

### **Opening Song "Jesus Entered Egypt"**

Jesus entered Egypt fleeing Herod's hand,  
Living as an alien in a foreign land.  
Far from home and country with his family,  
was there room and welcome for this refugee?

Jesus was a migrant living as a guest  
with the friends and strangers who could offer rest.  
Do we hold wealth lightly so that we can share  
shelter with the homeless, and abundant care?

Jesus crosses borders with the wand'ring poor,  
searching for a refuge, for an open door.  
Do our words and actions answer Jesus' plea:  
"Give the lowly welcome, and you welcome me"?

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### **Opening Litany** Your response is ... "we are seeking light"

#### **Song "It Came Upon A Midnight Clear"**

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious king."  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

And you, 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;  
oh, rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing: Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

**Prayer of the Day:** O God our redeemer, you created light that we might live, and you illumine our world with your beloved Son. By your Spirit comfort us in all darkness, and turn us toward the light of Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

### **Children's Message**

**Reading** Jeremiah 31:7-14

### **Sermon**

**Christmas Creed** (sung with words on the screen)

### **Prayer/Offering/Communion**

**Preface and Praise (tune: "Angels We Have Heard on High")**

**P:** May the good Lord be with you. Lift your hearts to God in praise.

**C: May the Lord be with you too. To the Lord our hearts we raise**

**All: GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!**

**In the word of God made flesh great and wondrous mystery,  
now we see with vision fresh God's abundant majesty.**

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!**

**Therefore, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven above  
let us praise his name whose birth, brings to us eternal love.**

**GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!**

**Consecration (tune "I Heard the Bells On Christmas Day")**

**C: The night Lord Jesus was betrayed  
he took the bread and when he'd prayed,  
he broke and gave them of the bread  
and unto his disciples said:**

(The pastor offers the words of institution for the bread.)

**C: Then when the sacred meal was o'r,  
our blessed savior spoke once more.  
He offered thanks, and lifted up  
to give to all the blessed cup:**

(The pastor offers the words of institution for the cup)

**Lord's Prayer, Distribution/Prayer/Benediction**

**Closing Song "Forever Emmanuel"**

We are not alone, we are not alone, with every breath,  
through every storm, we are not alone.

Chorus:

Sing Hallelujah, Hallelujah, forever Emmanuel.

Hallelujah, Hallelujah, forever Emmanuel.

Fill us with your love, fill us with your love,  
with hearts of grace for everyone, fill us with your love. (Chorus)

Lead us to your peace, lead us to your peace,  
where hunger and oppression cease, lead us to your peace. (Chorus)

Words and Music by Larry Olson

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**Jeremiah 31:7-14**

**New Revised Standard Version (along with some verses from the Message translation)**

<sup>7</sup>For thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,  
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;  
proclaim, give praise, and say,  
"Save, O LORD, your people,  
the remnant of Israel."

<sup>8</sup>See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,  
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,  
among them the blind and the lame,  
those with child and those in labor, together;  
a great company, they shall return here.

<sup>9</sup>With weeping they shall come,  
and with consolations<sup>[a]</sup> I will lead them back,  
I will let them walk by brooks of water,  
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;  
for I have become a father to Israel,  
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

<sup>10</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,  
and declare it in the coastlands far away;  
Tell them, 'The One who scattered Israel  
will gather them together again,  
and will keep them as a shepherd a flock.'

<sup>11</sup> I, GOD, will pay a stiff ransom price for Jacob;  
I'll free him from the grip of the Babylonian bully.  
The people will climb up Zion's slopes shouting with joy,  
their faces beaming because of GOD's bounty—  
Grain and wine and oil,  
flocks of sheep, herds of cattle.  
Their lives will be like a well-watered garden,  
never again left to dry up.  
Young women will dance and be happy,  
young men and old men will join in.

I will turn their mourning into joy,  
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

<sup>14</sup> I'll make sure that their priests get three square meals a day,  
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,  
says the LORD.