

## **Prelude: What Child Is This**

### **As With Gladness Men of Old**

1. As with gladness, men of old  
Did the guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright;  
So, most gracious Lord, may we  
Evermore be led to thee.
2. As with joyful steps they sped,  
Savior, to thy lowly bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
Thee whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek thy mercy-seat.
3. As they offered gifts most rare  
At thy cradle rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee our heavenly King.
4. Holy Jesus, every day  
Keep us in the narrow way,  
And, when earthly things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds thy glory hide.
5. In the heavenly country bright  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its light, its joy, its crown,  
Thou its sun which goes not down;  
There for ever may we sing  
Alleluias to our King.

**Introit: Psalm 24** *The King of Glory*

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein,

**for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.**

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

**He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.**

He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

**Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.**

Lift up your heads, O gates!

**And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.**

Who is this King of glory?

**The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!**

Lift up your heads, O gates!

**And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.**

Who is this King of glory?

**The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!**

In the name of the Father and of the ✙ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen**

## The CONFESSION OF SINS

Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, imploring him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, **who made heaven and earth.**

I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,

**and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to you that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against you by thought, word, and deed; therefore we flee for refuge to your boundless mercy, seeking and imploring your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**O most merciful God, since you have given your only begotten Son to die for us, have mercy on us and for his sake grant us forgiveness of all our sins; and by your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of you and of your will and true obedience to your Word, to the end that by your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy on us and has given his only Son to die for us and for his sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on his name he gives power to become the children of God and has promised them his Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, to us all. **Amen**

**Ephesians 3:1–6 *The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed***

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

**Matthew 2:1–12 *The Visit of the Wise Men***

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’ ” Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.”

After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

### **We Three Kings**

1. We three kings of Orient are  
Bearing gifts we traverse afar  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
Following yonder star

#### **Refrain:**

Star of wonder, star of night  
Star with royal beauty bright  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light.

2. Born a king on Bethlehem's plain  
Gold I bring to crown him again  
King forever, ceasing never  
Over us all to reign.
3. Frankincense to offer have I  
Incense owns a Deity nigh  
Prayer and praising, all men raising  
Worship him, God on high.
4. Myrrh is mine its bitter perfume  
Breathes a life of gathering gloom  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying  
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

5. Glorious now behold him arise  
King and God and Sacrifice  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Sounds through the earth and skies

**Sermon: *It's a Wonderful Life.***

**Prayers**

**Benediction**

**O Savior of Our Fallen Race**

1. Oh Savior of our fallen race,  
O Brightness of the Father's face,  
O Son who shared the Father's might  
Before the world knew day or night,  
O Jesus, very Light of light,  
Our constant star in sins deep night:  
Now hear the prayers Your people pray  
Throughout the world this holy day.
2. Remind us Lord of life and grace  
How once, to save our fallen race,  
You put our human vesture on  
And came to us as Mary's son.  
Today, as year by year its light  
Brings to our world a promise bright  
One precious truth outshines the sun:  
Salvation comes from You alone.
3. For from the Father's throne You came,  
His banished children to reclaim;  
And earth and sea and sky revere  
The love of Him who sent You here.  
And we are jubilant today,  
For You have washed our guilt away.  
O hear the glad new song we sing  
On this, the birth of Christ our King!

4. O Savior of our fallen race,  
The world will see Your radiant face  
For You who came to us before  
Will come again and all restore.  
Let songs of praise Your name adorn,  
O Christ, Redeemer, virgin-born  
Whom with the Father we adore  
And Holy Spirit evermore!

**Postlude: Newborn**