

couple (father and mother) protect, defend and raise their children (the word, "parents" appears three times.) Jesus, as the Only Begotten Son of God was given the fulfilment of the will of God even through His parents. They were tasked with teaching Jesus all the things necessary for His life on Earth. The importance of parents cannot be understated, and the importance of Jesus' parents is clear. Jesus is the perfect example of God's willingness to lead us, to keep us and to be involved in the most mundane parts of our life.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

① O Lord God, Father in Heaven, Who in the sending of Your Son, Jesus Christ, did in a wonderful manner give Your Love to us and show Your great kindness. We thank You for this marvelous gift and for the promise that through His name whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have Eternal Life.

We ask You to give us the fullness of His grace, that we may understand Your glory and truth in Him. Help us to receive Him into our hearts in faith, so that, believing in Him as Your perfect revelation, and trusting Him as our only and perfect Savior, we may have power to become Your Eternal sons and heirs according to the assurance of Eternal Life. Grant us the work of Your Holy Spirit that we may be guided by the light of Jesus Christ in all wisdom, counsel, and understanding, that our path may be clear, and that we may walk in obedience to His commandments, teachings, and example.

Extend Your dominion over all lands and nations. Give righteous wisdom to all who rule, so that people everywhere may be governed in peace, justice, and mercy. In all homes, give parents grace and wisdom to bring up their children in the knowledge of their Lord, which is the beginning of all wisdom. In all schools, grant teachers such knowledge as will direct them to the truth as it is in Christ our Lord. Teach us that we may serve You wherever we are employed.

And now, O Father in Heaven, let Your hand rest in benediction on this new year, to the end that we increasingly discover the exceeding riches of Your grace in Christ Jesus. In sorrow or joy let the eyes of our understanding be enlightened. In prosperity or trial let us know the working of Your mighty power and the expectation of our calling.

Hear us as we bring to You our private petitions. (**Time of silent prayer.**)

In these and all other things in which we stand in need, give Your help and mercy, O Father. This we pray in the name of Your beloved Son Jesus Christ.

© Amen.

CHRISTMAS TWO

Chant Tone



Introit

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have | seen His glory,*
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of | grace and truth.

Praise the Lord! For it is good to sing praises | to our God;*
for it is pleasant, and a song of praise is — fitting.

Great is our Lord, and abun | dant in power;*
His understanding is beyond — measure.

But the Lord takes pleasure in those who — fear Him,*
in those who hope in His | steadfast love.

Praise the Lord, O Je | rusalem!*
Praise your God, O — Zion!

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy — Spirit;
as it was in the be — ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. — Amen.

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have | seen His glory,*
glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of | grace and truth.

(Antiphon, John 1:14;
Psalm 147:1, 5, 11-12)

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, You have poured into our hearts the true Light of Your incarnate Word. Grant that this Light may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Gradual

To us a Child is born, to us a Son is — given;*
and the government shall be upon His — shoulder,
And His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, | Mighty God,*
Everlasting Father, | Prince of Peace.
Sing to the Lord a — new song,*
for He has done — marvelous things!

(Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a)

ENTRANCE PRAYER: O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ, we praise and adore You for choosing us in Him before the foundation of the world. We cannot understand how this is possible, but we believe it because of the clear testimony of Your Word. You destined us in love to be Your children through Christ, according to the purpose of Your will. Empower us with Your Holy Spirit to bear witness to the Light that has come into the world. All this we pray in the name of Him Whose Light still shines to all the world for the salvation of as many as will believe, even the name of Jesus Christ the Child of Bethlehem. Amen (So be it, Lord.)

THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS IS TOO SHORT. Which probably explains why the world begins the celebration the day after Thanksgiving (or as early as they dare.) Only slightly more than half of the years will have two Sundays after Christmas. This is one of those years when we get a second opportunity to gather as Christmas Christians to sing the hymns of the wonder of the birth of our Savior. The Season of Christmas is too short for another reason, the world has stopped playing the hymns of "peace on Earth, goodwill among men" and moved back to the grumpy dreary days of winter. We will do our best then to keep before them the message of Jesus the Christ, our Savior. We welcome everyone who has come to continue the celebration of our freedom, purchased and won in the life of a Baby born so many years ago.

THEME OF THE DAY:

Good and Evil

INTROIT—(Antiphon: John 1:14;) Psalm 147:1, 5, 11-12

John pointed us to the facts of Jesus. Jesus is God. He took on our flesh to redeem us from our sin. The Word became flesh. Psalm 147 is a song of praise written after the building of the walls and buildings of Jerusalem. David understood that the temple would eventually be built there, so that soon the Messiah would come and take His rightful place.

COLLECT

We want to walk in the way of the Lord, but often sin darkens the path. We thank God that He put the Light of Christ in our hearts and anticipate that He will show us the right way to live.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON—1 Kings 3:4-15

If you had one wish that was absolutely going to be fulfilled, what would you desire? You might want to be very careful. Solomon thought the wisdom to judge good and evil would be useful to govern. Sadly, (as with Adam and Eve,) he ended up falling to evil. God gave us the ability to follow the good and reject the bad in the water and Word or our Baptism. His promise is a long and purposeful life, and we fail. Only Jesus, in our flesh was able to live out the good will of God in all His perfection.

GRADUAL—Isaiah 9:6; Psalm 98:1a

It is always wonderful to consider a baby being born, however, this Baby was born to suffer our life, and die the death we will never feel; (being abandoned by God.) The Innocent One died that we would live in the presence of God forever.

EPISTLE LESSON—Ephesians 1:3-14

Paul praised God for all that He freely bestowed on humanity and His whole creation. Heading the list of reasons to praise God, was the fact that God, "chose us in Him before the creation of the world." Our election is to salvation and also to holiness of life. God's Love for us is demonstrated in Christ Jesus, in Whom, "we have redemption through His blood." Paul gave thanks for the conversion of the Ephesians. Paul prayed for them because Christians are at the same time saint and sinner and (life being what it is in a sinful world) Christians need all the help they can get.

GOSPEL LESSON—Luke 2:40-52

Historically this Sunday was called, "The Sunday after New Year," and used Matthew 2:13-23, the "Killing of the Innocents," which we moved to Christmas One during the previous change to a three year cycle of readings in 1982. (Back then we proscribed John 1:1-18 as the lesson for today. In 2006 we changed to Luke 2:40-52. God's plan is that a married