
THE BIRTH OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: CHRISTMAS EVE

Our planet earth is that
'Visited Planet'!

The Word – *the infant born in Bethlehem* – was the source of life, and this life brought light to all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out. [John 1:4-5]



Wednesday, December 24, 2025, 6:00 pm

CHRISTMAS COMMUNION FOR ALL AGES

According to *The Book of Alternative Services* with adaptations from *Common Worship* and *A New Zealand Prayer Book*.

As we come to worship on this holy night all are welcome to receive communion regardless of denomination or church affiliation and usual practice for receiving communion.
Everything for our worship is in this booklet.

A Warm Welcome to All!

Church of the Good Shepherd

Saint John, New Brunswick

ORDER OF WORSHIP

GATHERING OF WORSHIPPERS

Prelude

Welcome

Opening Acclamation for the Incarnation

Let us bless the living God:
He was born of the Virgin Mary,
revealed in his glory,

worshipped by the angels,
proclaimed among the nations,

believed in throughout the world,
exalted to the highest heavens.

Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation,
now and for ever. Amen.

Processional Carol “O come, all ye faithful”

- 1 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;

Refrain *O come, let us adore him,*
 O come, let us adore him,
 O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

- 2 God of God, Light of Light,
lo, he abhors not the virgin's womb;
very God, begotten not created: *Refrain*

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest: *Refrain*

4 See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps; *Refrain*

5 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

Text auth (st. 1, 2, 3, and 5) John Francis Wade (1711-1786),

auth (st. 4) Étienne-Jean-François Borderies,

tran (st. 1, 2, 3, and 5) Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880),

tran (st. 4, 5a) William T. Brooke (1848-1917)

Tune ADESTE FIDELES comp (atl. harm. and descant) David Willcocks (1919-),

comp (attributed to) John Francis Wade (1711-1786)

Greeting

The peace, joy, and light of God be with you.
And also with you.

PLEASE ALL BE SEATED.

ADVENT WREATH: *Lighting of the Christ Candle*

Christmas Eve - THE INCARNATION OF GOD

Prayer for the Christ Candle

Let us pray.

All **Lord Jesus, Light of light,
you have come among us,
humbly born in Bethlehem.
Help us who live by your light
to shine as lights in your world.
Glory to God in the highest. Amen.**

Carol *"Hark! The herald angels sing"*

1 Hark! The herald angels sing,
"Glory to the new-born King,
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;

with the angelic hosts proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

*Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."*

- 2 Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail, the incarnate Deity,
pleased as one of us to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel! **Refrain**
- 3 Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings,
Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise each child of earth,
born to give us second birth. **Refrain**

Text Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Tune MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1809-1847) adap: William Hayman

Cummings (1831-1915)

harm (alt. harmony) David Willcocks (1919-)

The following then is said,

Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

As we remain standing, let us pray.

Almighty God,
you have given us your only-begotten Son
to take our nature upon him
and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin:
grant that we, who have been born again
and made your children by adoption and grace,

may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit;
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 forever. **Amen.**

PLEASE BE SEATED FOR THE READING.

GOD'S WORD IS READ AND PROCLAIMED

The First Reading Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from Isaiah.

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains
are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news, who announces salvation,
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'
⁸ Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.
⁹ Break forth together into singing,
you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.
¹⁰ The LORD has bared his holy arm
before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
the salvation of our God. [NRSV-A]

Hear God's word for God's people.
Thanks be to God.

Psalms 98:1-7

1 Sing to the Lord a new song, *
for he has done marvellous things.
2 With his right hand and his holy arm *
has he won for himself the victory.
3 The Lord has made known his victory; *
his righteousness has he openly shown in the sight
of the nations.

- 4 **He remembers his mercy and faithfulness to the
house of Israel, ***
 **and all the ends of the earth have seen the
victory of our God.**
- 5 Shout with joy to the Lord, all you lands; *
 lift up your voice, rejoice, and sing.
- 6 **Sing to the Lord with the harp, ***
 with the harp and the voice of song.
- 7 With trumpets and the sound of the horn *
 shout with joy before the King, the Lord.

The Second Reading Hebrews 1:1-4

A reading from Hebrews.

¹Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. ³He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. [NRSV-A]

Hear God's word for God's people.
Thanks be to God.

Gradual Carol "*O Little Town of Bethlehem*"

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,
 how still we see thee lie!
 Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
 the silent stars go by;
 yet in thy dark streets shineth
 the everlasting light;
 the hopes and fears of all the years
 are met in thee tonight.
- 2 For Christ is born of Mary;
 and, gathered all above,
 while mortals sleep, the angels keep
 their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to all on earth.

3 How silently, how silently,
the wondrous Gift is given
as love imparts to human hearts
the blessings of God's heaven!
No ear may hear his coming
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4 O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
Oh come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

Text Phillips Brooks (1831-1893)

Tune ST. LOUIS, Lewis Henry Redner (1831-1908)

ALL REMAIN STANDING.

Gospel Acclamation

The Light has come
and the darkness cannot put it out.
Alleluia, alleluia!

The Word became like us
and lived with us,
and we have seen his glory.
Alleluia! Alleluia!

The Gospel John 1:1-14, 16, 18

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Hear the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to John.

Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁸ 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.
[NRSV- A]

The Gospel of Christ.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

The lighting of our candles *and they stay lit for the duration of the carol and a short period of silence.*

Carol *"Silent Night!"*

CHOIR 1 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.

ALL 2 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!

ALL 3 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.

Text Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)

Music Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863)

Arrangement Sally DeFord (1959-)

Our candles are now extinguished.

Message Fr Keith Joyce

The Apostles' Creed

Let us now declare what we believe, as we say,
**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived
by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

As we remain standing, as you're able,
let us pray to our incarnate Lord,
who has brought us out of darkness
and into his own marvellous light.

Christ born for us, Son of God given for us:
help us to know you,
to worship and to serve you ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Wonderful counsellor,
you order all things with your wisdom:
help the Church to reveal the mystery of your love
and fill her with the Spirit of truth ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, the government is on your shoulders:
guide the leaders of the nations
and bring in your kingdom of justice and righteousness ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Everlasting Father, you call us to live together in unity:
protect by your mercy all your children,
bless our families and renew our communities ...
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Prince of peace, you bring reconciliation through the cross:
by your healing power give to all who suffer ...
your gift of wholeness and peace.
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Father, full of the Spirit,
**hear our prayer, receive our praises,
fill our lives. Amen.**

Prayer continues in our confession. The following is said first.

Confession and Absolution

God has promised forgiveness to all who truly repent,
turn to Christ in faith and are themselves forgiving.
In silence we recall our sins, as we kneel or sit to pray.

***Silence** is kept for a time.*

Merciful God,
we have sinned
in what we have thought and said,
in the wrong things we have done
and in the good things we have not done.
We are truly sorry.
We repent and turn to you.
Forgive us, for Jesus Christ's sake,
and may our lives bring glory to your name.
Amen.

May the God of all healing and forgiveness
draw you to himself,
that you may behold the glory of his Son,
the Word made flesh,
and pardon you from all your sins,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

***ALL STAND, AS ABLE,** for the following.*

The Peace

This holy night the angels said,
'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to all in whom he delights. *Luke 2:14*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

THE SACRAMENT IS CELEBRATED

The Preparation of the Gifts

The altar is prepared as the following is presented.

ALL PLEASE BE SEATED FOR THE FOLLOWING.

Offertory Anthem “*O holy night*” - by the Choir with Dale Caines *French horn*

- 1 O holy night, the stars are brightly shining;
it is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees! O hear the angel voices!
O night divine! O night when Christ was born!
O night divine! O night, O night divine!
- 2 Truly He taught us to love one another;
His law is love and His gospel is peace.
Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother,
and in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
let all within us praise His holy name.
Christ is the Lord! O praise His name forever!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!
His pow'r and glory evermore proclaim!

Text Placide Cappeau (1808-1877)
Tune CANTIQUE DE NOËL Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)
In the Public Domain

ALL STAND AS ABLE FOR THE FOLLOWING.

The Prayer over the Gifts

Let us pray.

Jesus - Word made flesh, life of the world,
in your incarnation you embraced our poverty:
by your Spirit may we share

in your manger-held riches of heaven.

Blessed be God for ever.

Everything in heaven and on earth is yours,
O Lord.

**All things come from you,
and it is from what you have given us
that we now give to you. Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord is here
His Spirit is with us.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

It is always right to give you thanks,
God our Creator, loving and faithful, holy and strong.
You made us and the whole universe,
and filled your world with life.

You sent your Son to live among us,
Jesus our Saviour, Mary's child.
He suffered on the cross; he died to save us from our sins;
he rose in glory from the dead.

You send your Spirit to bring new life to the world,
and clothe us with power from on high.
And so we join the angels to celebrate and sing:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Father, on the night before he died,
Jesus shared a meal with his friends.
He took the bread, and thanked you.
He broke it, and gave it to them, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this to remember me.
After the meal, Jesus took the cup of wine.
He thanked you, and gave it to them, saying:
Drink this, all of you.
This is my blood, the new promise of God's unfailing love.
Do this to remember me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

Father, as we bring this bread and wine,
and remember his death and resurrection,
send your Holy Spirit,
that we who share these gifts
may be fed by Christ's body and his blood.
Pour your Spirit on us that we may love one another,
work for the healing of the earth,
and share the good news of Jesus,
as we wait for his coming in glory.

For honour and praise belong to you, Father,
with Jesus your Son, and the Holy Spirit:
one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Rejoicing in God's presence here amongst us,
let us pray as our Saviour has taught us,
boldly saying,

**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,
the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Silence is kept for a time.

The Breaking of the Bread

The presider breaks the consecrated bread and says,

We break the bread of life,
and that life is the light of the world.
**God here among us,
light in the midst of us,
bring us to your light and life.**

THE COMMUNION

The presider invites the people to share in communion, saying,

Christ is the true bread
which has come down from heaven.
Lord, give us this bread always.

Eat and drink with faith and thanksgiving.
God's holy food for God's holy people.
Thanks be to God.

*The presider and those assisting him will receive first, followed
by the choir and then the rest of the congregation.*

*We now enter a time of quiet reflection on the great gifts of God.
Also, at any time feel free to sing any of the following music.*

Communion music

“Lamb of God”

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:

grant us peace.

“Lord, you were rich beyond all splendour”

1 Lord, you were rich beyond all splendour,
yet, for love’s sake, became so poor;
leaving your throne in glad surrender,
sapphire-paved courts for stable floor:
Lord, you were rich beyond all splendour,
yet, for love’s sake, became so poor.

2 You are our God beyond all praising,
yet, for love’s sake, became a man;
stooping so low, but sinners raising
heavenwards, by your eternal plan:
you are our God, beyond all praising,
yet for love’s sake, became a man.

3 Lord, you are love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship you;
Emmanuel, within us dwelling,
make us and keep us pure and true:
Lord, you are love beyond all telling,
Saviour and King, we worship you.

Text Frank Houghton (1984-1972) from 2 Corinthians 8:9
Tune QUELLE EST CETTE ODEUR AGREABLE, French traditional melody
OMF International CCLI #2319023

“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 all men.
love for plea and gift and sign.

Text Christina Georgina Rossetti (1830-1894)

Music Reginald Owen Morris (1886-1948)

“Oh come, little children”

1 Oh come, little children; oh come, one and all.
Look into the manger in Bethlehem’s stall;
for their, little children, on this holiest night,
our God sends from heaven his Son, your delight.

2 He lies there before you, asleep in the hay,
with Mary and Joseph to guard him and pray.
The wandering shepherds look in at the door,
and seeing the infant, they kneel and adore.

3 Adore like the shepherds! Your glad voices raise
with those of the angels who sing in his praise.
Your chorus will echo from earth to the sky,
with “Glory to God in his heaven most high.”

Text Christoph von Schmid (1768-1854)

Tune Johann Abraham Peter Schutz (1747-1800)

AFTER COMMUNION

The presider, standing, says,

As we stand let us pray.

PLEASE STAND, AS ABLE.

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 forever. Amen.

The presider then pronounces the following blessing.

The Blessing

May the joy of the angels,
the eagerness of the shepherds,
the humility of Joseph, the obedience of Mary,
and the peace of the Christ-child
be yours this Christmas;

and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be amongst you and remain with you,
and all those you love and care for,
now and forevermore. **Amen.**

Closing Acclamation

Let us bless the living God:
He was born of the Virgin Mary,
revealed in his glory,

worshipped by the angels,
proclaimed among the nations,

believed in throughout the world,
exalted to the highest heavens.

Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation,
now and forever. Amen.

The following is then declared.

Dismissal

Go in the joy of Christ's birth.
Praise and thanks be to God.

Recessional Carol "Joy to the world"

- 1 Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
let earth receive the King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and heaven
and nature sing.
- 2 Joy to the earth! The Saviour reigns:
let us glad songs employ,
while fields and floods,
rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy,

repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

- 3 No more let wrongs and sorrows grow,
 nor thorns infest the ground;
 he comes to make
 his blessings flow
 far as our sin is found,
 far as our sin is found,
 far as, far as our sin is found.
- 4 He rules the world with truth and grace,
 and makes the nations prove
 the glories of his righteousness
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders of his love,
 and wonders, wonders of his love.

Text Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Tune ANTIOCH, George Frederic Handel (1685-1759)

Postlude



We acknowledge that the land on which
we gather is the traditional unceded
territory of the Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet)
and Mi'kmaq Peoples.

Those serving for tonight's worship:

<i>Bulletin preparation</i>	Lori Maker (Parish Office)
<i>Altar Guild</i>	Marilyn G., Sherry Desjardins
<i>Sunday School</i>	Laura Janes
<i>Sound system</i>	Chris Titus
<i>Greeter</i>	Patti & Jim Touchbourne
<i>Layreader & First Reader</i>	Joyce Mitchell
<i>Second Reader</i>	Ann Stone
<i>Prayer Leader</i>	Layreader
<i>Organist & Choir Director</i>	David Mitchell
<i>Guitarist</i>	Shayne Galbraith
<i>Trumpet</i>	Keith Joyce
<i>French horn</i>	Dale Caines
<i>Presider & preacher</i>	Keith Joyce
<i>Counters</i>	Terry Ricketts & Janet Brown
<i>Building care</i>	Jeff Maker

Good Shepherd's Christmas worship

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25
THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD:
CHRISTMAS DAY

10:00 am

COMMUNION OF THE NATIVITY

Sunday, DECEMBER 28
FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS
10:30 am Holy Eucharist (BAS)

Notes on this evening's Readings

Isaiah 52:7-10 The prophet has urged the people to rise out of their despondency. They are in exile and yearn to return to Jerusalem. They believe that God has deserted them for their infidelity. God speaks: my people will know about me; “therefore in that day they shall know that it is I who speak: here am I”.

Hebrews 1:1-4 Hebrews stresses the importance of salvation through Christ – perhaps to Jewish Christians who were tempted to return to Judaism, or to Jews who were interested in becoming Christian. Christ is the perfect priest: he is *mediator* between the Father and humans and *purifies* us of our sins.

John 1:1-14 John wrote his account of the gospel so that we “may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah [the Christ], the Son of God, and that through believing we may have life in his name”. John begins with a summary of the faith. © 1996-2022 Chris Haslam

NOTICES

Holiday Office Hours:

Lori will be on vacation from December 30th until January 6th, and the office will reopen on Tuesday, January 7th at 9am.

PRAYER

Prayer for folks in nursing or special care homes

Ginny Abbott, Diane Cormier, Frances Finley, Ann Hoben, Ruth Northeast, Elizabeth Parks, Elsie Rusling, Arlene Trask

Prayer for those in hospital or sick at home

Andrew Aalund, Diane Basque, Margaret Boyer, Edith Chilton, Shelly Clark Collins, Linda Cunningham, Jo-Ann Diamond, Bonnie Dean, Wendy DeWitt, Ernest Ellingwood, Barb Ellis, Debbie Green, Kaye Mallory, Pam Melanson, Michael Penchoff, Susan Penchoff, Carol Price, Margaret Ann Reid, Lois Shaw, Bob Sherwood, Mykayla Spinney, Norm Toole, Dennis Totton, Joe Totton, Robbie Wong.

**Flowers in the Sanctuary are given to the glory of God
and in memory of**

**Dearly departed Harris Family: Louise, Loman, Nancy, Rose, and
Jean-Paul- *from son Blair and daughter-in-law Tina***

**In memory of friends and relatives departed-*from Daryl and
Marilyn (Peacock) Galbraith and family***

**G. Suzanne Skidmore-*from daughter Patti, son-in-law Jim
Touchbourne, grandchildren André and Louise***

**Beloved family members Gillian Joyce, Derek Allen, Margery
Palomino, and Rob Joyce-*from Keith and Elinor Joyce***

An image of a potential typical home in Bethlehem when
Jesus was born.



Mary's Song

Blue homespun and the bend of my breast
keep warm this small hot naked star
fallen to my arms. (Rest...
you who have had so far to come.)
Now nearness satisfies
the body of God sweetly. Quiet he lies
whose vigor hurled a universe. He sleeps
whose eyelids have not closed before.

His breath (so slight it seems
no breath at all) once ruffled the dark deeps
to sprout a world. Charmed by dove's voices,
the whisper of straw, he dreams,
hearing no music from his other spheres.
Breath, mouth, ears, eyes
he is curtailed who overflowed all skies,
all years. Older than eternity, now he
is new. Now native to earth as I am, nailed
to my poor planet, caught
that I might be free, blind in my womb
to know my darkness ended,
brought to this birth for me to be new-born,
and for him to see me mended
I must see him torn.

By Luci Shaw

A Blessed and Happy Christmas to All!



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