

The Meeting of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Temple

Reader's Vespers sung on Wednesday 1st February 2023 Service to be used at home, without a Priest

The 'Reader' may be the most senior person present – e.g. a parent or grandparent, according to the situation – or simply the most confident reader or singer. The parts marked for the 'Choir' can be read or sung by everyone together, or by one person alone.

You may prefer to use parts of the service in your own language. If so, please make sure that the prayers are read from an Orthodox prayer book or service book.

Available music may be found at www.orthodoxcommunityrugby.com/choir

Before the Service

*If you are using the service at home, you should do so in front of the household icons – e.g. in the family icon corner. If you have charcoal and incense, you may wish to light the charcoal before the service begins; you can then place incense on the lit charcoal during the hymn **Lord I call at the words "Let my prayer arise"**. You may wish to prepare an **unlit lamp or candle(s)** which can be lit when the hymn **O Gladsome Light** is sung.*

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

Reader: O come, let us worship God our King.
O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God.
O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God.

PSALM 103

Reader: Bless the Lord, O my soul; O Lord my God, Thou hast been magnified exceedingly. Confession and majesty hast Thou put on, Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment, Who stretchest out the heaven as it were a curtain; Who supporteth His chambers in the waters, Who appointeth the clouds for His ascent, Who walketh upon the wings of the winds, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His

ministers a flame of fire, Who establisheth the earth in the sureness thereof; it shall not be turned back forever and ever. The abyss like a garment is His mantle; upon the mountains shall the waters stand. At Thy rebuke they will flee, at the voice of Thy thunder shall they be afraid. The mountains rise up and the plains sink down, unto the place where Thou hast established them. Thou appointedst a bound that they shall not pass, neither return to cover the earth. He sendeth forth springs in the valleys; between the mountains will the waters run. They shall give drink to all the beasts of the field; the wild asses will wait to quench their thirst. Beside them will the birds of the heaven lodge, from the midst of the rocks will they give voice. He watereth the mountains from His chambers; the earth shall be satisfied with the fruit of Thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and green herb for the service of men, To bring forth bread out of the earth; and wine maketh glad the heart of man. To make his face cheerful with oil; and bread strengtheneth man's heart. The trees of the plain shall be satisfied, the cedars of Lebanon, which Thou hast planted. There will the sparrows make their nests; the house of the heron is chief among them. The high mountains are a refuge for the harts, and so is the rock for the hares. He hath made the moon for seasons; the sun knoweth his going down. Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night, wherein all the beasts of the forest will go abroad. Young lions roaring after their prey, and seeking their food from God. The sun ariseth, and they are gathered together, and they lay them down in their dens. But man shall go forth unto his work, and to his labour until the evening. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation. So is this great and spacious sea, therein are things creeping innumerable, small living creatures with the great. There go the ships; there this dragon, whom Thou hast made to play therein. All things wait on Thee, to give them their food in due season; when Thou givest it them, they will gather it. When Thou openest Thy hand, all things shall be filled with goodness; when Thou turnest away Thy face, they shall be troubled. Thou wilt take their spirit, and they shall cease; and unto their dust shall they return. Thou wilt send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created; and Thou shalt renew the face of the earth. Let the glory of the Lord be unto the ages; the Lord will rejoice in His works. Who looketh on the earth and maketh it tremble, Who toucheth the mountains and they smoke. I will sing unto the Lord throughout my life, I will chant to my God for as long as I have

my being. May my words be sweet unto Him, and I will rejoice in the Lord. O that sinners would cease from the earth, and they that work iniquity, that they should be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

The sun knoweth his going down, Thou appointedst the darkness, and there was the night. How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, glory to Thee, O God. (x 3)

In place of the Litany of Peace, the choir sings: Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

“LORD I CALL ...”

Tone 1

[Music on website]

Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Hear me, O Lord!
Lord, I call upon Thee, hear me!
Receive the voice of my prayer,
when I call upon Thee!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Let my prayer arise
in Thy sight as incense,
and let the lifting up of my hands
be an evening sacrifice!//
Hear me, O Lord!

Out of the depths I cry to Thee, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice!

Tone 1

[Music on website]

Simeon, tell us, Whom dost thou bear in thine arms,
that thou dost rejoice so greatly in the Temple?
To Whom dost thou shout and cry aloud:
“Now am I set free, for I have seen my Saviour?”
This is He Who was born of a Virgin;
this is God the Word, Who came forth from God,
Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man.//
Let us worship Him!

Let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

Repeat: “Simeon, tell us ...”

If Thou, O Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee.

Repeat: “Simeon, tell us ...”

For Thy Name’s sake I wait for Thee, O Lord. My soul has waited for Thy Word; my soul has hoped on the Lord.

Simeon, receive Him Whom Moses once beheld in darkness,
granting the Law on Sinai,
now that He has become a Babe subject to the Law!
This is He Who spoke through the Law.
This is He, of Whom the Prophets spoke,
Who for our sakes has taken flesh and has saved man.//
Let us worship Him!

From the morning watch until night, from the morning watch, let Israel hope on the Lord!

Repeat: “Simeon, receive Him ...”

For with the Lord there is mercy and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He will deliver Israel from all his iniquities.

Repeat: “Simeon, receive Him ...”

Praise the Lord, all nations! Praise Him, all peoples!

Come, let us also go to meet Christ with divine songs!
Let us receive Him Whose salvation Simeon saw!
This is He Whom David announced;
this is He Who spoke in the Prophets,
Who, for our sakes, has taken flesh and Who speaks through the Law.//
Let us worship Him!
For His mercy is confirmed on us; and the truth of the Lord endureth forever.

Repeat: “Come, let us also go to meet Christ ...”

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Tone 6

Let the gate of heaven be opened today,
for the unoriginate Word of the Father
has made a beginning in time without forsaking His divinity.
As a Babe forty days old,
of His own will He is brought by the Virgin, His Mother,
as an offering in the Temple of the Law.
The Elder receives Him in his arms,
crying as a servant to his Master:
“Let me depart, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!”//
Glory to Thee, O Lord, for Thou hast come into the world to save the
human race!

O GLADSOME LIGHT

O Gladsome Light of the holy glory of the Immortal Father, heavenly,
holy, blessed, Jesus Christ. Now that we have come to the setting of the
sun, and behold the light of evening, we praise God, Father, Son, and
Holy Spirit. For meet it is at all times to worship Thee with voices of
praise, O Son of God, the Giver of Life; therefore all the world doth
glorify Thee.

THE EVENING PROKEIMENON

Reader: The Evening Prokeimenon.

Reader: O God, in Thy Name save me, and in Thy strength do Thou
judge me.

Choir: O God, in Thy Name save me, and in Thy strength do Thou
judge me.

Reader: O God, hearken unto my prayer; give ear unto the words of
my mouth.

Choir: O God, in Thy Name save me, and in Thy strength do Thou
judge me.

Reader: O God, in Thy Name save me,

Choir: and in Thy strength do Thou judge me.

READINGS

Reader: The Reading from Exodus
The Lord spake to Moses in that day that He brought out the children

of Israel from the land of Egypt, saying: “Sanctify to Me every firstborn,
first-produced, opening every womb among the children of Israel.” And
Moses went, and gathered all the people together, and said: Remember
this day in which ye came forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the
house of bondage, for with a strong hand the Lord brought you forth
from thence. And preserve ye His law. And it shall come to pass when
the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as He
promised to thy fathers, and thou shalt set apart every firstborn
opening the womb, the males to the Lord. And if thy son should ask
thee hereafter, saying: What is this? then thou shalt say to him: With a
strong hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of
bondage. And when Pharaoh hardened his heart so as not to send us
away, he slew every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of
man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore do I sacrifice to the Lord
every offspring that openeth the womb, the males to the Lord, and ever
firstborn of my sons I will redeem. And it shall be for a sign unto thy
hand, and immovable before thine eyes. For thus said the Lord God
Almighty: The firstborn of thy sons thou shalt give to Me. And
whosoever shall have borne a male child, on the eighth day she shall
circumcise the flesh of his foreskin. And for thirty-three days she shall
not enter the sanctuary, unto the priest, until the days of her
purification be fulfilled. And thereafter she shall bring a lamb of a year
old without blemish for a whole-burnt offering, and a young pigeon or
turtle-dove to the door of the tabernacle of witness, to the priest. And
if she cannot afford a lamb, then shall she take two turtle-doves or two
young pigeons, and the priest shall pray for him. For these are given to
Me for a present out of the midst of the children of Israel: I have taken
them, and have sanctified them to Myself instead of the firstborn of the
Egyptians, in the day in which I smote every firstborn in the land of
Egypt, whether of man or beast, said God Most High, the Holy One of
Israel. [Exodus 12:51-13:3; Leviticus 12:2-7; Numbers 8:16-17]

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah

And it came to pass in the year in which King Uzziah died, that I saw the
Lord sitting on a high and exalted throne, and the house was full of His
glory. And seraphim stood round about Him: each one had six wings: and
with two they covered their face, and with two they covered their feet, and
with two they flew. And one cried to the other, and they said: “Holy, holy,
holy, is the Lord of hosts! The whole earth is full of His glory!” And the lintel

shook at the voice they uttered, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! for I am pricked to the heart; for being a man, and having unclean lips, I dwell in the midst of a people having unclean lips; and I have seen with mine eyes the King, the Lord of hosts!" And there was sent to me one of the seraphim, and he had in his hand an ember, which he had taken off the altar with the tongs: and he touched my mouth, and said: "Behold, this hath touched thy lips, and will take away thine iniquities, and will purge off thy sins." And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom should I send, and who will go to this people?" And I said: "Behold, I am here, send me!" And He said: "Go, and say to this people: Ye shall hear indeed, but ye shall not understand; and ye shall see indeed, but ye shall not perceive. For the heart of this people hath become gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." And I said: "How long, O Lord?" And He said: "Until the cities be deserted by reason of their not being inhabited, and the houses by reason of there being no men, and the land shall be left desolate. And after this God shall remove the men far off, and they that are left upon the land shall be multiplied." [Isaiah 6:1-12]

Reader: The Reading from the Prophecy of Isaiah
Behold, the Lord sitteth on a light cloud, and shall come to Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at His presence, and their heart shall faint within them. And their spirit shall be troubled within them; and I will frustrate their counsel. And I will deliver Egypt into the hands of men, of cruel lords: for the Lord and Master, the Holy One of Sabaoth, saith these things. And the Egyptians shall drink water that is by the sea, but the river shall fail, and be dried up. These things saith the Lord: "Where are now thy wise men? And let them declare to thee, and say: What hath the Lord of hosts purposed upon Egypt?" But in that day the Egyptians shall be in fear and trembling, because of the hand of the Lord of Sabaoth, which He shall bring upon them. In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the land of the Egyptians, and a pillar to the Lord by its border. And it shall be for a sign to the Lord forever in the land of Egypt: for they shall presently cry to the Lord, and the Lord shall send them a Man who shall save them. The Lord shall be known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day; and they shall offer sacrifices, and shall vow vows to the Lord. [Isaiah 19:1, 3, 4-5, 12, 16, 19-21]

In place of the Evening Litany, the choir sings Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

VOUCHSAFE, O LORD

Reader: Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this evening without sin. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is Thy name forever. Amen. Let Thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on Thee. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, teach me Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Master, make me to understand Thy statutes. Blessed art Thou, O Holy One, enlighten me with Thy statutes. Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

In place of the Litany of Supplication, the choir sings: Lord, have mercy. (x 12)

APOSTICHA

Tone 7

[Music on website]

Adorn thy bridal chamber, O Zion,
and welcome Christ the King!
Salute Mary, the heavenly gate, fashioned as the throne of the Cherubim!
She carries the King of Glory!
The Virgin is a cloud of light:
she has borne in the flesh the Son begotten before the Morning Star.
Simeon, taking Him in his arms, proclaimed to the peoples://
"He is the Master of life and death; the Saviour of the world!"

v. Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation!

The unwedded Mother has brought into the Temple
Him Who shone forth before the ages from the Father.
In these latter times He was born from a Virgin womb.
He gave the Law on Mount Sinai, yet He makes Himself obedient to the
commandment of the Law.
She has brought Him to the Priest and righteous Elder
whose appointed lot it was to see Christ the Lord.
Simeon, receiving Him in his arms, rejoiced greatly and cried aloud:
"This is God Who is co-eternal with the Father!//
He is the Redeemer of our souls!"

v. *A Light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.*

The Theotokos Mary carried in her arms
Him Who is borne aloft upon the chariot of the cherubim, and praised
in song by the seraphim.

The Giver of the Law, Who fulfils the commandment of the Law,
was made flesh of the Unwedded Virgin.

She gave Him into the arms of the Priest and Elder.

Holding the Life, he asked to be released from life, saying:

“Now, Master, let me depart to declare to Adam
that I have seen the pre-eternal God and Saviour of the world, //
Who was made a Babe without undergoing change!”

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;
now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Tone 8

He Who is borne on high by the Cherubim
and praised in hymns by the Seraphim

is brought today according to the Law into the holy Temple
and rests in the arms of the Elder as on a throne.

From Joseph He receives gifts fitting for God:

a pair of doves, a symbol of the spotless Church

and of the newly chosen people of the Gentiles,

and two young pigeons,

for He is the originator of the two Covenants, both Old and New.

Simeon, now granted the fulfilment of the prophecies concerning
himself,

blesses the Virgin and Theotokos Mary.

He foretells in figures the Passion of her Son.

From Him he begs release, crying aloud:

“Now, Master, let me depart as Thou hast promised me,

for I have seen the pre-eternal Light //

and the Lord and Saviour of the people who bear the Name of Christ!”

THE PRAYER OF SAINT SIMEON, THE GOD-RECEIVER

Reader: Lord, now lettest thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be the glory of Thy people Israel.

Reader: Holy God, Holy Mighty Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (x 3)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, look upon and heal our infirmities for Thy Name’s sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Reader: Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.

TROPARION

Troparion of the Meeting of the Lord in Tone 1 [\[Music on website\]](#)

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Full of Grace!

From thee shone the Sun of Righteousness, Christ our God,
enlightening those who sat in darkness.

Rejoice and be glad, O righteous Elder,

thou didst accept in thine arms the Redeemer of our souls, //

Who grants us the Resurrection!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;

Repeat: “Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos ...”

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Repeat: “Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos ...”

THE DISMISSAL

Reader: Establish, O God, the holy Orthodox Faith and all Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages. Amen.

Choir: More honourable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, thou who without defilement gavest birth to God the Word, and art truly Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Bless, O Lord.

Reader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Who deigned to be carried in the arms of Righteous Simeon for our salvation; through the intercessions of Thy most pure Mother; by the might of the precious and life-giving Cross; by the protection of the honourable bodiless powers of heaven; at the supplications of the Holy, Glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist, John; of our Holy, Venerable and God-bearing Fathers; of our Father among the Saints, Chad, Bishop of Lichfield, Patron and Protector of this Community; of the Holy and Righteous Ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints, have mercy upon us and save us. Amen.

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy upon us, and save us. Amen.