

Vesper Propers, December 20, 2026
SUNDAY BEFORE THE NATIVITY
Sunday of the Ancestors

Supplement for *The Order of Vespers for Sundays After Pentecost, 2006*

Lamplighting Psalms in the Tone of the Week (Tone 5, p. 69), stichera 10-7.

Cantor: If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord who would survive?
(on 6) But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.

Stichera of the Prefeast

Tone 6 podoben: Vsju otloživše

6



The Nev - er - set - ting Sun is com - ing from the vir - gin - al womb to en - light - en
ev - 'ry - one un - der the sun. Let us meet him with pure hearts and with good works.
Let us pre - pare ourselves now through the Ho - ly Spir - it to greet him
who is coming to his own peo - ple as he him - self had willed.
He is be - ing born in Beth - le - hem so that through his com - pas - sion
he might bring back all of those who were ex - iled from
life in Par - a - dise.

Cantor: My soul is longing for the Lord. I count on his word.
(on 5) My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.

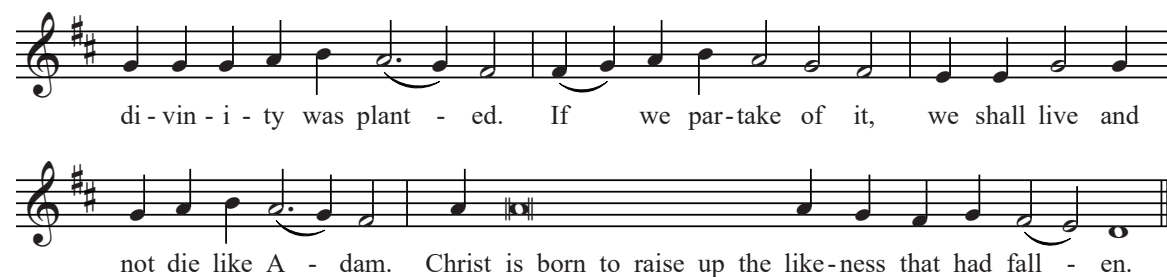
5

He who is car - ried by the Cher - u - bim has tak - en human
nature in the abode of the im - mac - u - late womb. He has come to earth to be born
of the tribe of Ju - dah. The ho - ly cave has been a - dorned
like a splen - did palace for the King of all; the man - ger, like a ru - by throne.
The Vir - gin will place the Child in - to it, for the re - new - al
of his bound - less cre - a - tion.

Cantor: Let the watchman count on daybreak
(on 4) and Israel on the Lord.

4

Hav - ing con - ceived in a man - ner beyond un - der - stand - ing,
the Vir - gin places you into the manger of the dumb an - i - mals, O e - ter - nal



di - vin - i - ty was plant - ed. If we par-take of it, we shall live and
not die like A - dam. Christ is born to raise up the like-ness that had fall - en.

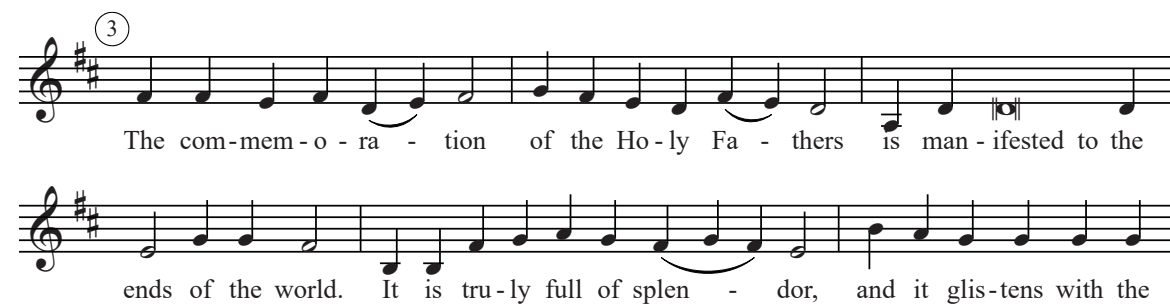
The service continues on p. 21.



Word of God, be - cause you come to pardon the ig - nor - ance
that I ac-quired through the envy of the ser - pent. You come to be wrapped in
swad - dling clothes in or - der to break the chains and fet-ters of my sins.
O on - ly bless-ed One and Lov-er of us all, I most joy - fully glorify, ex-tol
and a-dore you and your com-ing in the flesh; for through you
I have been freed.

Cantor: Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,
(on 3) Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

Stichera of the Ancestors



The com-mem - o - ra - tion of the Ho - ly Fa - thers is man - ifested to the
ends of the world. It is tru - ly full of splen - dor, and it glis-tens with the

rays of grace: for Christ the wondrous Sun has shone forth on high from a-far.

He forms the assembly of stars which glis - ten with him, and the

star reveals that the nativity of the God - man will be in Beth - le-hem.

There-fore, we pi-ous-ly and faith-ful-ly clap our hands and leap with joy at

this na - tiv - i - ty, and we give praise be - fore the feast.

Cantor: Praise the Lord, all you nations, **Psalm 116**
(on 2) acclaim him all you peoples!

The Ho - ly Fa - thers are a-dorned by the glo - ry of the divine sharing of our

na - ture. Ad-am re-joic-es this day, since he is the foun-da-tion and the

strength of the wise Fore-fa - thers; A-bel leaps for joy as well. E-noch is glad;

Seth and No-ah dance to-ge-th - er. The praise - worthy Abraham sings with

4

Troparia

Troparion of the Resurrection in the Tone of the Week (Tone 5, page 80), then:

Cantor: (Tone 2) Glory...

Troparion of the Ancestors - Tone 2

Great are the ac-com - plish - ments of faith: the three ho - ly youths rejoiced in

the streams of fire as if in re-fresh - ing wa - ters; and Dan - iel the prophet

shep-herd - ed li - ons like sheep. Through their pray'rs, O

Christ our God, save our souls.

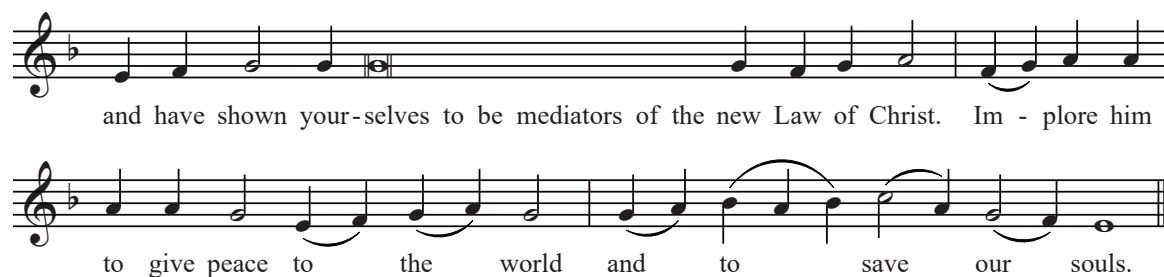
Cantor: (Tone 4) Now and ever...

Troparion of the Prefeast - Tone 4

Beth - le - hem, make read - y, E - den has been o - pened for all.

Eph-ra-thah, pre-pare your-self, for the Tree of Life has blossomed from the Vir-gin

in the cave. Her womb has become a spir-it - ual par - a - dise in which



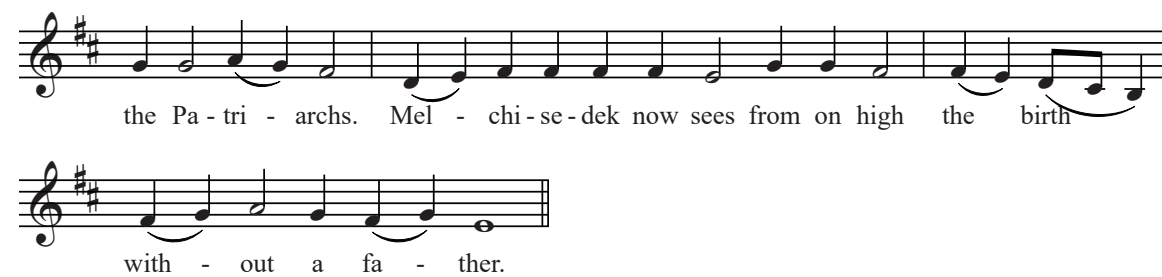
and have shown your-selves to be mediators of the new Law of Christ. Im - plore him
to give peace to the world and to save our souls.

Cantor: Now and ever...

Theotokion of the Prefeast



Be - hold, the time of sal - va - tion is draw - ing near. O Cave, pre - pare
your-self, for the Vir - gin is com - ing to give birth. O Beth - le - hem, O land
of Ju - dah, a - dorn your-self and be hap - py since the Lord will
shine forth from you, O moun - tains and hills and lands a - round Ju - dah,
heark - en, for Christ is com - ing that he may save his cre - a - tion
be - cause he is the Lov - er of us all.



the Pa - tri - archs. Mel - chi - se - dek now sees from on high the birth
with - out a fa - ther.

Cantor: Strong is the love of the Lord for us;
(on 1) he is faithful forever.



The faith - ful and God - wise youths are ra - diant with joy in the fur - nace.
They her - ald the nativity of Christ on earth. As the pre - cious dew which the
Lord sent down, he now preserves the Virgin with - out stain,
and en - rich - es her with sub - lime gifts. There - fore Dan - iel, in - spired by God,
is al - so hap - py and full of joy be - cause he had a clear vis - ion
of the un - hewn stone from the moun - tain. He now zeal - ous - ly
prays for our souls.

Cantor: (Tone 6) Glory...

Doxastikon of the Ancestors - Tone 6 samohlasen

Dan-iel was a be-lov-ed man. He saw you, O Lord, as the Rock which was
hewn with-out the use of a hand. He fore-told that you, the In-car-nate Word,
the Unchangeable God, and Sav-ior of our souls, would be born
with-out seed as a Child of a Vir-gin.

Cantor: Now and ever...

Theotokion of the prefeast

O cave, prepare yourself to re-ceive the Moth-er who bears Christ with-in
her womb. O man-ger, receive the Word who de-stroyed the sins of all.
O shep-herds, keep watch and then bear witness to the awe-some won-der.
O ma-gi, from Per-sia now come, and bring your gifts of gold, frank-in-cense, and

myrrh to the King. For the Lord has appeared from a Vir-gin Moth-er;
yet she bowed to him as a ser-vant and spoke to him in her bos-om,
say-ing: "How were you con-ceived in me? How did you grow in me, my
God and Sav-ior?"

- Readings:
- 1) Genesis 14:14-20
 - 2) Deuteronomy 1:8-11.15-17
 - 3) Deuteronomy 10:14-21

Aposticha

Aposticha in the Tone of the Week (Tone 5, p. 77), concluding with:

Cantor: (Tone 2) Glory...

Doxastikon of the Ancestors - Tone 2 samohlasen

Re-joice, O il-lus-tri-ous Proph-ets! You firm-ly es-tab-lished
the Law of the Lord, and you faith-ful-ly mani-fest-ed your-selves to be
in-vin-cible and un-shak-a-ble pil-lars. You have been tak-en to heav-en