

**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**  
**Christmas Eve**

*The dark night of sin has been shattered  
with the birth of the Light of the world*



## SERVICE OF CAROLS AND CANDLELIGHT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

This evening's order of worship is based on The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, first heard at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England on Christmas Eve 1918. The hymns serve to highlight the theme of the readings which point to the love of God in sending His Son, Christ Jesus, as the Savior of the world.

### Hymn 376 Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a  
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is  
 3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by  
 4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her  
 God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a  
 day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and  
 own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y  
 sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the  
 help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He  
 gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
 poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.  
 feels for all our sad - ness, And He shares in all our glad - ness.  
 leads His chil - dren on To the place where He is gone.

- 5 Not in that poor, lowly stable  
 With the oxen standing by  
 Shall we see Him, but in heaven,  
 Set at God's right hand on high.  
 Then like stars His children, crowned,  
 All in white, His praise will sound!

## EXHORTATION AND PRAYER

**P** Dear people of God, in this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ-Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy Child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ, and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of this community and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember, in His name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love him, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise Him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

(A moment of silence for prayer)

To sum up all these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself taught us.

**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 evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

BE SEATED

## Hymn 387 – Joy to the World

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re-ceive her  
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav-ior reigns! Let men their songs em -

King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him  
ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and

room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture  
plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing

sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

+++

## NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

### First Lesson: Genesis 3:8-15 – *The Seed of the woman will crush the serpent's head*

<sup>8</sup> And [Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup> So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”

<sup>11</sup> And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” <sup>12</sup> Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.” <sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

<sup>14</sup> So the LORD God said to the serpent:

“Because you have done this,

You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field;

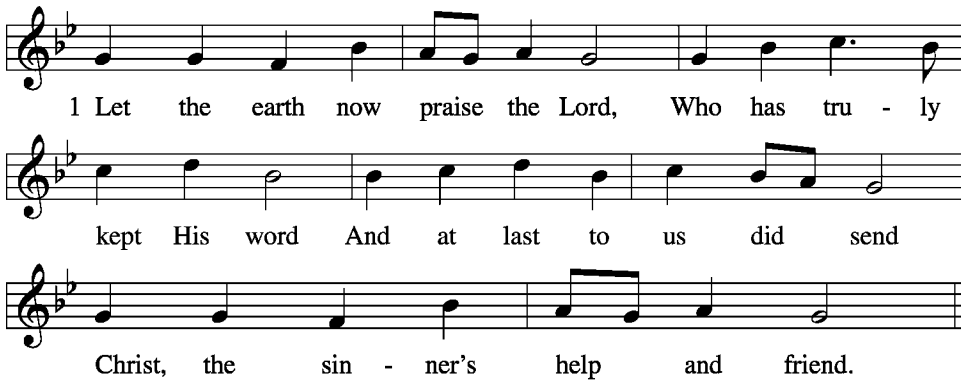
On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life.

<sup>15</sup> And I will put enmity between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her Seed;  
He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Hymn #352 v. 1, 5, 6 – Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has tru - ly  
kept His word And at last to us did send  
Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head That, set free from doubt and dread,  
I may cling to You in faith, Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again As the glorious king to reign,  
I with joy will see Your face, Freely ransomed by Your grace.

+ + +

### Second Lesson: Genesis 22:15-18 – God's promise to Abraham

<sup>15</sup> Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, <sup>16</sup> and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— <sup>17</sup> blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup> In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Hymn #379 v. 1-2 – O Come All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, Joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
2 High - est, most ho - ly, Light of Light e - ter - nal,



come ye, O come — ye to Beth - le - hem;  
Born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal He comes;



Come and be - hold Him Born the king of an - gels:  
Son of the Fa - ther Now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

*Refrain*



O come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him,



O come, let us a - dore Him, Christ the Lord!

+ + +

### Third Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7 – *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.*

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light;  
Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,  
Upon them a light has shined...

<sup>6</sup>For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called  
Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup>Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end,  
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice

From that time forward, even forever.  
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Hymn #380 – Hark the Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;  
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,  
3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"  
Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.  
Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!  
Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"  
Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!  
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

+ + +

**Fourth Lesson: Micah 5:2-4** – *A Branch from the stem of Jesse*

<sup>2</sup>“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
Though you are little among the thousands of Judah,  
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me  
The One to be Ruler in Israel,  
Whose goings forth are from of old,  
From everlasting.”

<sup>3</sup>Therefore He shall give them up,  
Until the time that she who is in labor has given birth;  
Then the remnant of His brethren  
Shall return to the children of Israel.

<sup>4</sup>And He shall stand and feed His flock  
In the strength of the LORD,  
In the majesty of the name of the LORD His God;  
And they shall abide,  
For now He shall be great  
To the ends of the earth;

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.



## Hymn #361 v. 1-2 – O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;  
 While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.  
 O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,



The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to-night.  
 And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

+ + +

## Fifth Lesson: Luke 1:26-35, 38 – *The angel Gabriel visits Mary*

<sup>26</sup> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; <sup>[a]</sup> blessed are you among women!"

<sup>29</sup> But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. <sup>30</sup> Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. <sup>33</sup> And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

<sup>35</sup> And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God...

<sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Hymn #370 v. 1-2 – What Child is This?



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is  
2 Why lies He in such mean es-tate Where ox and ass are



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While  
feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is  
si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;  
pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!  
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

## Sixth Lesson: Luke 2:1-7 – The birth of Jesus

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. <sup>3</sup>So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. <sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Hymn #364 – Away in a Manger



1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,  
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,  
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.  
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.  
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.



The stars in the sky \_\_\_\_\_ looked down where He lay,  
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,  
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,



The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.  
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is nigh.  
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

+ + +

## Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:8-20 – The shepherds visit the manger

<sup>8</sup> Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. <sup>10</sup> Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

<sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

<sup>15</sup> So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup> And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup> Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. <sup>18</sup> And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

Hymn #368 – Angels We Have Heard on High



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,  
 2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?  
 3 Come to Beth-le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun-tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
 What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

*Refrain*



Glo - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - -



- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

+ + +

## Eighth Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12 – The visit of the wise men

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

<sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

<sup>5</sup> So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’ ”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod, when he had secretly called the <sup>[b]</sup>wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

<sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. <sup>11</sup> And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup> Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### Hymn #397 v. 1-3 – As With Gladness Men of Old



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;  
 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to Thy low - ly bed,  
 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare At Thy cra - dle, rude and bare,



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead - ing on - ward, beam-ing bright;  
 There to bend the knee be - fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;  
 So may we with ho - ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al - loy,



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev - er - more be led by Thee.  
 So may we with will - ing feet Ev - er seek Thy mer - cy seat.  
 All our cost-liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.

**Ninth Lesson: John 1:1-14** – *The Word becomes flesh and dwells among us*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. <sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. <sup>8</sup> He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. <sup>9</sup> That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. <sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

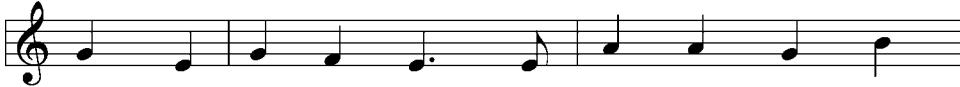
**P** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

## Hymn #358 v. 1-3, 15 – From Heaven Above to Earth I Come



1 "From heav'n a - bove to earth I come To bear good  
 2 "To you this night is born a child Of Mar - y,  
 3 "This is the Christ, our God Most High, Who hears your



news to ev - 'ry home; Glad tid - ings of great  
 cho - sen vir - gin mild; This lit - tle child of  
 sad and bit - ter cry; He will Him - self your



joy I bring, Where - of I now will say and sing:  
 low - ly birth Shall be the joy of all the earth.  
 Sav - ior be From all your sins to set you free.

15 Glory to God in highest heav'n,  
 Who unto us His Son has giv'n!  
 While angels sing with pious mirth  
 A glad new year to all the earth.

+ + +

## Sermon

## Prayers of the Church:

**P** O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ, grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, so may we with sure confidence behold Him when He shall come to be our Judge; Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

**P** Almighty God, in the beginning You created all things by Your Word; and in the fullness of time Your Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. Grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.



**P** When all was still and it was midnight, Your eternal Word, O Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May we receive Him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim Your gracious good will to all people on earth; for He is God with us, Emmanuel, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

## CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

(Pastor lights a solitary candle from the Christ Candle and will light the candles of the ushers, who will light the candles of people sitting by the aisles. They in turn light those next to them, tipping unlit candles toward lit ones.)

## SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*(Please tip only the unlighted candles. Parents should determine if it is appropriate for their child to hold a lighted candle.)*

*(After all candles are lit, the Lights are extinguished. The congregation joins in singing the hymn. You may keep your candle burning through the Blessing.)*

## Hymn #363 – Silent Night



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon  
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries  
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - diant



vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild,  
stream from heav - en a - far, Heav'n - ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
beams from Thy ho - ly face With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,



Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.  
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!  
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

**The Blessing:**

**P** May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of Almighty God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—be upon you and remain with you always.

**C** Amen.

*Please extinguish your candle carefully to prevent wax from falling on you, your clothes. Again, use caution: the wax will be warm for several minutes.*

**† Glory to God in the Highest,  
and on Earth Peace, Good Will toward Men †**

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Thank you for joining us in worship this evening. May God bless your celebration of the Birth of our Saviour Jesus!

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St. Matthew's, Roblin and Grace, Zorra are Member congregations of Lutheran Church Canada  
Pastor Barry D. Wood

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**Acknowledgments**

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