender
with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor
the darkness everywhere;
True Man, yet very God,
from sin and death He saves us,
And lightens every load.

Isaiah 7:14

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For unto us a Child is born,
Unto us a Son is given;
And the government will be upon His shoulder.
And His name will be called
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace
There will be no end,
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice

From that time forward, even forever.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

ELH 121

O Savior, Child of Mary,
Who felt our human woe,
O Savior, King of glory,
Who dost our weakness know;
Bring us at length we pray,
to the bright courts of heaven,
And to the endless day!

Hebrews 1

¹ God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His* Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hebrews 2

¹⁴ Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵ and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. ¹⁶ For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham. ¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.

Sermon

What Child is this, who laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Why lies He in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you;
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh;
Come, peasant, king, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
The Virgin sings her lullaby;
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The Babe, the Son of Mary!

Hebrews 4

¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Prayer of the Church

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus lay 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 cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care;
And take us to heaven to live with Thee there.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

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;
Heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is Born!"

Silent night! Holy Night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night! Holy Night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is Born.