



# Dreaming of the Holy Rood

a liturgy of the Incarnation  
based on the Ruthwell Cross

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## The Vision of a Jeweled Cross

### The Dreamer

Lo! I will tell of the best of dreams,  
what I dreamed in the middle of the night,  
after the speech-bearers were in bed.  
It seemed to me that I saw a very wondrous tree  
lifted into the air, enveloped by light,  
the brightest of trees. That beacon was all  
covered with gold. Gems stood  
beautiful at the surface of the earth, there were five also  
up on the central joint of the cross.  
All those fair through eternal decree gazed  
[on] the angel of the Lord.  
[It] was certainly not a wicked person's gallows there,  
but holy spirits, men over the earth,  
and all this famous creation gazed on him.  
Wondrous was that tree of victory, and I stained with sins  
wounded sorely with defects, I saw the tree of glory,  
honored with garments, shining joyously,  
adorned with gold. Gems had splendidly covered the Lord's tree.  
I was able, however, to perceive through the gold,  
the ancient hostility of wretched ones, [that] it first began  
to bleed on the right side. I was all troubled with grief,  
I was afraid in the presence of that beautiful sight. I saw that noble beacon  
change its coverings and color; sometimes it was drenched with moisture,  
soaked with the flow of blood, sometimes adorned with treasure.  
Nevertheless, I, lying a long time there,  
gazed troubled at the Saviour's tree.

### Choir

#### "Faithful Cross"

Faithful Cross, above all other,  
one and only noble Tree,  
none in foliage, none in blossom,  
none in fruit thy peer may be;  
sweet the wood, and sweet the iron,  
and thy load, most sweet is he.

Bend, O lofty Tree, thy branches,  
thy too rigid sinews bend;  
and awhile the stubborn hardness,

which thy birth bestowed, suspend;  
and the limbs of heaven's high Monarch  
gently on thine arms extend.

Thou alone wast counted worthy  
this world's Ransom to sustain,  
that a shipwrecked race for ever  
might a port of refuge gain,  
with the sacred Blood anointed  
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

I. Mary, the God-Bearer

Convener

Praise and honor to the Father,  
praise and honor to the Son,  
praise and honor to the Spirit,

All

Ever three and ever One;  
One in might, and one in glory,  
While eternal ages run. Amen.

Convener

Both wonderful and mysterious, the history of this bejeweled cross began when the divine persons of the holy Trinity looked upon the breadth and length of our world – the whole circuit of the earth – with love:

seeing it inhabited by so many nations,  
seeing the diversity of peoples living in it,  
seeing some in peace and others in war,  
seeing some weeping and others laughing,  
seeing some healthy and others sick,  
seeing some being born and others dying.

All

We are humbled and ask for mercy.

Convener

This Divine Majesty in Heaven looked at the diverse humans upon the earth and their many different manners, gestures, and actions in our world:

swearing and blaspheming against God,  
wounding and killing one another,  
despoiling and polluting the beauty of nature,  
hoarding the bounty of creation and allowing others to suffer in need,  
sinning in so many other ways and descending into hell through this blindness.

All

We are sinners and ask for mercy.

#### Convener

Moved by compassion and love, the divine persons of the holy Trinity decided the Son should enter this world and bring about the redemption of this human race. To achieve this goal, the Divine Majesty in Heaven looked upon a young woman barely entering adulthood:

seeing her humility and faith,  
seeing her expectation and openness,  
and they sent to her an angel.

#### Reader 1

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

#### Reader 2

Mary [then arose] and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

And [then] Mary said,

My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:  
for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He hath shewed strength with his arm;  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seats,  
and exalted them of low degree.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things;

and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He hath holpen his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy;  
As he spake to our fathers,  
to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

The Dreamer

O Glorious, Heavenly Trinity, high and holy,  
full of honor, blessed throughout the spacious lands!  
Rightfully all people gifted with speech,  
all of us hapless dwellers of earth,  
with all our might must glorify you on high,  
for now the Faithful Saviour has shown us God,  
that we might know Him.  
Lo! How wondrous the changes brought forth in our lives  
since the mild Creator of mankind  
received flesh undefiled from a mortal maid;  
By means greater than all the dwellers of earth might comprehend,  
came the Lord of triumph upon the earth.  
How wondrously the Glory of the skies, High Lord of heaven,  
through His mother's womb worked to help us all.  
And so the Saviour of the nations, the Lord of hosts,  
now offers us each day and forever His forgiveness.

## II. The Nativity of Jesus

Convener

In mercy and love, God chose to become human, transforming our lives and liberating us from the power of sin.

Reader 1

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Choir

“Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth”

Come, Thou Redeemer of the earth,  
And manifest Thy virgin birth:  
Let every age adoring fall;  
Such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will,  
But of the Spirit, Thou art still  
The Word of God in flesh arrayed,  
The promised Fruit to man displayed.

The virgin womb that burden gained  
With virgin honour all unstained;  
The banners there of virtue glow;  
God in His temple dwells below.

Forth from His chamber goeth He,  
That royal home of purity,  
A giant in twofold substance one,  
Rejoicing now His course to run.

## Reader 2

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

## Choir

“From God the Father He Proceeds”

From God the Father He proceeds,  
To God the Father back He speeds;  
His course He runs to death and hell,  
Returning on God's throne to dwell.

O equal to the Father, Thou!  
Gird on Thy fleshly mantle now;  
The weakness of our mortal state  
With deathless might invigorate.

Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,  
And darkness breathe a newer light,  
Where endless faith shall shine serene,  
And twilight never intervene.

All laud to God the Father be,  
All praise, eternal Son, to Thee;  
All glory, as is ever meet,  
To God the Holy Paraclete.

Reader 1

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Reader 2

And when (the wise men) were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

Choir

“Why, Impious Herod”

Why, impious Herod, vainly fear  
that Christ the Saviour cometh here?  
He takes no earthly realms away  
Who gives the crown that lasts for aye.

To greet His birth the Wise Men went,  
led by the star before them sent;  
called on by light, towards Light they pressed,  
and by their gifts their God confessed.

In holy Jordan's purest wave

the heavenly Lamb vouchsafed to lave;  
That He, to whom was sin unknown,  
might cleanse His people from their own.

New miracle of power divine!  
The water reddens into wine:  
He spake the word: and poured the wave  
in other streams than nature gave.

All glory, Lord, to Thee we pay  
for Thine Epiphany today;  
all glory as is ever meet,  
to Father and to Paraclete. Amen.

Reader 1

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee.

The Dreamer

You are the wall-stone that the builders of old rejected.  
Well it seems that you become the keystone of the spacious hall,  
binding in firm embrace wide-running walls and flint unbroken;  
that every eye throughout the world may marvel evermore, O Lord of glory!  
Through your skilful craft, show the beauty of your handiwork –  
truth-firm and triumphant – leaving firm wall upon firm wall.  
The work needs the Craftsman to return, the King himself,  
and repair that house which now lies decayed under its roof.  
For He shaped the body and the limbs of humankind from the clay;  
and now the Lord of life shall free that wretched throng from their enemies,  
liberate the all-forlorn from fear, as He often did in the past.

### III. The Public Ministry of Jesus

Convener

When Jesus began his public life and ministry, he humbly went to the Jordan to be baptized by John.

Reader 1

John [called the Baptist] seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and



remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Convener

Eternal Lord, help us in our need as we seek resolution of heart,

All

Following you with courage and excitement.

Convener

Give us the understanding of mind to know and embrace the costs of following you,

All

Accepting the insults and abuse that you also bore on our behalf.

Convener

Give us the determination of spirit to take risks in your service,

All

So we may be worthy to be called your disciples.

Convener

These we ask in your name.

All

Amen.

Convener

The Gospel of Saint John tells us of Jesus' first miracle.

Reader 2

There was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. [But] his mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

## Convener

The Gospel of Saint John also tells us how Jesus miraculously fed 5000 people with five barley loaves and two small fish.

## Reader 1

Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

[But] when Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

## Choir

### "Creator of the Starry Height"

Creator of the starry height,  
Thy people's everlasting Light,  
Jesu, Redeemer of us all,  
Hear thou thy servants when they call.

Thou, sorrowing at the helpless cry  
Of all creation doomed to die,  
Didst come to save our fallen race  
By healing gifts of heavenly grace.

When earth was near its evening hour,  
Thou didst, in love's redeeming power,  
Like bridegroom from his chamber, come  
Forth from a Virgin-mother's womb.

At thy great name, exalted now,  
All knees in lowly homage bow;  
All things in heaven and earth adore,  
and own thee King for evermore.

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,  
Our Judge in that tremendous day,

Ward off, while yet we dwell below,  
The weapons of our crafty foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,  
and God the Spirit, Three in One,  
laud, honor, might and glory be  
from age to age eternally.

Convener

In the Gospel of Saint Luke, we are told of Jesus' compassion and forgiveness when he responds to a woman's remorse while visiting the home of Simon, a pharisee.

Reader 2

One of the Pharisees desired [of Jesus] that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Convener

In Saint John's Gospel, we hear of Jesus healing a blind man and of the man's community to this miracle.

Reader 1

[One day, Jesus] saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

(When) Jesus heard that they had (taken him to the Pharisees and) had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe.

### The Dreamer

He who shaped the world, the Spirit-Son of God,  
shows us honour and grants us grace,  
eternal habitations with the angels.  
And He sows varied wisdom of mind  
and sets it them the hearts of all people.  
Unto one He sends wise abilities of tongue  
through the spirit of his mouth and noble insight in his heart,  
so richly may one sing and utter all things,  
who has might of wisdom hidden in his heart.  
And with skillful fingers another may fairly sound the harp before the hosts;  
yet another may read aright all godly law,  
or tell the mysteries of the stars and the wide universe,  
or write skilfully the spoken word.  
So toward all humanity the Lord, the Son of God,  
directs His gifts and offers honor and power  
and bounteous blessings upon the children of earth.  
But to no one person does He give all wisdom of heart,  
wary that in giving strength beyond others to one  
that pride may take hold upon them to their own harm.

### Choir

#### "O Word of Might"

O Word of Might, that springing forth  
From out the Father's heart, wast born  
To raise our fallen state on earth,  
Bring help, and leave us not forlorn.

Illume our breasts with heavenly light,  
And set our souls aflame with love,  
That we, forsaking things of night,  
Shall lift our hopes to joys above.

When from the awful judgment throne  
Dread doom unto his foes the Lord  
Shall send, and call in tender tone  
The just unto their sweet reward;

Let not our souls on that dread day  
Be rolled in seething pools of fire;

Let mercy melt thine ire away,  
And be thy love our sole desire.

Then to the Father and the Son  
And Holy Spirit, one in three,  
From first to last, as ages run,  
Eternal praise and glory be.

Convener

In Saint John's Gospel, we also hear of the resistance to Jesus by those in authority:

Reader 2

[Shortly thereafter] gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

The Dreamer

Lo! We have heard how the Christ-child by His advent  
brought again salvation;  
how He, the Creator's noble Son,  
freed and kept men beneath the clouds,  
so that now each mortal, while he dwells here in life,  
may choose either the shame of hell or the fame of heaven,  
the shining day or the loathsome night,  
the power of glory or the pain of darkness,  
joy with the Lord or wailing with demons,  
bliss with angels or torment with fiends,  
either life or death,  
whichever the person prefers to achieve  
while body and soul abide in the world.  
Therefore let blessing and eternal thanks  
be unto the glory of the Trinity!

#### IV. The Crucifixion of Jesus

Convener

Saint Paul, in his Letter to the Philippians, reminds us of the profound sacrifice Jesus Christ made on our behalf.

Reader 1

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being

of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Convener

Eternal Lord, help us in our unbelief and failings, to feel the depths of grief and confusion that your cross should evoke in us,

Reminding us that you suffered so cruelly for our sake,

All

To understand the infinite love and humility that led you to the cross,

Convener

To desire the courage and humbleness of heart to share in your sacrifice upon the cross,

All

Hoping to accept a portion of the suffering you endured for us.

Convener

May we honestly recognize that in our own sinfulness,

All

When we also reject you and place you yet again upon the cross.

Convener

These we ask in your name.

All

Amen.

The Dreamer

With humility and remorse, I hear the words of the Savior's tree echo in my memory.

The Cross

It was years ago (that, I still remember),  
that I was cut down from the edge of the forest,

removed from my foundation. Strong enemies seized me there,  
they made me into a spectacle for themselves,  
commanded me to lift up their criminals.  
Men carried me there on their shoulders, until they set me on a hill,  
many enemies secured me there. Then I saw mankind's Lord  
hasten with great zeal, that he wished to climb upon me.  
There, I did not dare break to pieces or bow down  
against the Lord's words, when I saw the surface  
of the earth tremble. I was able to destroy  
all the enemies, nevertheless, I stood firmly.  
The young hero stripped himself then (that was God Almighty),  
strong and resolute. He ascended onto the high gallows,  
brave in the sight of many, there,  
[since] he wished to release mankind.  
I trembled when the man embraced me.  
However, I dared not bow down to the earth,  
fall to the surface of the earth, but I had to stand fast.  
I was raised [as a] cross. I lifted up the mighty king,  
the lord of the heavens; I dared not bend down.  
They pierced me with dark nails. On me, the scars are visible,  
open malicious wounds. I did not dare injure any of them.  
They mocked both of us, together. I was all drenched with blood,  
covered from the man's side, after he had sent forth his spirit.  
I endured many cruel events on that hill.  
I saw the Lord of Hosts severely stretched out.  
Darkness had covered the bright radiance  
of the Lord's corpse with clouds, a shadow went forth,  
dark under the sky. All of creation wept,  
they lamented the king's death. Christ was on the cross.

*A bell tolls slowly, followed by a period of silence.*

Choir

"Much Have Sinned in Deed and Word"

Much have we sinned in deed and word,  
We bare our hearts before thee, Lord;  
Thy tender clemency we seek,  
Oh heal our wounded souls and weak.

Grant that we may the body cleanse  
Of sinful stain through abstinence,  
May lift our fasting hearts to thee,  
From all defiling evils free.

O tender Godhead, three in one!  
Be ours the will all crime to shun.  
To know and keep thy laws divine,  
And be the fruits of fasting thine.

## V. The Resurrection of the Lord

Convener

In his Gospel, Saint Luke tells us how the first disciples were confused by Jesus' empty tomb.

Reader 1

[Some women disciples of Jesus] came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

Convener

In The Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke tells us how the Risen Jesus stayed with his disciples for a short time before ascending into heaven, promising his followers that they would be sustained by the Holy Spirit as they gave witness to him "to the ends of the earth".

Reader 2

[Jesus] shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

The Dreamer

With joy and gratitude, I hear again the words of the bejeweled cross of Christ.

The Cross

The time is now come



that men over the earth and all this illustrious creation  
far and wide honour me,  
they pray to this sign. On me, God's son  
suffered a time. Therefore, now I rise up  
glorious under the heavens, and I am able to heal  
each one of those who hold me in awe.  
Formerly, I was the most fierce of torments,  
most hateful to people, before I opened the right  
path of life to them, the speech-bearers.  
Lo, the prince of glory, the guardian of the kingdom of the heavens,  
honoured me over all the trees of the forest!  
Just as he, Almighty God, before all men,  
honoured his mother also, Mary herself,  
over all womankind.  
Now I command you, my beloved warrior,  
that you tell this vision to men,  
reveal in words that it is the tree of glory,  
on which Almighty God suffered  
for mankind's many sins  
and Adam's deeds of old,  
He tasted death there. However, the Lord arose again  
to help men with his great power.  
None needs to be afraid [of]  
of [he] who already bears on his breast the best of signs,  
but through the cross, each soul must seek  
the kingdom from the earthly way,  
those who intend to dwell with the Lord.

Convener

Eternal Lord, touch our minds and hearts so that we may feel the deep gladness and joy that  
should come with your victory, allowing ourselves to be consoled,

All

Accepting and proclaiming your continuing presence and love,

Convener

Helping us to see and announce your true nature,  
Now revealed in its fullness after being hidden upon the cross, sustaining us as we seek to walk  
with you as true companions,

All

Aware of the many changes and graces received through your death and resurrection and  
ascension.

The Dreamer

It is therefore fitting that the tribes of men give thanks  
unto the Lord for every good which late and early He has given us,

through mystery of wonders manifold.  
He gives us food and fulness of possession,  
wealth over the spacious earthy and gentle weather  
beneath the protecting heavens; the sun and moon, noblest of constellations, heavens candles, shine  
forth for all mankind on earth alike;  
dew falls and rain; they call abundance forth  
to nourish life for all the race of man; earth's riches they increase.  
For all these gifts must we give thanks and praise unto our Lord,  
yet first for our salvation, the hope vouchsafed,  
when He at His ascension turned away the miseries which we had suffered long.

#### Choir

“O Thou Who Seek'st the Christ to Find”

O thou who seek'st the Christ to find,  
Uplift thine eyes on high;  
For lo! to every humble mind  
His glory fills the sky.

His mighty wonders there behold,  
In boundless fields of light,  
Sublime, eternal, and as old  
As heaven and ancient night.

Here is the nation's King indeed,  
Here Israel's mighty Lord,  
To Abraham promised and his seed,  
Forevermore adored.

To him each prophet witnesseth,  
By word and sign sincere;  
Acknowledged by the Sire, who saith,  
"Behold, believe and hear!"

To Jesus, who his light displays  
To babes, all glory be,  
To Sire and Spirit equal praise  
For all eternity.

#### Convener

We stand before the Lord, the Angels, and all the Saints, with openness and love, as they look with favor upon us.

In their presence and inspired by their example, may we receive a deep inner knowledge of all the good we have received, so that acknowledging this with deep and abiding gratitude, we may love and serve the Divine Majesty in everything.

In that hope, let us recall the many benefits we have received from God and the love with which we were created,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering the gifts and attributes by which God shaped us,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering the many things God has done for us or given to us in deep affection,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering how much God has given us of what he possesses, including the Godhead's very self in Christ.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall the ways in which God dwells within each creature,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

In all plants and animals, giving them sensation and life,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

In each person upon the earth, giving understanding of creation and compassion toward others,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall the ways in which God works and labors on our behalf with deep love and affection,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering that God works to sustain all of creation, guiding its ways,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Remembering that the Spirit shapes each of us, fulfilling our unique purposes.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Let us recall that every gift descends from God,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

That our limited powers descend from God's supreme and infinite power,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

That every virtue descends from God's supreme and infinite virtue,

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Just as the rays of light descend from the sun,

All

And as the waters flow from their fountains. Amen.

Choir

“Sing, My Tongue”

Sing, my tongue, how glorious battle  
Glorious victory became  
And above the cross, his trophy  
Tell the triumph and the fame  
Tell how he, the Earth's Redeemer  
By his death, for us o'ercame.

When at length the appointed fulness  
of the sacred time was come,  
he was sent, the world's Creator,  
from the Father's heavenly home,  
and was found in human fashion,  
offspring of the virgin's womb.

Now the thirty years are ended  
which on earth he willed to see,  
willingly he meets his passion,  
born to set his people free;  
on the cross the Lamb is lifted,  
there the sacrifice to be.

His the nails, the spear, the spitting  
Reed and vinegar and gall:  
From his patient body pierced  
Blood and water streaming fall;  
Earth and sea and stars and mankind  
By that blood are cleansed all.

The Dreamer

Now this is my life's joyous expectation  
that I may seek the tree of victory  
and honour [it] well  
most often of all men. The desire for that is  
great in my heart, and my patronage is  
directed to the cross. I do not have many  
powerful friends on earth, since they departed away hence  
from the joys of the world, they sought the King of Glory;  
now they live in the heavens with God the Father.  
They dwell in glory, and each day  
I look forward to the time when the cross of the Lord  
that I previously saw here on the earth,  
in this temporary life, will fetch me,

and will then bring me to where great bliss is,  
joy in the heavens, where the Lord's people are  
seated at the feast, where perpetual joy is;  
then it may set me, where afterwards I might  
dwell in glory, with the saints  
to enjoy bliss well. May the Lord be a friend to me,  
who suffered here on earth before  
on the gallows-tree for men's sins;  
he redeemed us and gave us life,  
a heavenly home. Joy was restored  
with blessings and with bliss, for those who endured the fire there.  
The Son was triumphant on that expedition,  
mighty and successful, when he came with the multitude,  
the host of souls, into God's kingdom.

Convener

From the depths of our longings, may our lives' joyous expectation be that we may seek the tree  
of victory and honor it.

May this desire be great in our hearts and may we look forward to the time when the cross of  
the Lord we previously saw here on the earth, in this temporary life, will fetch us, and will then bring  
us to where great bliss is, joy in the heavens, where the Lord's people are seated at the feast, where  
perpetual joy is; then it may set us, where afterwards we might dwell in glory, with the saints to enjoy  
bliss well.

May the Lord be a friend to us, he who suffered here on earth before on the gallows-tree for  
men's sins; he who redeemed us and gave us life, a heavenly home. Through his suffering on this cross,  
joy was restored.

All

We are grateful and give thanks.

Convener

Praise and honor to the Father,  
praise and honor to the Son,  
praise and honor to the Spirit,

All

Ever three and ever One;  
One in might, and one in glory. Amen.

Choir

"Faithful Cross" (reprise)

Faithful Cross, above all other,  
one and only noble Tree,  
none in foliage, none in blossom,

none in fruit thy peer may be;  
sweet the wood, and sweet the iron,  
and thy load, most sweet is he.

Bend, O lofty Tree, thy branches,  
thy too rigid sinews bend;  
and awhile the stubborn hardness,  
which thy birth bestowed, suspend;  
and the limbs of heaven's high Monarch  
gently on thine arms extend.

Thou alone wast counted worthy  
this world's Ransom to sustain,  
that a shipwrecked race for ever  
might a port of refuge gain,  
with the sacred Blood anointed  
of the Lamb for sinners slain.

Praise and honor to the Father,  
praise and honor to the Son,  
praise and honor to the Spirit,  
ever Three and ever One:  
one in might, and One in glory,  
while eternal ages run.