

# SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



**The First Sunday after Christmas Day**

**December 28, 2025**

**9:30 A.M in the Church**

The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker

Rector

# Welcome to our Church

## WELCOME

to

## St. Paul's Episcopal Church

We are delighted you are seeking God in this special place. We want you to know that wherever you are on the journey of faith, you are welcome to ask your questions here.

**Services are available:** Recent services are available on our website: <https://stpaulwilkesboro.org>

**Newsletters:** Sign-up today to receive our weekly electronic newsletter! Email the church office at [office@stpaulwilkesboro.org](mailto:office@stpaulwilkesboro.org) to have your name added. If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter mailed, please call the office.

We extend a special thanks today to all that have been so generous with their time and talents in making this service possible.

200 W. Cowles St., P. O. Box 95, Wilkesboro, NC 28697

336-667-4231

[www.stpaulwilkesboro.org](http://www.stpaulwilkesboro.org)

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**Pastoral Emergency Line: 336-482-6800**

**ONLINE GIVING QR CODE:**




# The Gathering

Prelude  
Medley of Christmas Carols

## Welcome and Announcements

### Processional Hymn #102 Once in Royal David's City (verses 1-3 and 6)



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci - ty stood a  
2 He came down to earth from hea - ven, who is  
\*3 We, like Ma - ry, rest con - found - ed that a  
4 For he is our life - long pat - tern; dai - ly,  
\*5 And our eyes that at last shall see him, through his  
6 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the



1 low - ly cat - tle shed, where a mo - ther laid her  
2 God and Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a  
3 sta - ble should dis - play hea - ven's Word, the world's cre -  
4 when on earth he grew, he was tempt - ed, scorned, re -  
5 own re - deem - ing love; for that child who seemed so  
6 ox - en stand - ing round, we shall see him; but in



1 ba - by in a man - ger for his bed: Ma - ry  
2 sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall; with the  
3 a - tor, cra - dled there on Christ - mas Day, yet this  
4 ject - ed, tears and smiles like us he knew. Thus he  
5 help - less is our Lord in heaven a - bove; and he  
6 hea - ven, where his saints his throne sur - round: Christ, re -



1 was that mo - ther mild, — Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child. —  
2 poor, the scorned, the low - ly, lived on earth our Sa - vior ho - ly.  
3 child, our Lord and bro - ther, brought us love for one an - oth - er.  
4 feels for all our sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.  
5 leads his chil - dren on — to the place where he is gone. —  
6 vealed to faith - ful eye, — set at God's right hand on high. —

Words: Sts. 1-2 and 4-6, Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), alt.;  
st. 3, James Waring McCrady (b. 1938)

Music: *Irby*, melody Henry John Gauntlett (1803-1876); harm. Arthur Henry Mann (1850-1929)

87. 87. 77

## Opening Acclamation

Presider: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

People: And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

## Gloria

*Refrain*

The musical score for the Gloria is written for voice and piano. It begins with a *Refrain* section. The first system shows the vocal line with the lyrics "Glo - - - - - ri - a" and the piano accompaniment. The second system continues with the lyrics "in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -". The third system concludes with the lyrics "- ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o." and ends with a double bar line. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands, often using arpeggiated figures.

Glo - - - - - ri - a

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

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

Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt. Copyright © by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

## **The Collect**

Presider: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

# The Liturgy of the Word

## First Reading

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.  
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.  
The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the LORD will give.  
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

## The Response

## Psalm 147

### *Laudate Dominum*

Hallelujah!

How good it is to sing praises to our God! \*

**how pleasant it is to honor God with praise!**

The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; \*

**God gathers the exiles of Israel.**

God heals the brokenhearted \*

**and binds up their wounds.**

God counts the number of the stars \*

**and calls them all by their names.**

Great is our LORD and mighty in power; \*

**there is no limit to God's wisdom.**

The LORD lifts up the lowly, \*

**but casts the wicked to the ground.**

Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; \*

**make music to our God upon the harp.**

God covers the heavens with clouds \*

**and prepares rain for the earth;**

God makes grass to grow upon the mountains \*

**and green plants to serve mankind.**

God provides food for flocks and herds \*

**and for the young ravens when they cry.**

God is not impressed by the might of a horse; \*

**he has no pleasure in the strength of a human;**

But the LORD has pleasure in those who love him, \*

**in those who await God's gracious favor.]**

Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; \*

**praise your God, O Zion;**

For God has strengthened the bars of your gates; \*

**God has blessed your children within you.**

God has established peace on your borders; \*

**God satisfies you with the finest wheat.**

God sends out commands to the earth, \*

**and God's word runs very swiftly.**

God gives snow like wool; \*

**he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.**

God scatters his hail like bread crumbs; \*

**who can stand against this cold?**

God sends forth his word and melts them; \*

**God blows with his wind, and the waters flow.**

God declares his word to Jacob, \*

**God statutes and his judgments to Israel.**

God has not done so to any other nation; \*

**to them no judgments are revealed.**

**Hallelujah!**

## **Second Reading**

**Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7**

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's People.

**People: Thanks be to God.**



*Please stand as you are most comfortable.*

## Sequence Hymn #115 What Child is This

*Unison or harmony*

The musical score is written for three voices (1, 2, 3) and piano accompaniment. It is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is a simple, hymn-like tune. The lyrics are arranged in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano line. The first system includes a three-part setting of the first line. The second and third systems provide the main body of the hymn. The score concludes with a refrain section, also in three parts, which repeats the first line of the hymn.

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on  
2 Why lies he in, such mean es - tate where  
3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with  
ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for  
peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

*Refrain*

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds  
guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to  
bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898). Music: *Greensleeves*, English melody; harm. *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871.

*Please stand as you are able.*

## **The Gospel**

**John 1:1-18**

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

**People: Glory to you, Lord Christ**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord

**People: Praise to you, Lord Christ**

*All are seated.*

## **The Sermon**

*The Rev. Stephanie E. Parker*

*A time of silence following the sermon.*

## The Decalogue

Presider: Hear the commandments of God to the people:

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of bondage.

You shall have no other gods but me.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not make for yourself any idol.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not invoke with malice the Name of the Lord your God.

*Amen. May it be so.*

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

*Amen. May it be so.*

Honor your father and your mother.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not commit murder.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not commit adultery.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not steal.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not be a false witness.

*Amen. May it be so.*

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

*Amen. May it be so.*

## Prayers of the People

- Leader Merciful and mighty God, lead us, we pray, once again to Bethlehem to hear the message of the angels and to see the Son of God lying in a manger.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Leader Hear our prayers for the unity and mission of the Church; strengthen the Church in faith, increase it in love, and preserve it in peace.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Leader In this holy time, the angels proclaimed the birth of the Prince of Peace. We pray for peace and justice on earth, for those who hold authority, for all who serve the common good. May we all seek truth and work for peace.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Leader In this holy time you came to us as a child cradled in a borrowed bed of straw as there was no room in the inn. We pray for those who suffer poverty, the helpless, those who are cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick, the lonely, the addicted, the aged and vulnerable children, and those of tender faith.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Leader Under the stars, in fields and deserts, shepherds and outcasts hear your good news. Give us grace to spread your gospel of joy and justice.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Leader In your great mercy, O Lord, we remember all those who rejoice with us, but whom we see no longer. May their light shine in our hearts forever.
- People O come, let us adore him.**
- Presider O Lord our God, may the Light and Hope of this night, and of your Son's Incarnation, reassure our hearts that you are among us, and that you will be with us always, even to the end of the age. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, we pray.  
**Amen.**

*Remain standing or kneeling as desired.*

## **Confession of Sin**

*Please stand or kneel as you are most comfortable*

*New Zealand Prayer Book*

God has promised forgiveness  
as a gift of freedom and grace.

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Moment of silence observed.*

God of all mercy,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you,  
opposing your will in our lives.  
We have denied your goodness in each other,  
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.  
We repent of the evil that enslaves us  
the evil we have done,  
and the evil done on our behalf.  
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us  
through our Savior Jesus Christ,  
that we may abide in your love  
and serve only your will. Amen.**

## **Absolution**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness,  
and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## **The Peace**

✧ *“The Peace” is a Christian tradition deriving its roots from Jesus himself who greeted people saying, “Peace be with you.” “The Peace” may feel awkward if you are new or an introvert or trying not to be noticed. We take this portion of our worship seriously as we live in a deeply divided world full of violence. These actions in God’s house model what we are called to do in the world.*

**Presider:** The peace of Christ be always with you.

**People:** And also with you.

## **Presider: Invitation to the Great Thanksgiving**

## **Offertory**

### **Offertory Anthem**

**Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming**

*trad. German*

*(for text, see Hymn #81)*

## The Great Thanksgiving

*Please stand as you are most comfortable      Eucharistic Prayer 2, EOW page 60*

*Sing*

Presider *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. A-men*

Presider All things come of thee, O Lord

**People      And of thine own have we given thee**

Presider The Lord be with you.

**People      And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

**People      We lift them to the Lord**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People      It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider: We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a good mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest**

***Please stand or kneel here***

*Presider continues*

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, when the time came, he gave himself up to death and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.”

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with our Patron Paul and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **AMEN.**



As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

*A period of silence is kept.*

### Fraction

(S-154)

*This setting is not used in Lent.*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;

there - fore let us keep the feast.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

## The Invitation to Communion

Presider: The gifts of God for the people of God...  
**God's holy food for God's holy people.**

*This is the table of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and who want to love him more. So come, you who have much faith and you have little, you who have been here often and you have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, for it is the Lord who invites you.*

You will now have three ways to receive communion:

**In one kind**--this means you receive only the bread or only the wine. Receive the bread by extending your hands, palm upward, when the presider comes to you and then leaving the rail or crossing your hands over your chest when the chalice comes to you.

To receive the wine only, cross your hands when the bread is presented and then drink from the chalice by gently assisting the chalice bearer by grasping the base of the chalice lightly to help guide it to your lips.

**Intinction (having the bread dipped in the wine and placed in your hand) is only done by the presider from the intinction tray. To receive communion by intinction simply keep your hands down by your sides as we have been doing. Then raise them to take intincted bread between thumb and forefinger.**

**In two kinds**--this is where you consume both the bread and the wine either by receiving the bread and then drinking from the chalice or by Intinction.

There is no intinction by multiple individuals from the chalice.

Gluten free wafers available upon request.

*Please stand or kneel as desired.*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Presider     Let us pray,

**Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, God, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **The Christmas Blessing**

May you, in God's holy mercy, increase in love for one another;  
May you follow Christ Jesus and learn how to live in God's ways;  
and may the Holy Spirit strengthen your hearts in holiness, as you move out into this beautiful and fractured world. And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with this day and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Please stand as comfortable.*

## Recessional Hymn #107 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;  
3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
now ye hear of end - less bliss; Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
He hath o - pened hea - ven's door, and we are blest for ev - er - more.  
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save!

Christ is born to - day!  
Christ was born for this!  
Christ was born to save!

The musical score is written for a four-part setting (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major, 4/4 time. It features a simple, homophonic style with block chords and moving lines. The lyrics are printed below the staves, with some lines of music continuing across the line breaks. The score concludes with a final cadence in the bass line.

Words: John Mason Neale (1818-1866), alt. Music: In dulci jubilo, German carol, 14th cent.; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944).

## **The Dismissal**

**Presider:** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia!

**People:** Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## **Postlude**

### **The First Noel**

*arr. David Willcocks (1919-1981)*

*\*\*Please note that neither Mother Stephanie nor St. Paul's will ever send out an e-mail or text communication requesting money, gift cards, etc. If you receive any suspicious communications like this, please ignore and delete these communications. Contact the Parish Office at any time with questions or concerns regarding possible scams. \*\**

# PRAYER LIST

***Please remember in your prayers:*** All who are ill or unemployed and those who are on our prayer list.

## **Short-term**

The Albanil Family, Debbie Mckenzie, Jamie Tate, Rose Andrews

## **Long-term**

Aliza Grace Mabie, Cade Gibbs, Ray Call, Steve Jackson, Ken Asel, Shane Jenkins, Kaye Hall, Dot Beamon, Da'Shon Horton

## **Armed Forces**

Let us pray for the safety of **all our troops**, especially John Craine, Micha Duerk, Faith Lankford, Cole Griffith, Zach Necessary, Jason Westmeyer, and all others who serve throughout the world.

**Prayer requests can be submitted through the prayer request form by scanning the QR code below, or by contacting the office.**





*December 30th—Paul Hubbard*

*December 30th—Julie Koch*

*December 31st—Sheilah Conway*

*December 31st—Sharon Greene*

*December 31st—Tim Day*

*December 31st—Jerry Barker*

*January 2nd—Frances Yale*

*January 2nd—Bryan Will*

*January 3rd—Denver Owens*

*December 28th—Mark &  
Muluani Cook*



**Serving Today**

**Altar Guild: Pam Mayberry, Drew Mayberry**

**Reader: Joe Fesperman**

**Acolytes: Robin Shumate, Drew Mayberry**

**Usher: Jeff Beard**

**Bread Bakers: Mark Williams & Ben Staley**

**Vestry Lock-Up for December: Julie Koch**



The Rt. Rev José McLoughlin  
*Bishop of the Diocese of Western North Carolina*

**St. Paul's Vestry 2025**

**Jeff Beard**

**Chuck Forester, Jr. Warden**

**Ruth Harris**

**Julie Koch**

**Scott Jessee, Sr. Warden**

**Tana Myers**

**Diane Peabody**

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Bill Harris, *Secretary*

Drew Mayberry, *Treasurer*

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*rector@stpaulwilkesboro.org*

Russell Stinson, *Director of Music*

Penny Farmer, *Finance Administrator*

Robyn Setzer, *Parish Administrator*