



## Nativity of Saint John the Baptist

The Order of Saint Luke

Festive Evensong

7:30pm

*When the time came for Elizabeth to deliver, she gave birth to a son.  
When her neighbors and relatives heard that God had been merciful to her, they shared her joy.  
... they intended to name the baby after his father Zechariah.  
But his mother spoke up, "No, he is to be called John."  
They were all astonished.*

TIB

*Please participate  
by muting your mic and actively giving voice to our shared commemoration.  
With shorter expressions such the "Amen" or "Thanks be to God"  
unmute and share in the holy cacophony.*

## OPENING

Entrance of the Light (*All mics muted and speaking the bold print*)

Light and peace in Jesus Christ!

**Thanks be to God!**

We join with John the Baptist  
in the communion of saints in heaven  
and throughout the earth, saying:

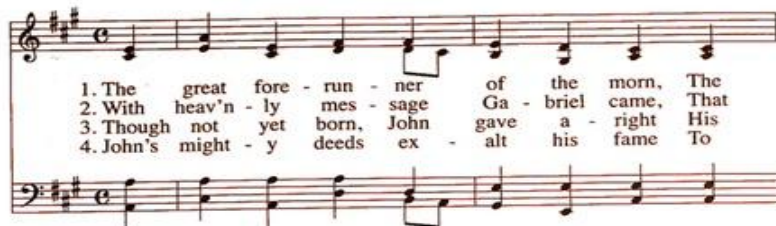
**To the one seated on the throne  
and to the Lamb,  
be praise and honor,  
glory and dominion forever and ever!**

Adapted from Revelation 5:13b TIB

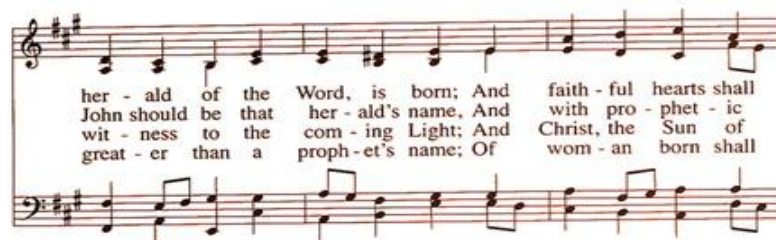
Hymn *(All muted and singing with the cantor.)*

NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

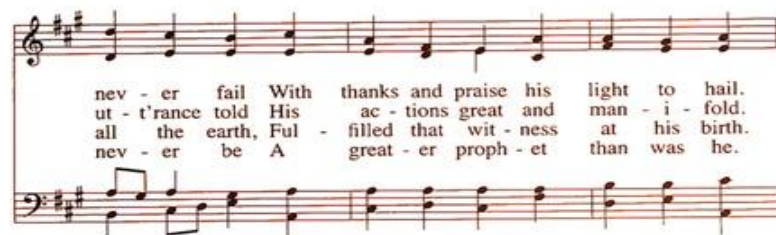
### The Great Forerunner of the Morn 974



1. The great fore - run - ner of the morn, The  
2. With heav'n - ly mes - sage Ga - briel came, That  
3. Though not yet born, John gave a - right His  
4. John's might - y deeds ex - alt his fame To



her - ald of the Word, is born; And faith - ful hearts shall  
John should be that her - ald's name, And with pro - phet - ic  
wit - ness to the com - ing Light; And Christ, the Sun of  
great - er than a proph - et's name; Of wom - an born shall



nev - er fail With thanks and praise his light to hail.  
ut - t'rance told His ac - tions great and man - i - fold.  
all the earth, Ful - filled that wit - ness at his birth.  
nev - er be A great - er proph - et than was he.

Text: Praecursor alicuius luminis, Venerable Bede, 673-735; tr. by John M. Neale, 1818-1866, alt.  
Tune: WINCHESTER NEW, LM; adapt. from *Musikalisches Handbuch*, Hamburg, 1690

Thanksgiving for the Light

The Holy One be with you,  
**and also with you.**

Let us pray:

Blessed are you, God of all times and places,  
continue to recreate and form us with all your saints by the light of your love.

Remembering Christ's incarnation, life, death and rising, we rejoice to have been born by water and the Spirit at the font, the womb of your Church.

**All glory be to you through Jesus Christ our risen Lord  
in the light of the life-giving love of the Holy Spirit  
now and unto ages of ages. Amen.**

OSL

#### A Prayer of Awareness

As your church lights the evening lamps,  
we gather around the Light, and touch the truth of our lives:  
how small we are, how little we know,  
how great you are, how present you have been to us and others throughout this day.

*-silence to gaze at Christ with us-*

"O God, you have searched me out and known me; you know my sitting down and my rising up." Such knowledge at once unsettles and blesses us.  
In Christ we are a forgiven people. **Thanks be to God.**

[DTB]

The phrase "how small we are, how little we know" comes from an Earl Wilson Jr. lyric.

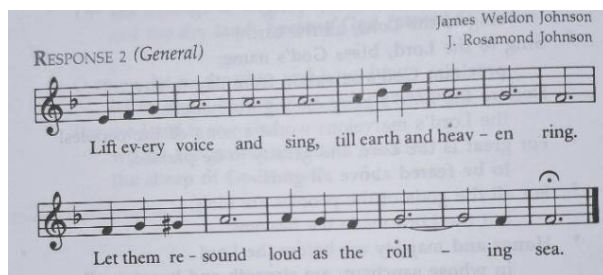
#### PSALTER

Psalm: Psalm 80 (*Mics muted all join in the sung Response. Two voices will chant the Psalm.*)

*To the conductor: to the tune of "Lilies of the Covenant"*

*By Asaph.*

#### [R]esponse



Sung response from Psalm 97, *UMH*, p.816.

1 Shepherd of Israel, hear us, you who lead Joseph like a *flock!*\*

You who are enthroned on the cheru-bim, shine *out!*

2 Shine out before Ephraim, Benjamin and Ma-*nasseh!*\*

Awaken your power and come to *save us!*

3 O God, re-turn to *us—* \*

let your face [shine] on us, and we will be *saved!*

**R**

4 ADONAI, God of *Hosts*, \*

how much longer will you fume while your peo-ple *pray?*

5 You fed us on the bread of *tears*, \*

and made us drink our tears [in full *measure.*]

6 [You let our neighbors now *mock us.*]\*

and our enemies treat us with *scorn.*

7 O God of Hosts, re-turn to us— \*  
let your face shine on us and we will be *saved*!

**R**

8 There was a vine: you uprooted it from *Egypt*; \*  
to plant it, you drove out o-ther *nations*.

9 You cleared a space where it could *grow*; \*  
it took root and filled the *land*—

10 it covered the mountains with its *shade*, \*  
and its branches were like the cedars of *God*;

11 its tendrils stretched out to the *Sea*, \*  
its offshoots all the way [to the *river*.]

12 Why, then, have you des-troyed its *wall* \*  
so that all who pass can steal its *grapes*?

13 The forest boar can tramp-le *it* \*  
and creatures of the field can *eat it*.

14 Please, O God of Hosts, come *back*! \*  
Look down from heaven, and watch over this *vine*,

15 the root planted by your own *hand*, \*  
the shoot you have raised up as your *own*.

16 It is now cut down and thrown into the *fire*, \*  
consumed by the flames of your re-*buke*.

17 Let your hand rest upon the One at your right *side*, \*  
the Chosen One you raised up for your-*self*.

18 Then we'll never turn from you a-*gain*; \*  
our life renewed, we will in-voke your *Name*.

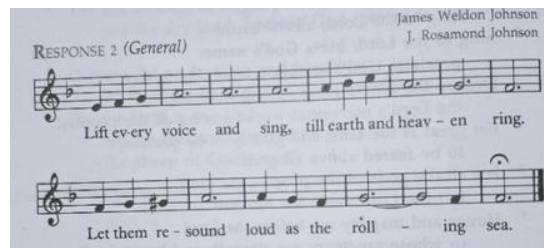
19 ADONAI, God of Hosts, re-turn to us— \*  
let your face [shine] on us and we will be *saved*!

The Order of Saint Luke. A Lukan Psalter: According to the usage of The Order of Saint Luke (Kindle Locations 6965-6968). OSL Publications. Kindle Edition.

Gloria **Glory to God: Source of all *good*, \***  
**Eternal Word and Ho-ly *Spirit*,**  
**one God, holy and bless-ed *Trinity*, \***  
**who is now, ever was, and ever shall be for endless ages. *A-men*.**

OSL

Response:



- Silence -

## WORD

First Reading: (Malachi 4:1-5)

A reading from Malachi:

4 :1 The Day is coming, burning like an oven,  
when all the arrogant and all the evildoers  
will be stubble;  
the Day that comes will burn them up,  
says ADONAI Omnipotent,  
and it will leave them neither root nor branch.

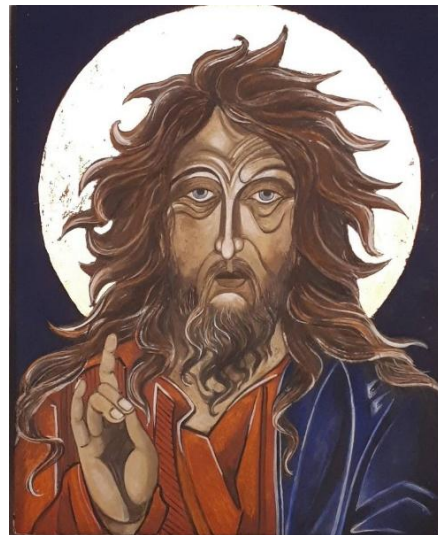
2 But for you who revere my Name,  
the sun will rise, a sun of justice,  
with healing in its rays.  
You will go out leaping  
like calves released from their stall.

3 And you will trample on those who are corrupt,  
for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet,  
on the Day when I act, says ADONAI Omnipotent.

4 Remember the teaching of my servant Moses,  
the statutes and ordinances  
that I commanded Moses at Horeb for all Israel.

5 Know this:

I will send you the prophet Elijah  
before the great and terrible day of ADONAI comes,  
to reconcile parents to their children  
and children to their parents,  
so that, when I come,  
I need not strike the land with utter destruction.



Priests for Equality. *The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation* (pp. 1481-1482). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word.

**Thanks be to God.**

Canticle (*All singing with mics muted, the cantor leading to Psalm Tone 1.*)

You are God, we *praise you!*\*

You are the Lord, we ac-claim *you!*

You are the eternal God who has cre-ated!\*

All creation wor-ships *you!*

The glorious company of a-pos-tles *praise you.* \*

The noble fellowship of pro-phets *praise you.*

The white-robed army of mar-tyrs *praise you.* \*

Throughout the world, your holy Church ac-claims *you:*

O creator God of majesty un-bounded,\*

Your Chosen One, worthy of all worship,  
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and *guide*.  
Come, help your people and bring us with your *saints*\*  
to glory ev-er-lasting.

An Excerpt from the Canticle of the Holy Trinity (Te Deum laudamus)  
Selected from the Ambrosian Hymn, OSL. *LBF*, 215.

Second Reading: (Matthew 11:2-19)

A reading from Matthew 11.

2 While John was in prison, he heard about the works the Messiah was performing, and sent a message by way of his disciples 3 to ask Jesus, “Are you ‘The One who is to come’ or do we look for another?” 4 In reply, Jesus said to them, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see:

5       ‘Those who are blind recover their sight;  
those who cannot walk are able to walk;  
those with leprosy are cured;  
those who are deaf hear;  
the dead are raised to life;  
and the *anawim*—the “have-nots”—  
have the Good News preached to them.’

6 “Blessed is the one who finds no stumbling block in me.”

7 As the messengers set off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out to the wasteland to see—a reed swaying in the wind? 8 Tell me, what did you go out to see—someone luxuriously dressed? No, those who dress luxuriously are to be found in royal palaces. 9 So what did you go out to see—a prophet? Yes, a prophet—and more than a prophet! 10 It is about John that scripture says,

‘I send my messenger ahead of you  
to prepare your way before you.’

11 “The truth is, history has not known a person born of woman who is greater than John the Baptizer. Yet the least born into the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 “From the time of John the Baptizer until now, the kingdom of heaven has been advancing with power, and powerful people take hold of it. 13 The Law and the Prophets prophesied until John came. 14 And he, if you will believe me, is the Elijah who was to return. 15 Let those who have ears to hear, hear this!

16 “What comparison can I make with this generation? They are like children shouting to others as they sit in the marketplace,

17 ‘We piped you a tune, but you wouldn’t dance.  
We sang you a dirge, but you wouldn’t mourn.’

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He is possessed.’ 19 The Chosen One comes, eating and drinking, and they say, ‘This one is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ Wisdom will be vindicated by her own actions.”

Priests for Equality. The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation  
(pp. 2667-2668). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Kindle Edition.

Holy Wisdom, Holy Word  
**Thanks be to God.**



- Silence –

Hear what the Spirit is saying: *(If you are prompted share from the reading a word or phrase that invites your attention.)*

### Commemoration

The Nativity of John the Baptist

The feast of the nativity of John the Baptist is an irregularity in the liturgical calendar because we commemorate John's birth day rather than the day of his death (the only other exceptions being Christ and Mary). Six months in advance of the birth of Jesus, we remember the birth of the baby that leapt in the womb of Elizabeth at the approach of the newly pregnant Mary.



We honor the story of John's nativity because of its importance in the opening of the Gospel of Luke. There John's birth to Elizabeth and Zechariah is portrayed not only as God's blessing to a childless, elderly couple but also as the start of God's plan of salvation through Christ. John's role in God's saving economy is also highlighted in the prophecy of the Spirit-filled Zechariah:

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;  
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins.  
By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us.  
(Lk. 1: 76-78).

John's birth is thus the sign that the sun of righteousness stands ready on the horizon, its healing light even now burning through the darkness of sin. The Orthodox sing in joy about John's birth:

On the day the herald of grace more dazzling than the dawn announces the Sun of glory and proclaims that his radiance will enlighten the entire world.  
By your birth, O forerunner, the godless night has been driven away from the earth. From one end to the other the rays of divine grace shine forth because you announce the Sun which never sets.

L. Ruth  
Josselyn-Cranson, Heather. *For All the Saints*  
(p. 190). OSL Publications. Kindle Edition.

## PRAYERS

The Kyrie *(All mics muted and singing with the cantor.)*

Kyrie, eleison.  
Christe, eleison.

Kyrie, eleison.

George Crisp, OSL, *Book of Offices and Services*, WR 3

### Responsory Prayer

Abba God, our hope in life and death  
we thank you for the promise of your kin-dom,  
especially when it seems far off.

When we are down and helpless,  
when lies are reigning,  
when fear and indifference are growing,  
when tears are flowing,  
**may your kin-dom come.**

When joy is missing,  
when love is lacking,  
and unbelief is growing.  
and the future is uncertain,  
**may your kin-dom come.**

To those who are sick and lonely,  
to those who are imprisoned and tortured,  
to those who are war-torn and grieving,  
to those who fear for their safety,  
**may your kin-dom come.**

Into the churches,  
into our praying,  
into our singing,  
into our caring  
**may your kin-dom come.**

In all the world.  
In those who lead this nation.  
In the branches of government.  
In our neighborhoods and families,  
**may your kin-dom come.**

Into our hearts,  
into our hands,  
into our eyes,  
into anger giving way to tears,  
**may your kin-dom come.**

Adapted from a Czech litany and an Eastern Orthodox prayer [Prayers for the Order of Saint Luke, see pp. 232 ff.]



Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

*Here, the community may offer their prayers and thanks in silence or aloud.*

The Lord's Prayer      *All muted and singing with the solo voice.* (p. 259, A Lukan Book of Feasts)

#### Prayer of the Day

God of crooked ways made straight,  
cause us to always rejoice in the approach of Jesus.  
Like John the Baptizer,  
work in us such humility and joy,  
that when Jesus calls  
we never hinder his increase as Lord of all.  
When we fret in the prisons of delay and martyrdom,  
send us news of Messiah Jesus  
so we hold on in faith to the end. **Amen.**

DTB

Heather Josselyn-Cranson, ed., For All the Saints (p. 191).  
OSL Publications. Kindle Edition.

#### Commendation

In peace we will lie down and sleep.  
**In the Lord alone we safely rest.**  
Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,  
**that awake we may watch with Christ,**  
**and asleep we may rest in peace.**  
May the divine help remain with us always.  
**And with those who are absent from us.**  
- Silence-

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.  
**For you have redeemed me,**  
**O Lord, O God of truth.**

Adapted from the Sarum Breviary; Psalm 4:8 and 30:5

#### Canticle of Simeon (commonly spoken in unison or chanted to Psalm Tone 1)

**Lord, you have now set your ser-vant free\***  
**to go in peace as you have promised;**  
**for these eyes of mine have seen the Savior\***  
**whom you have prepared for all the world to see,**  
**a Light to en-lighten the nations,\***  
**and the glory of your peo-ple Israel.**

ICET

**Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and blessed,\***  
**one God, now and for ever. A-men.**

## Going Forth

Witnesses in faith, in prayer, and in deed,  
holy in life, perfected in love,  
with us on earth, around us in heaven,  
your faithful witness, John the Baptist, points to the Way.  
Strong Word of God, send us forth  
with that great company of saints  
to bear good news for your sake,  
and the sake of the world.

RBA

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with us.  
Let us bless the Lord.  
**Thanks be to God.**



Attributions:

**The Festive Vespers** for this service is from *A Lukan Book of Feasts and Holy Days*, edited and compiled by Dwight Vogel, OSL (pp. 212-218). Kindle Edition.

**Commemoration text and Collects** from *For All the Saints: A Calendar of Commemorations (Second Edition)*, edited by Heather Josselyn-Cranson, OSL.

**Hymn: The great forerunner of the morn** [Author: The Venerable Bede](#); [Translator: J. M. Neale](#)

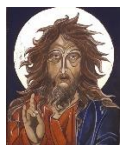
## Art



[Pontormo Tafferia — Robert Simon Fine Art](#)



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[John the Baptist Painting by Lynda Miller Baker | Saatchi Art](#)