

**Matins propers, December 25**  
**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD, GOD AND SAVIOR**  
**JESUS CHRIST**

*Supplement for The Order of Matins: Sunday and Feasts, 2006*

*"The Lord is God" is sung in Tone 4, p 162*

**Troparion of the Nativity - Tone 4**

Your birth, O Christ our God, has shed up - on the world the light of  
knowl - edge; for through it, those who wor-shipped the stars have learned from  
a star to worship you, the Sun of Jus - tice, and to know you, the Dawn  
from on High. Glo - ry to you, O Lord!

**Cantor:** Glory... *(and all repeat the troparion: "Your birth, O Christ our God...")*

**Cantor:** Now and ever... *(and all repeat the troparion: "Your birth, O Christ our God...")*

**Sessional Hymn I - Tone 1 podoben: Hrob tvoj**

For our sake, O long - suf - fer - ing Sav - ior, You were placed in the  
an - i - mal's man - ger, and You will - ing - ly lived as an In - fant.

The shep-herds and an-gels ex-tolled You, say - ing: Glo-ry and praise

to Christ our God who is born on earth and de - i - fies the hu-man race.

*Cantor*

Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit now and

ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

*All repeat the sessional hymn: "For our sake, O long-suffering Savior..."*

**Sessional Hymn II - Tone 3 podoben: Krasot'i**

O The - o - to - kos, you carried in your womb, in the flesh, the One

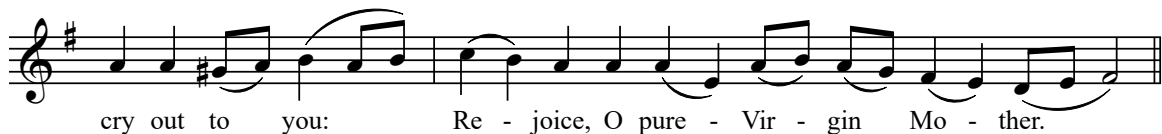
who is e - ter - nal, in - com - pre - hen - si - ble, and con - sub - stan - tial

with the un - seen Fa - ther, the One and indivi - sible di - vin - i - ty

of the Trin - i - ty. O ev - er - praised One, He shines forth

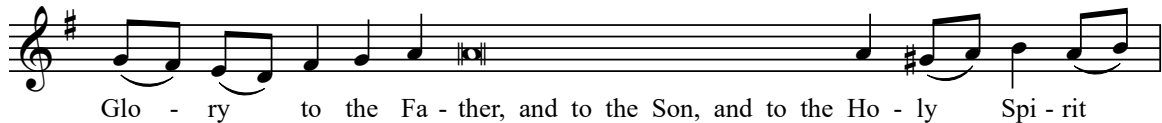


your grace in - to the world. There - fore, we un-ceas-ing-ly



cry out to you: Re - joice, O pure - Vir - gin Mo - ther.

*Cantor*



Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit



now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

*All repeat the sessional hymn: "O Theotokos, you carried in your womb..."*

*Polyeleos, p. 16.*

### **Exaltation**

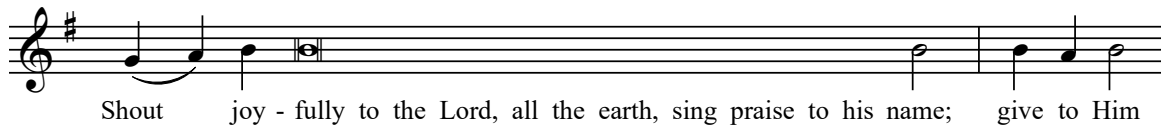


We ex - tol You, O life - giv - ing Christ! For our sake You are



now born in the flesh from the un - be - trothed, all - pure Vir - gin Mar - y.

*Cantor*



Shout joy - fully to the Lord, all the earth, sing praise to his name; give to Him



glo - rious praise.

*The exaltation is repeated after each verse:  
We extol you, O life-giving Christ...*

*Cantor*



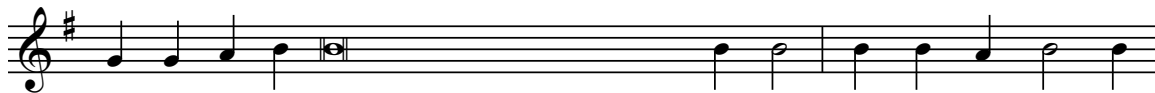
The Lord has sent de - liv - er - ance to his peo - ple.

*Cantor*



The Lord said to my Lord, You are my Son; this day I have be - got - ten You.

*Cantor*



Be - fore the day - star, like the dew, I have begot - ten you. The Lord has sworn, and



He will not re - pent.

*Cantor*



Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spi - rit now and ev - er



and for - ev - er. A - men.

*After the last repetition of the Exaltation:*

*Three times*



Al - le - lu - ia. al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, glo - ry to you. O God.

*The Alleluia is folowed by the Bulgarian verse ("Bolharski pripiv"):*

**Bulgarian verse** (*"Bolharski pripiv"*)

O come, O come! Let us sing with the an-gel -  
ic choirs: Glo - ry to God in the high - - - est  
who is now born in a cave.

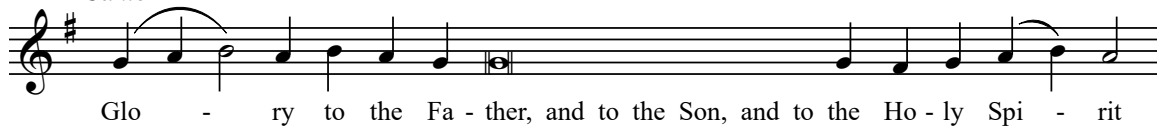
**Sessional Hymn III - Tone 4 podoben: Udivisja Josif**

Come, O be-liev-ers, let us see where Christ is born. Fur-ther-more,  
with the Ma-gi, the kings from the East, let us fol-low wher-ev-er  
the star goes. The an-gels are prais-ing Him there un-ceas-ing-ly;  
the shep-herds are sing-ing a wor-thy song which says: Glo-ry to  
God in the high-est; glo-ry to Him who Is born of the



Vir - - - gin in a cave in Beth - le - hem of Ju - de - a.

*Cantor*



Glo - ry to the Fa - ther, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spi - rit



now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

*All repeat the sessional hymn: "Come, O believers, let us see where Christ is born..."*

*Festal Gradual Hymn, p. 312.*

*The service continues on p. 23 with the singing of the prokeimenon.*

**Prokeimenon - Tone 4** (Psalm 109: 3-4, 1):



From the womb, be - fore the mor - ning star, I have be - got - ten you.



The Lord has sworn and he will not re - pent.

**Verse:** The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool.

*"Let everything that lives and that breathes..." is sung in Tone 4, p. 171.*

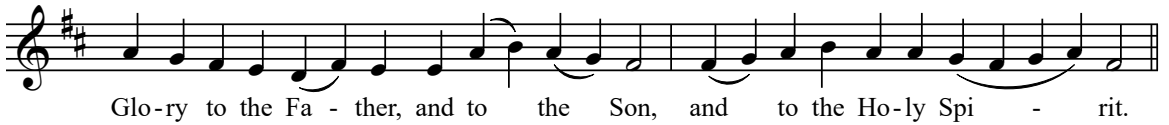
**Gospel:** Matthew 1: 16-25 (*the birth of the Lord*)

*"Having beheld the resurrection of Christ..." is not sung. The service continues with the chanting of Psalm 50, p. 28.*

## Stichera after Psalm 50

*Cantor*

*Tone 2 Bolhar*



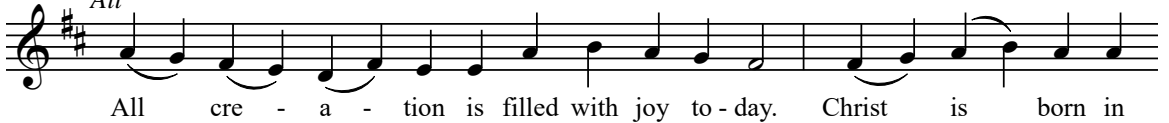
*All*



*Cantor*

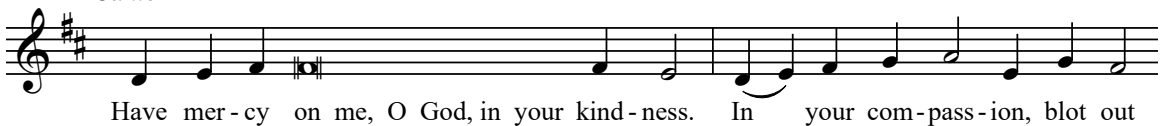


*All*

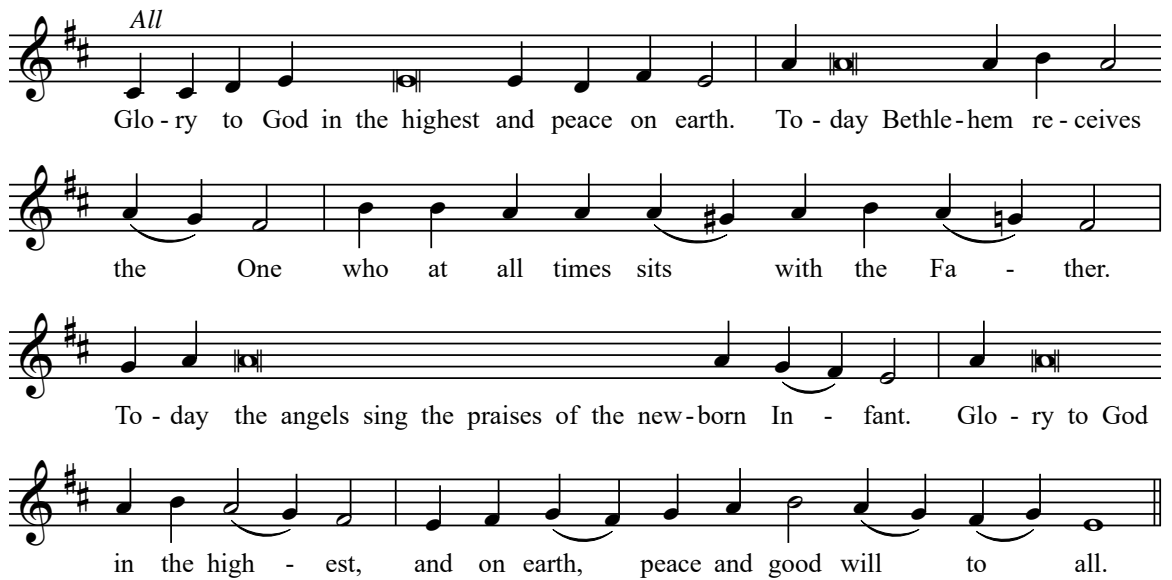


*Cantor*

*Tone 6 samohlasen*



*All*



Glo-ry to God in the highest and peace on earth. To - day Bethle-hem re- ceives  
 the One who at all times sits with the Fa - ther.  
 To - day the angels sing the praises of the new-born In - fant. Glo - ry to God  
 in the high - est, and on earth, peace and good will to all.

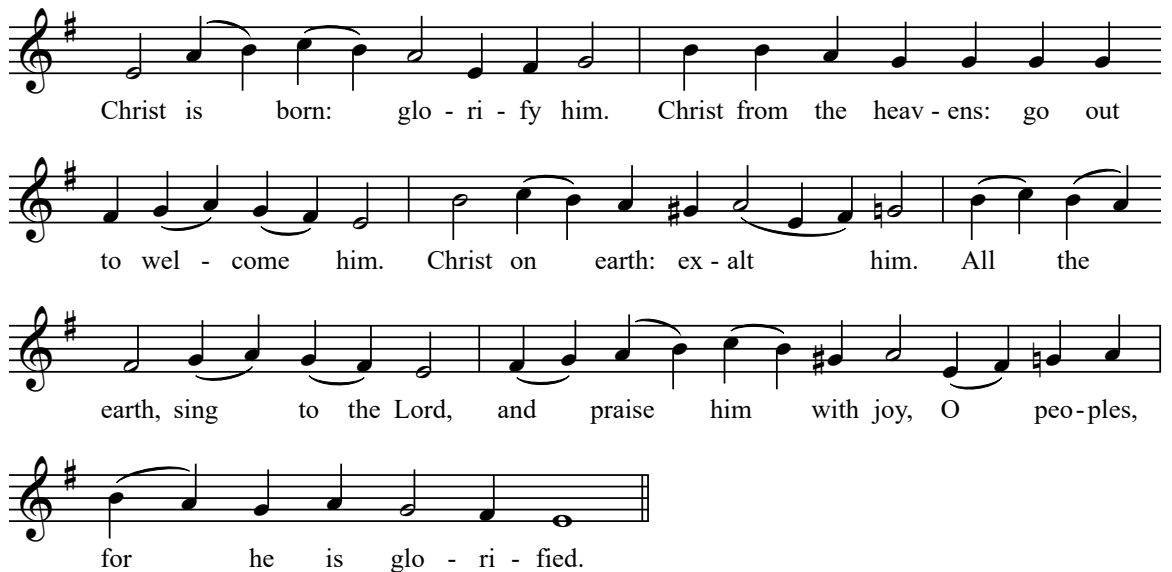
*The service continues with the litany, "Save your people, O Lord..." on p. 30.*

## The Canon of the Nativity

### Ode 1

#### Irmos

*Tone 1 samopodoben*



Christ is born: glo - ri - fy him. Christ from the heav - ens: go out  
 to wel - come him. Christ on earth: ex - alt him. All the  
 earth, sing to the Lord, and praise him with joy, O peo-ple,  
 for he is glo - ri - fied.

*Refrain*

Glo - ry to your ho - ly Na - ti - vi - ty, O Lord!

Although created in the image of God, humankind fell from the divine and higher life, and through transgression became entirely subject to corruption and decay. But now the all-good Creator fashions human nature anew; for this reason, we glorify Him. *Refrain*

When the Creator saw the one whom He had created with his own hands perishing, He lowered the heavens and came down; He took upon himself human nature from the most holy and pure Virgin, truly becoming flesh; for this reason, we glorify Him. *Refrain*

Glo - ry to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spir - it;

now and ev - er and for - ev - er. A - men.

Christ our God is the Son and the Brightness of the Father; He is Wisdom, Word, and Power. And unknown to the heavenly hosts and those upon the earth, He became man and has won us back again; for this reason, we glorify Him.

*The irmos may be repeated as katavasia, if desired.*

### Ode 3

#### Irmos

Let us sing to the Son begotten of the Father without change be-fore all

a - ges. Let us cry a - loud to Christ our God, in - car-nate

with-out seed from the Virgin in these lat-ter days: you have ex-alt-ed our horn;

Ho - ly are you, O Lord.

*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

Although Adam was formed from the clay of the earth, he shared In God's life; yet through the tempting of a woman, he sunk and fell into corruption. But now when he sees Christ born of a woman, he cries aloud: For my sake, You have become as I am; glory to You, O Lord! *Refrain*

You made yourself, O Christ, a creature in the form of clay, and even took on our flesh, thereby making us partakers in your divine nature. You have become a mortal, yet still remain God. You are our strength; glory to You, O Lord!

Glory.... now and ever...

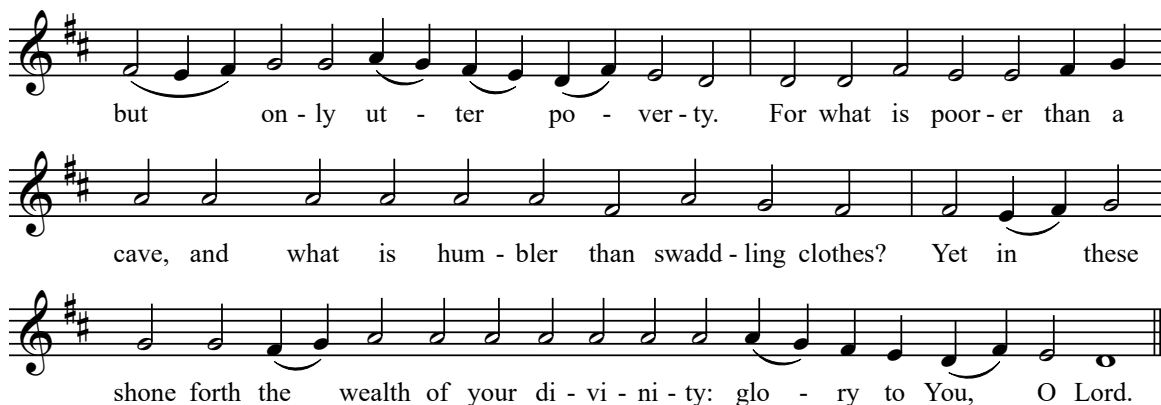
Rejoice, O Bethlehem, for you are the Queen among the princes of Judah; because from you comes forth, in the sight of all, Christ himself, the Shepherd who watches over Israel, and He that is seated upon the Cherubim. He is our strength and reigns over all.

**Hypakoe - Tone 8**

Call - ing the Ma - gi by a star, hea - ven brought forth the

first fruits of the Gen-tiles to You, a Babe ly - ing in a man - ger;

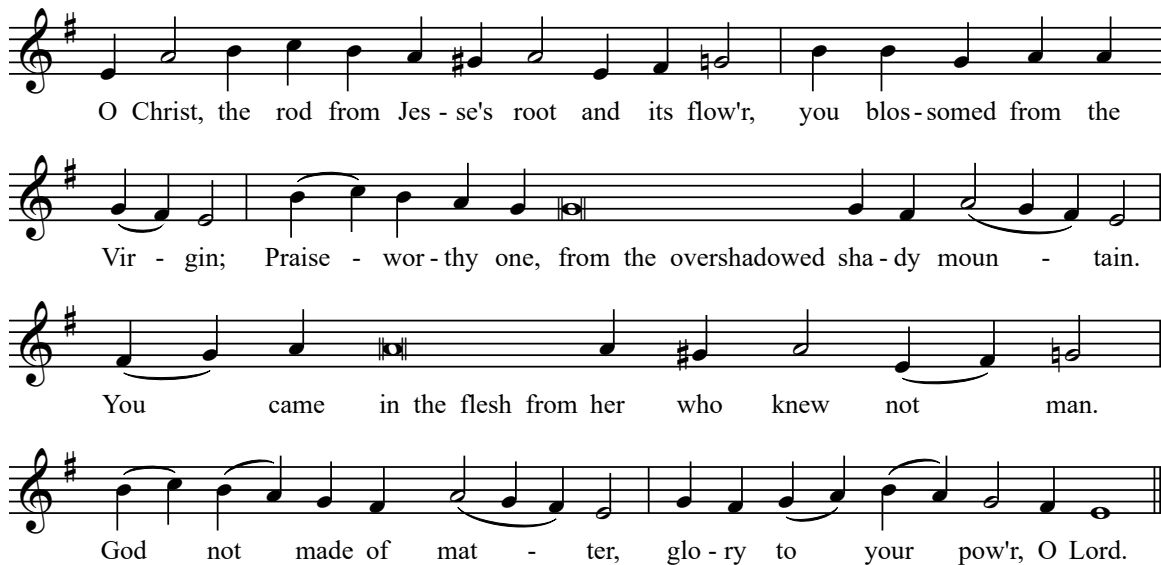
and they were a - mazed to see nei - ther scep - ter nor throne



but on - ly ut - ter po - ver - ty. For what is poor - er than a  
cave, and what is hum - bler than swadd - ling clothes? Yet in these  
shone forth the wealth of your di - vi - ni - ty: glo - ry to You, O Lord.

#### Ode 4

#### Irmos



O Christ, the rod from Jes - se's root and its flow'r, you blos - sored from the  
Vir - gin; Praise - wor - thy one, from the overshadowed sha - dy moun - tain.  
You came in the flesh from her who knew not man.  
God not made of mat - ter, glo - ry to your pow'r, O Lord.

*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

In the days of old, Jacob foretold You, O Christ, calling You the Expectation of the nations. You have come forth from the tribe of Judah and have overcome the might of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria, turning their idolatry into faith pleasing to God. Glory to Your power, O Lord!

*Refrain*

Rising as a Star out of Jacob, O Master, You have brought joy to the Magi who interpreted wisely the words of Balaam, the prophet of old. They were led to You as the first fruits of the Gentiles, and You graciously received them as they brought You pleasing gifts. Glory to your power, O Lord!

Glory.... now and ever...

You have descended, O Christ, into the womb of the Virgin as dew upon the fleece and as drops of rain that shower the earth. Ethiopia, Tarshish, and the Isles of Arabia; the kings of Saba, of the Medes, and those of all the earth, bow down before You, O Savior. Glory to your power, O Lord!

### Ode 5

#### Irmos

O God of peace and Fa - ther of mer - cies, you sent us the An - gel  
of your great coun - sel to grant us peace. There - by, we have been led  
toward the light of di - vine knowl - edge and ris - ing out of the night  
we glo - ri - fy you, O Lov - er of us all.

*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

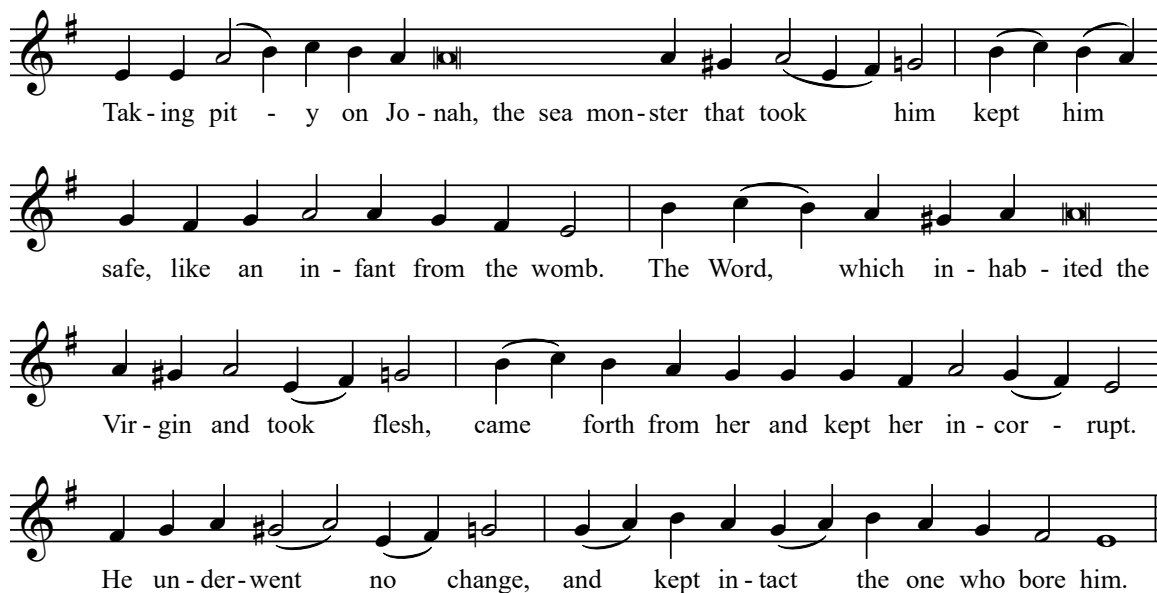
In obedience to the decree of Caesar, O Christ, You were registered among his servants; and You have set us free from being enslaved to the enemy and sin. Completely sharing in our poverty, You made our nature godlike by uniting yourself to us and by participating in our nature.

Glory.... now and ever...

As it was prophesied in times past, behold, the Virgin has conceived in her womb and has given birth to God in the flesh and still remained a virgin. Through her we are reconciled to God; let us sinners sing her praises, for she is truly the Mother of God.

## Ode 6

### Irmos



Tak - ing pit - y on Jo - nah, the sea mon - ster that took him kept him  
safe, like an in - fant from the womb. The Word, which in - hab - ited the  
Vir - gin and took flesh, came forth from her and kept her in - cor - rupt.  
He un - der - went no change, and kept in - tact the one who bore him.

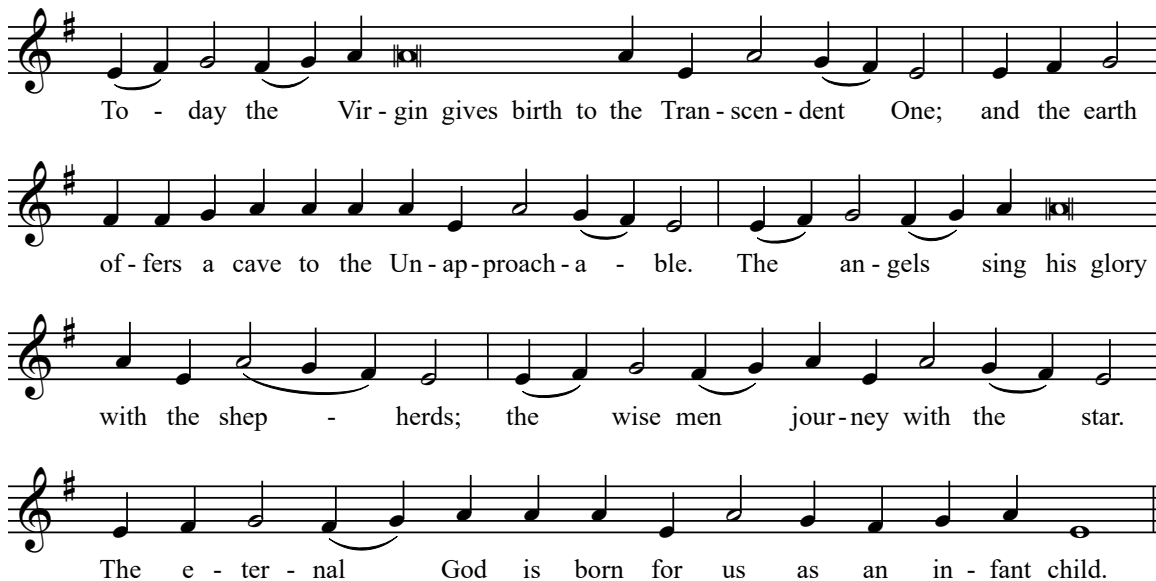
*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

Christ our God, begotten from the Father before the morning star, appears in the flesh; He, who directs the armies of heaven, is laid in a manger of dumb beasts. He, who frees the twisted bonds of sin, is wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Glory.... now and ever...

A young child, a Son is born from the race of Adam and is given to the faithful. He is the Father and Prince of the World to come; He is the all-powerful God who rules over all creation; He is called the Angel of great counsel.

### Kontakion of the Nativity - Tone 3

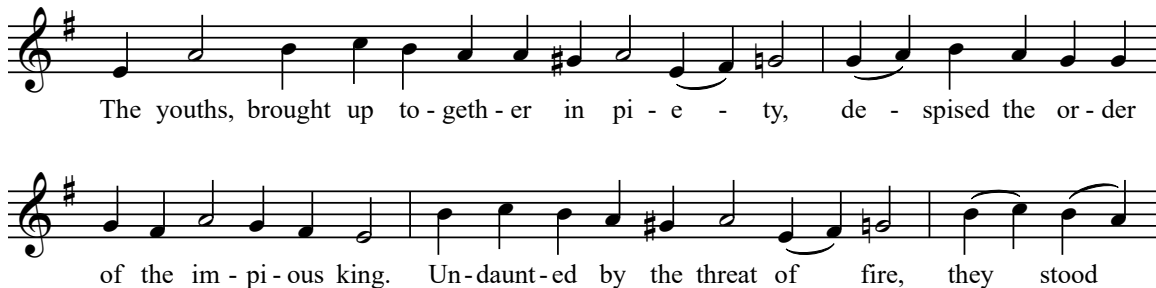


To - day the Vir - gin gives birth to the Tran - scen - dent One; and the earth  
of - fers a cave to the Un - ap - proach - a - ble. The an - gels sing his glory  
with the shep - herds; the wise men jour - ney with the star.  
The e - ter - nal God is born for us as an in - fant child.

**Ikos:** Bethlehem has opened up Eden for us. Come and let us see the delights that we have found there in secret. Come and let us gather the fruits of Paradise that are within the cave. There, the unwatered Root has manifested itself, and it has sprouted forgiveness. There, the undug Well, of which David yearned to drink, is found. There, the Virgin, who gave birth to the Infant, immediately quenched the thirst of Adam and David. Therefore, let us hasten to the place where the young Infant, the Eternal God, is born.

### Ode 7

#### Irmos



The youths, brought up to - geth - er in pi - e - ty, de - spised the or - der  
of the im - pi - ous king. Un - daunt - ed by the threat of fire, they stood

in the midst of the flames and sang this hymn: Bless-ed are you, God  
of our fa - thers.

*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

An angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds keeping night watch over their flocks. The shepherds were frightened as they saw the glory of the Lord around the angel and heard him say: Rejoice, for Christ is born. Blessed are You, O God of our Fathers. *Refrain*

At the word of the angel, the heavenly hosts cried aloud: Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace and good will to all; Christ has shone forth. Blessed are You, O God of our Fathers.

Glory.... now and ever...

When the angel had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another: Let us go and see this event which the Lord has made known to us. They hastened to Bethlehem and worshiped with Mary the One whom she had borne. They cried out: Blessed are You, O God of our Fathers.

## Ode 8

### Irmos

The fur-nace cooled like dew, mir-ac-u-lous-ly, fore-shad-owed a  
great mar-vel. For it did not burn the youths it re-ceived, nor did the  
fire of divinity burn the Virgin's womb by en-ter-ing it. There-fore, let us

strike up a hymn and sing: Let all cre - a - tion bless and ex - alt the Lord  
for - ev - er.

*Refrain:* Glory to your holy nativity, O Lord!

The children of David were once led captive from Zion by the daughter of Babylon through the strength of the sword; now, the Magi bringing gifts, are sent by her to beseech the Daughter of David in whom God took flesh. Therefore, let us praise God, saying: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him above all forever. *Refrain*

As captives, the children of Zion did not play upon their lyres; Christ, shining forth in Bethlehem, quiets all the iniquity of Babylon as well as the music of her harps. Therefore, let us praise God, saying: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him above all forever.

Glory.... now and ever...

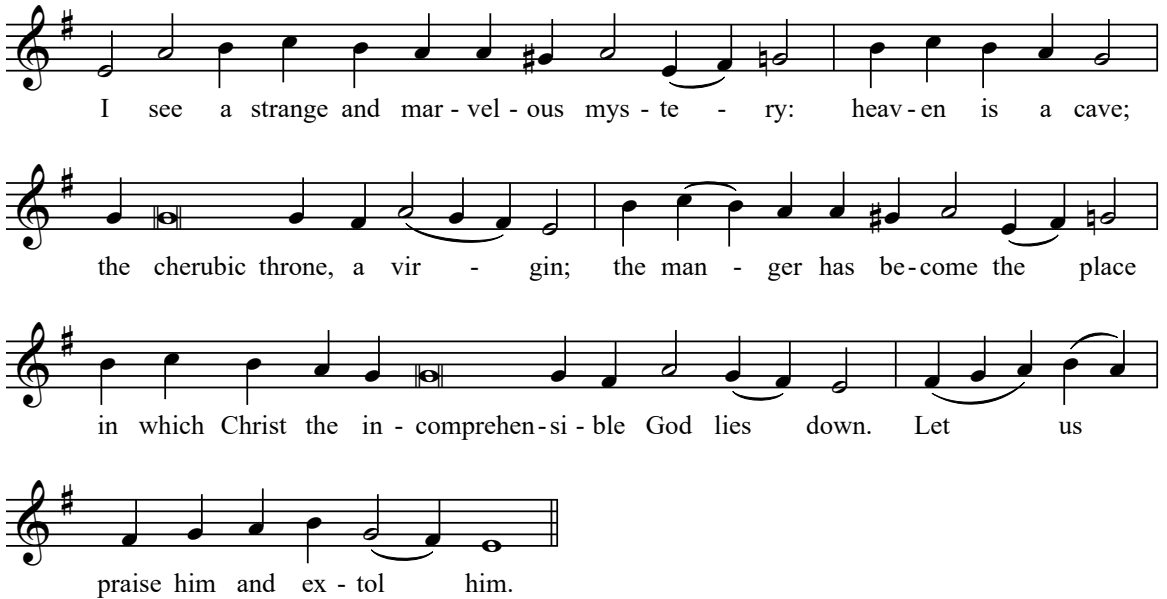
Babylon plundered Zion, the Queen, and seized all her riches. But Christ, by a guiding star, attracted to Zion the wealth of Babylon with her kings who studied the stars. Therefore, let us praise God, saying: Let all creation bless the Lord and exalt Him above all forever.

*The Canticle of the Theotokos is omitted. Instead, the following magnification is sung:*

**Ode 9  
Magnification**

Ex - tol, ex - tol, O my soul, O my soul,  
Christ the King born in a cave, Christ the King, born in a cave.

## Irmos



I see a strange and mar-vel-ous mys-te-ry: heav-en is a cave;  
the cherubic throne, a vir-gin; the man-ger has be-come the place  
in which Christ the in-comprehen-si-ble God lies down. Let us  
praise him and ex-tol him.

O my soul, extol our God, born in the flesh from the Virgin.

Observing the unusual path of a mysterious and newly shining star which was brighter than any other heavenly light, the Magi learned that Christ the King was born on earth in Bethlehem for our salvation.

O my soul, extol our God, who is worshiped by the Magi.

The Magi asked of Herod: Where is the newborn King whose star we have seen? We have come to worship Him. The enemy of God was troubled and irrationally schemed how to kill Christ.

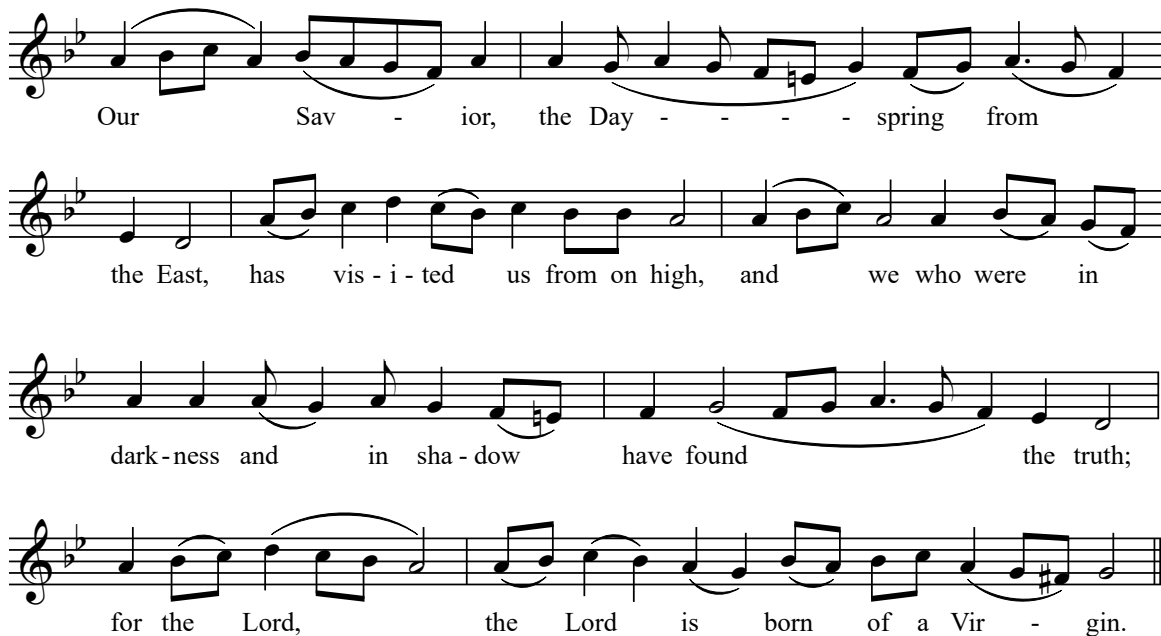
O my soul, extol the pure Virgin, who has given birth to Christ the King.

Herod asked the Magi, who had come to Bethlehem to worship Christ with their gifts, when they had first seen the star which directed them. But the Magi returned to their own country by the same star, thereby deceiving Herod, the killer of the Innocents.

*The magnification and irmos are repeated as katavasia.*

After the ninth ode, Little Litany (p. 36). Then the Hymn of Light (Svitilen) of the Nativity is sung:

**Hymn of Light - Tone 3 samopodoben:**



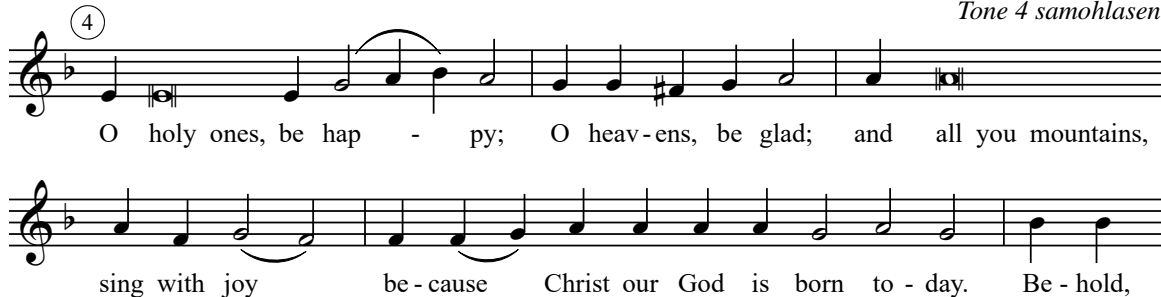
Our Sav - ior, the Day - - - spring from  
the East, has vis - i - ted us from on high, and we who were in  
dark - ness and in sha - dow have found the truth;  
for the Lord, the Lord is born of a Vir - gin.

**The Praises (Psalms 148-150)**

The opening verses of Psalm 148 are sung in Tone 4 (p. 184), followed by the recited verses. The stichera are sung beginning "on 4":

**Cantor:** Praise him for his powerful deeds,  
(on 4) praise his surpassing greatness.

*Tone 4 samohlasen*



④  
O holy ones, be hap - py; O heav - ens, be glad; and all you mountains,  
sing with joy be - cause Christ our God is born to - day. Be - hold,



the Vir - gin is enthroned like the Cher - u - bim, hold - ing in her arms the incarnate



Word of God. The shep - herds glo - rify with hymns the new - born Babe;



the Ma - gi of - fer gifts to their Mas - ter; and the angels sing prais - es



and say: O in - com - pre - hen - si - ble Lord, glo - ry to You!

**Cantor:** O praise him with sound of trumpet  
(on 3) praise him with lute and harp.



O Virgin The - o - to - kos, you gave birth to the Sav - ior. You overthrew



the ancient curse of Eve. As a moth - er you were the benevolence of the Fa - ther.



You bore in your womb the in - car - nate Word of God. We cannot under - stand



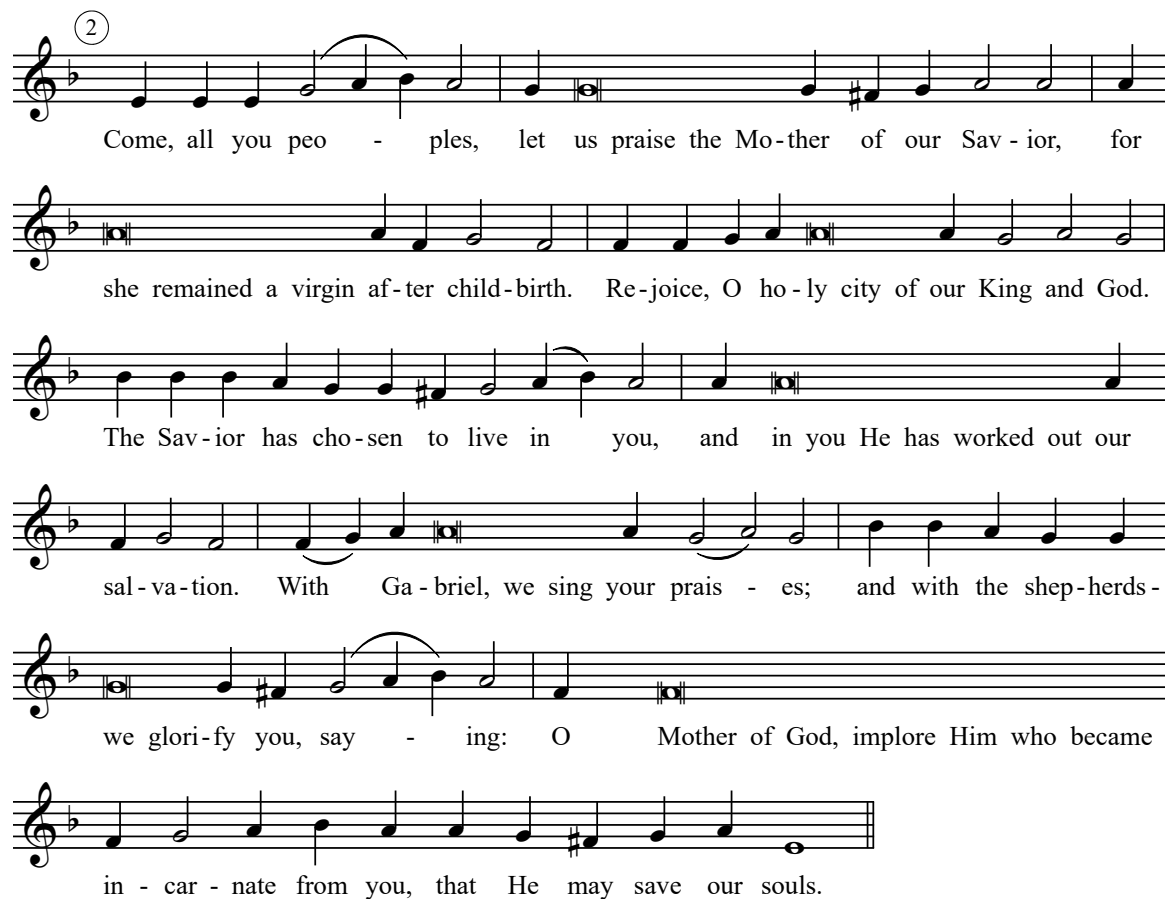
this mys - ter - y, but we glo - rify it with one faith. We al - so join you



in praise to say: O In - ef - fa - ble Lord, glo - ry to You!

**Cantor:** Praise him with timbrel and dance,  
(on 2) praise him with strings and pipes.

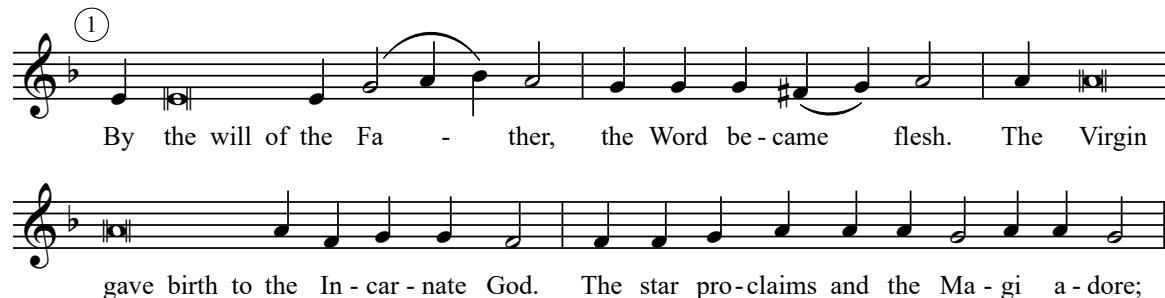
②



Come, all you peo - ples, let us praise the Mo-ther of our Sav - ior, for  
she remained a virgin af-ter child-birth. Re-joyce, O ho-ly city of our King and God.  
The Sav-ior has cho-sen to live in you, and in you He has worked out our  
sal - va - tion. With Ga - briel, we sing your prais - es; and with the shep-herds -  
we glori-fy you, say - ing: O Mother of God, implore Him who became  
in - car - nate from you, that He may save our souls.

**Cantor:** O praise him with resounding cymbals, praise him with clashing of cymbals.  
(on 1) Let everything that lives and that breathes give praise to the Lord.

①



By the will of the Fa - ther, the Word be - came flesh. The Virgin  
gave birth to the In - car - nate God. The star pro-claims and the Ma - gi a - dore;

the shep-herds are a - mazed and all cre - a - tion re-joic - - es.

**Cantor:** (Tone 6) Glory...

*Tone 6 samohlasen*

At the time of your coming up-on the earth, the first census of the world took place.

At that time You wanted to enroll the names of all who be-lieved in your birth.

There - fore, such a decree was published by Cae - sar be - cause your timeless

and eternal kingdom was re - newed by your birth. And now we offer You, O

God and Sav - ior of our souls, not gifts of sil - ver and gold,

but the wealth of our true faith.

**Cantor:** (Tone 2) Now and ever...

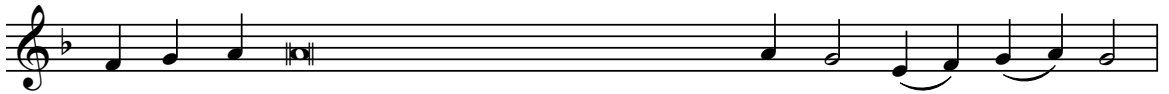
*Tone 2 samohlasen*



To - day Christ is born of the Vir - gin in Beth - le - hem. To - day



the E - ternal One has a be - gin - ning; to - day the Word be - comes in - car - nate.



All the heav - enly powers rejoice, and all who dwell on earth are hap - py.



The Ma - gi of - fer gifts to the Mas - ter; the shep - herds pro - claim the mar - vel;



and we cry a - loud un - ceas - ing - ly: Glo - ry to God in the high - est



and on earth, peace and good will to all.

*The service continues with the Great Doxology (p. 41), which concludes with the Trisagion (p 44). Then we sing the troparion of the Nativity, once:*

**Troparion of the Nativity - Tone 4**



Your birth, O Christ our God, has shed up - on the world the light of



knowl - edge; for through it, those who wor - shipped the stars have learned from

a star to worship you, the Sun of Jus - tice, and to know you, the Dawn  
from on High. Glo - ry to you, O Lord!

*Christmas Matins concludes with the Litany of Supplication (p. 45), the Prayer over Bowed Heads (p. 47), and the Dismissal (p. 48):*

**Priest:** May Christ our true God, who for our salvation was born in a cave in Bethlehem of Judea, and lay in a manger, have mercy on us and save us...

The end, and glory to God!