

CHRISTMAS EVE EUCHARIST

Sunday, December 24, 2023

5:00 PM

PRELUDE

Carols of Christmas

O Come All Ye Faithful

The First Noel

Carol of the Bells

"Pastoral Symphony" from *Messiah*

arr. by Stuart Ross Carlson

by G.F. Handel

+ Gathering +

RINGING OF THE BELL

At the sound of the bell, the congregation is invited to rise as you are able and face the narthex.

WELCOME

In the wonder and the mystery of the Word putting on clothes and moving into our neighborhood we gather this night. For Christ is born and we are forgiven of our sin, forever yoked to God's redeeming grace. Let us gather into this place of worship in thanksgiving of our God, Creator, Redeemer, ✝ Sustainer, to Whom be given all honor and praise from this day and forevermore. **Amen, Alleluia.**

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

The congregation is invited to face the cross as it is carried in.

O Come, All Ye Faithful (ELW 283)

O, Come, All Ye Faithful



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;



come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
 born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!
 Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

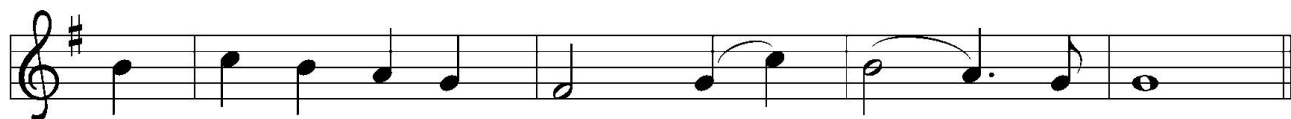


come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:
 Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!
 Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

Refrain



Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,



ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

Text: attr. John Francis Wade, 1711–1786; tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1802–1880, sts. 1, 3–4; tr. unknown, st. 2
 Music: ADESTE FIDELES, attr. John Francis Wade

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

GLORIA

Assisting minister

Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All

Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we

wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.

Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;

you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.

For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,

you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,

in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray together.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

+ Word +

READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

A reading from Isaiah.

²The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.
³You have multiplied the nation,
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.
⁴For the yoke of their burden,
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.
⁵For all the boots of the tramping warriors
and all the garments rolled in blood
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
⁶For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The congregation may stand.

Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289, verse 1)



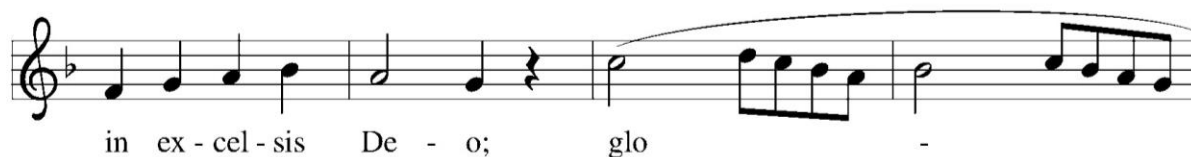
1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
2 Shep-herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



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.



Glo - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo -



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

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864
Music: GLORIA, French carol

GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.

²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Angels We Have Heard on High (ELW 289, verse 3)

HOMILY

The congregation may be seated.
Vicar Alex Linn

HYMN OF THE DAY

The congregation may stand.
Love Has Come (ELW 292)



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the
2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -
3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;
sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;
last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to
what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the
Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.
name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.
gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

THE NICENE CREED

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed:

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Trusting in God's good news of great joy for all people, we offer our prayers for ourselves, our neighbors and the world God loves . You may assume a posture of prayer through standing, kneeling, or sitting.

Silence

Glory to you, God, for the song of the angels, proclaiming to the world Christ's holy birth. Give your church a joyful song to sing, that we bring the good news of peace and salvation to all people. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for the stars that shine in the depth of the night. Provoke awe in our hearts at the expansive mystery of the cosmos. Open us to find beauty in the clear darkness of night and in the first glimmers of dawn. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for the child born to us who establishes a kingdom of justice and righteousness. Break bonds of oppression, bring reconciliation to warring lands, and establish peace from this time onward and forevermore. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for Mary's loving care. Lead us to tend to one another in time of need. Share the comfort of your presence with all people tonight who are alone or separated from loved ones due to estrangement, incarceration, or illness. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Glory to you, God, for the faithfulness of the shepherds in their vocation. Grant rest to any who feel exhausted from their work during this season: retail and restaurant workers, church musicians, administrative staff, and clergy, organizers of charitable-giving events, and service workers doing essential tasks. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

People of God, for what else shall we pray this day? Your prayers are invited now, either silently or aloud. (*Pause for prayers.*)

Hear us, O God. or Lord, we praise you.

Your mercy is great. **Thanks be to God.**

Glory to you, God, for the multitude of the heavenly host. We rejoice in the zeal of all your saints who have witnessed the appearing of your grace, and who reveal to us your salvation for all. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abide with us, O God of mercy, and receive our prayers according to your abundant grace.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

You are invited to share a sign of peace with one another (wave, handshake, hug, etc.), honoring the personal boundaries of all. Those online may unmute and verbally share the peace.

+ Meal +

INVITATION TO OFFERING

The congregation may be seated.

The God of heaven and earth, of all of creation, holds each one of us in tender love and care. God is gracious and good, and no one is insignificant in God's eyes. God tells us over and over in the Bible not to be afraid. Our gifts this morning represent one way that we let go of fear – the fear of scarcity – and trust instead in the abundance of God. We let go of thinking that we are on our own, and we live in graceful dependence on God and on one another. Let us gather our gifts together and offer them to God in gratitude and praise. We give thanks for your ongoing support of the ministry of St. John's!

OFFERTORY

We give thanks for your ongoing support of the ministry of St. John's! Gifts may be placed in the offering plate, made in the Vanco Mobile app, or given online by scanning the QR code. Thank you for your generosity!



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

In Dulci Jubilo

arr. Phillip Le Bas

In dulci jubilo

Let us our homage show

Our heart's joy reclineth

In praeseptio

And like a bright star shineth

Matris in gremio

Alpha es et O!

O patris caritas

O nati lenitas

Deep were we stained

Per nostra crimina

But thou hast for us gained

Coelorum gaudia

O that we were there!

O Jesus *parvule*

I yearn for thee alway

Hear me, I beseech thee,

O puer optime

My prayer let it reach thee,

O princeps gloriae,

Trahe me post te!

Ubi sunt gaudia

If that they be not there

There are angels singing

Nova cantica

There the bells are ringing

In regis curia

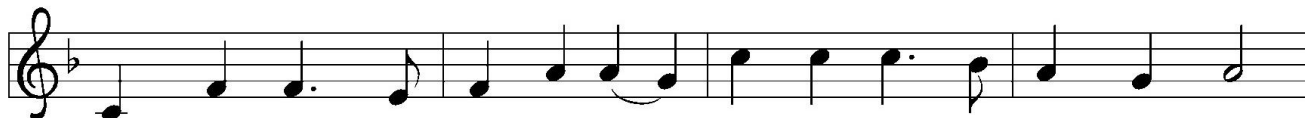
O that we were there!

OFFERTORY VERSE

The congregation may stand.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (ELW 270)

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 you na - tions, rise; join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see! Hail, in - car - nate de - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with an - gel - ic hosts pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



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

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.

Music: MENDELSSOHN, Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847; arr. William H. Cummings, 1831–1915

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray together.

God our provider,

by your merciful hand

abundance springs up from the earth.

Receive and bless these gifts of your own bounty,

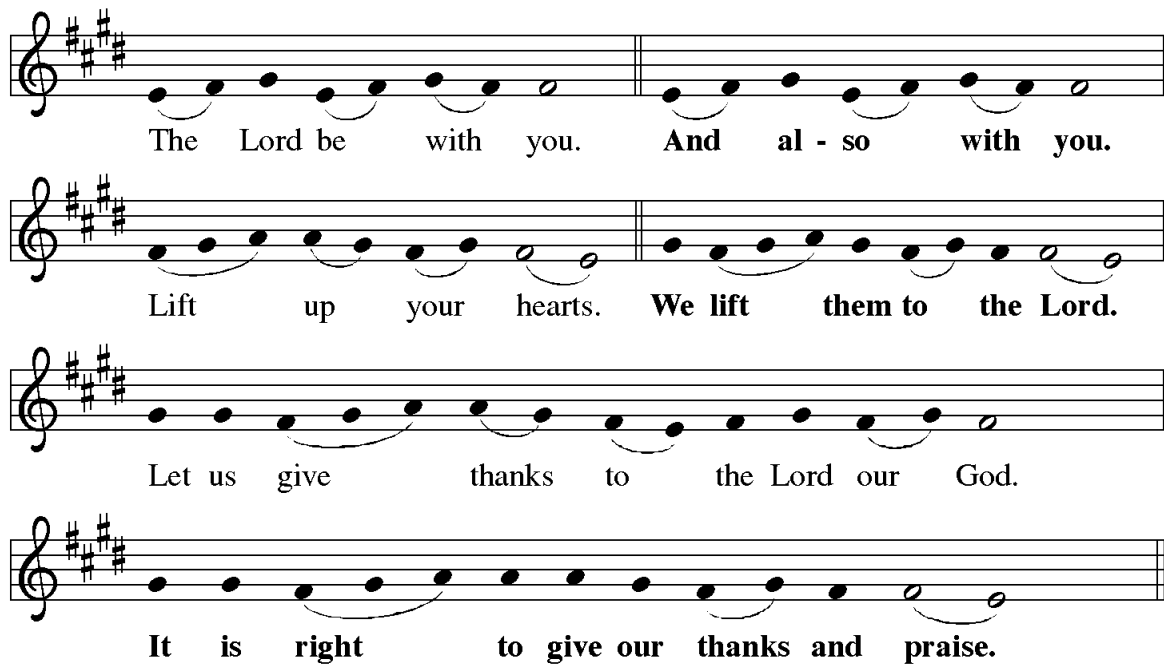
Let them be a sign of your steadfast love

and faithfulness for all people,

through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

DIALOGUE



The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

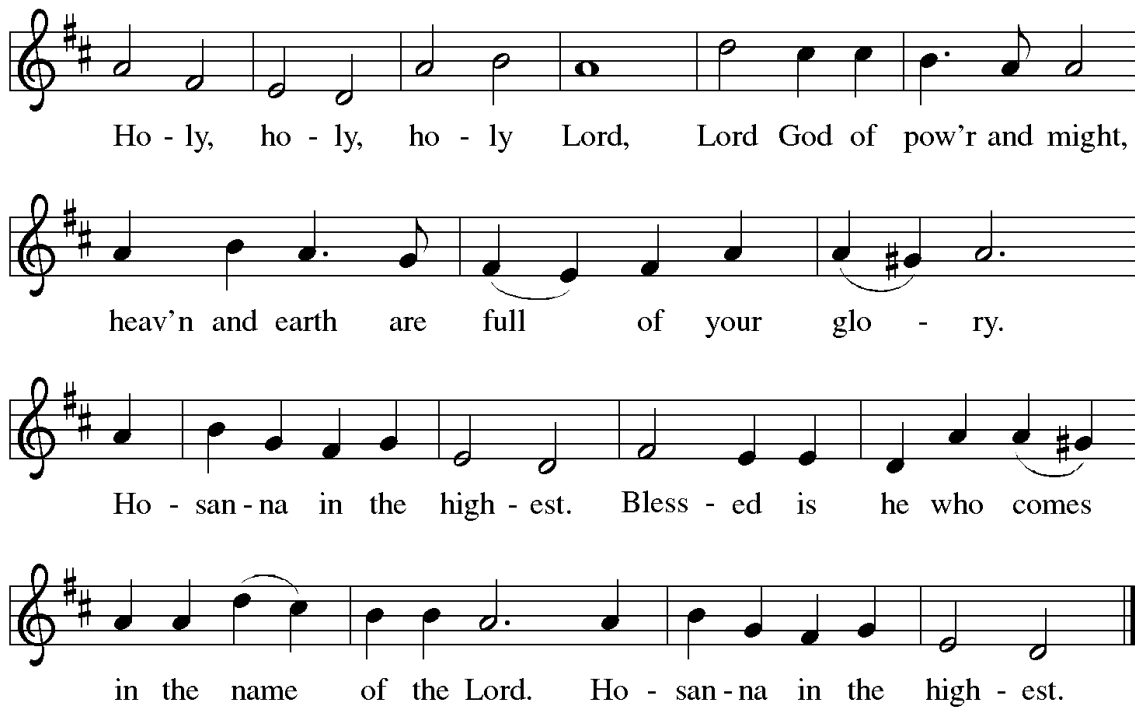
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

“... we praise your name and join their un-ending hymn:”

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,

heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes

in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God.
You are most holy,
and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
so that everyone who believes in him may not perish
but have eternal life.

We give you thanks for his coming into the world
to fulfill for us your holy will
and to accomplish all things for our salvation.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.



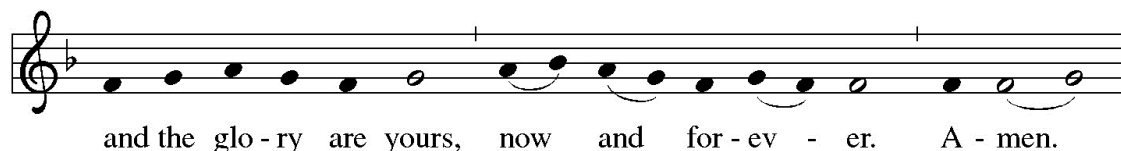
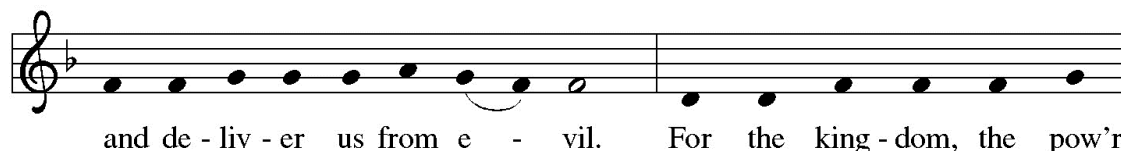
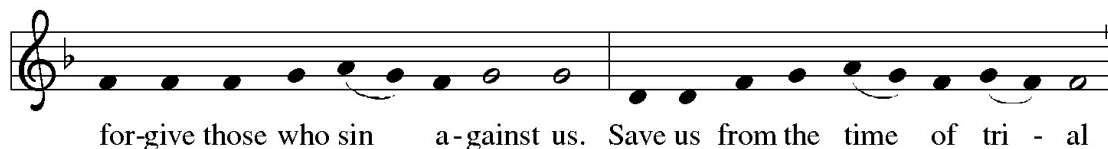
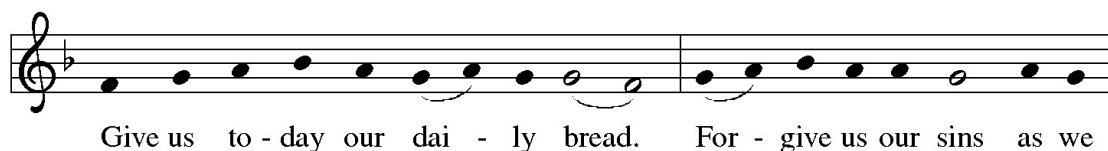
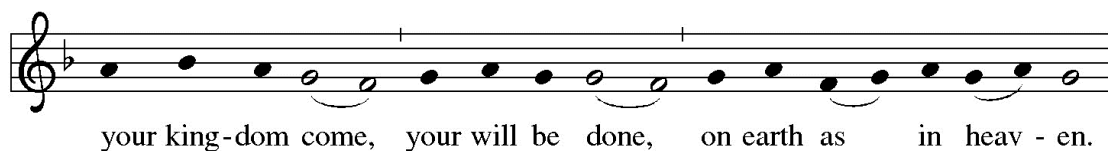
Christ has died. Christ is ris - en. Christ will come a - gain.

Remembering, therefore, his salutary command,
his life-giving passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension,
and the promise of his coming again,
we give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty,
not as we ought but as we are able;
we ask you mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving
and with your Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, your servants,
and these your own gifts of bread and wine,
so that we and all who share in the body and blood of Christ
may be filled with heavenly blessing and grace,
and, receiving the forgiveness of sin,
may be formed to live as your holy people
and be given our inheritance with all your saints.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.



LORD'S PRAYER



INVITATION

In this meal is the light for all life, Come, for Christ first welcomed us.

COMMUNION

The congregation may be seated.

All are welcome at communion without exception for it is Christ who first welcomed us. The Lord's table is open.

Your row will be invited up the aisle to receive communion, beginning first with the left side of the nave followed by the two right sections. The minister will place bread (body) in your hand saying, "The Body of Christ, given for you," after that you may follow the line toward the chalice and receive the wine (blood) from the assistant minister who will say "The Blood of Christ, shed for you." You may then dip the bread into the cup of wine (red), or grape juice (white). Once you have communed you may head back to your pew.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on

us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the

sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION CAROL

Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming (ELW 272)

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Christmas Sanctus

by Lee Dengler

See the weary pair, nestled in a stable bare,
gazing at their baby boy, filled with love and praise.
Earth and heaven sing, worshipping the newborn King,
who has come to change the world. Joine in songs of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy is the blessed one.
Heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Holy, Holy, holy is the promised son.
Glory be to God in the highest!

See the shepherds run, searching for God's precious Son;
Kneeling at his manger bed, filled with love and praise
Every knee will bow, every tongue confessing now,
Jesus Christ is Lord of All. Join in songs of praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy is the blessed one.
Heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Holy, Holy, holy is the promised son.
Glory be to God in the highest!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

The congregation may stand.

Let us pray together.
We thank you, O God,
that you have strengthened our hearts
through this feast of life and salvation.
Shine the light of Christ on our path,
that we may do justice,
love kindness,
and walk humbly with you,
now and forever.
Amen.

+ Sending +

PROCLAMATION OF THE NATIVITY OF CHRIST

During the reading of the Proclamation, light is passed from the Christ candle to each worshiper. Light your candle by tipping your unlit candle over your neighbor's burning candle. Never tip a burning candle.

Today, unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed all people in Their image.

Several thousand years after the flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the Judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king; in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel.

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome. The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; the whole world being at peace, Jesus Christ, Son of the eternal God, desiring to sanctify the world by Their most merciful incarnation, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary.

This is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ; thanks be to God.

HYMN: Silent Night

Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,
 1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te, hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.
 all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - li - scher
 Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

Ruh, schlaf in himm - li - scher Ruh.
 peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

BENEDICTION

The peace of God,
 which surpasses all understanding,
 keep your hearts and your minds
 in ☩ Christ Jesus.
Amen.

SENDING HYMN

Joy to the World (ELW 267)



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



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
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748

Music: ANTIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

DISMISSAL

Beloved of God,
 Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Carillon from 24 Pièces on Style Libre

by Louis Vierne

Worship materials adapted this day from multiple ecumenical partners including the Episcopal Church, USA, and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (2023).

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- Scripture readings from the NRSV

SERVING TODAY

<i>Interim:</i>	Vicar Alex Linn
<i>Assisting Minister:</i>	Chris Maglocchi
<i>Director of Music:</i>	Luke Duroc-Danner
<i>Violin:</i>	Amanda Beaune
	Polina Borisova
<i>Viola:</i>	Lillian Chou
<i>Cello:</i>	Omikara Gil
<i>Soprano:</i>	Ariel Andrew
<i>Alto:</i>	Katarina Galagaza
<i>Bass:</i>	Scott Spector
<i>Crucifer:</i>	Aidan Maglocchi
<i>Book Bearer:</i>	Finny Maglocchi
<i>Reader:</i>	Mae Loesel
<i>Ushers:</i>	Peter Hauser, John Hauser, Tom Morrison, Buckley Crist
<i>Communion Assistants:</i>	Jack and Anna Loesel
<i>Altar Guild:</i>	Cindi Rachowicz

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Year-End Donations

As we approach the end of 2023, we welcome your consideration of an end-of-year gift to St. John's. An end-of-year donation helps bolster our financial footing for our ministry here at St. John's and in our community. Please note that if you'd like your gift to qualify as a 2023 donation, it needs to be postmarked, hand delivered, or submitted electronically by December 31st. Checks dated in 2023 but postmarked or hand-delivered in 2024 will be counted as 2024 donations. December 31st is a Sunday this year, so if you are mailing a 2023 year-end donation, please mail early!

As you consider an end-of-year contribution, please keep in mind that RMD distributions and stock gifts are welcome options for giving. These must also be made by December 31 to qualify as a 2023 donation. If you have already met your RMD for 2023, we encourage you to consider this option for your 2024 giving.

Finally, if you are prepaying your 2024 pledge/donation, please make a note of this when you submit your gift. Donations submitted on or before December 31 st that are indicated as being for 2024 will be recorded on your 2023 giving statement but recognized in St. John's 2024 financial reporting. If you have questions about giving at St. John's, please contact our Treasurer, Michel Hauser, michelhauser@outlook.com. Thank you for your generosity!

NOTES ON TODAY'S MUSIC

Stuart Ross Carlson (b. 1996) is an American violinist, violist, arranger, and composer. Stuart holds degrees in violin, viola, and composition from the University of Michigan, and he won the VSA International Young Soloists Competition in 2016. He currently plays with the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra along with being the featured soloist for the Michigan Philharmonic in 2020. As a composer and arranger, Stuart has made many arrangements for violin as well as string ensembles, and his recent album "Portrait of a Landscape: Seasons" fuses Bluegrass and Classical styles.

George Friedrich Handel (1685-1759) is one of the most well-known composers of the Baroque along with J.S. Bach. Originally from Halle in Saxony, Handel studied as a young boy the organ under Friedrich Wilhelm Zachow, and he later learned the violin, harpsichord, and oboe. He would go on to study in Italy where he wrote his first oratorios before settling in London to write Italian style opera. As Italian opera began to fall in popularity in London, Handel switched to composing oratorio in English - most famously including the Messiah in 1743. The Pastoral Symphony (or "Pifa") comes at the midpoint of Part 1, and it leads into the annunciation to the shepherds.

Lee Dengler (b. 1949) and Susan Naus Dengler (b. 1949) are both American composers and church musicians. Lee holds BA and Masters degrees in composition and Susan holds BA and Masters degrees in music performance. Together, they lead the music and arts ministry at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Indiana. In tonight's anthem, Susan wrote the lyrics fusing the nativity story with the traditional Sanctus text, and the music was written by Lee Dengler.

Philip LeBas (b. 1958) is an English teacher, bassonist, conductor, and arranger. Born in Cambridge, UK, Philip holds degrees in Natural Sciences, Nuclear Physics, and Theology/Philosophy. He plays the piano, bassoon, and flute, and currently holds the principal bassoonist position with the Maidstone Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra. He also serves as the choir director for the Church of Sts Peter and Paul, Seal, near Sevenoaks. He also formerly taught at Walthamstow Hall, an independent girls secondary school in Sevenoaks, as the head of the physics department.

Louis Vierne (1870-1937) was a French organist and Composer who served as the organist of Notre-Dame de Paris from 1900 until his death. Vierne was born almost completely blind, but at age 2 the young Louis was able to pick out the notes of a Schubert Lullaby on the piano after hearing it once. Once his family moved to Paris, Vierne began studying the piano and organ at the National Institute for the Young Blind, and he impressed César Franck with his playing at just 11. Vierne would go on to become a celebrated organist and teacher at the Paris Conservatoire, and would compose extensively for the organ.

POINSETTIAS

The poinsettias decorating the church this Christmas are given to the glory of God by:

- Lyn and Dave Brunn, in thanksgiving for Karen and Kathy and their families.
- Rachel Cordts, in loving memory of Rachel E. and William J. Cordts.
- Buckley and Susan Crist, in thanksgiving for many happy Christmases with family and friends.
- The Danielsen's, in thanksgiving for our family, friends, and a year of togetherness.
- John and Michel Hauser, in loving memory of Lewis and Ilze Williams and in thanksgiving for Cyril and Tish Hauser.
- Ken and Diane Kastman, in loving memory of Carolyn Groves – mother of their daughter-in-law, Mary Kastman.
- Karl Leinberger, in loving memory of Barbara Bolin Leinberger and in thanksgiving for Rena Leinberger.
- Alex Linn, in thanksgiving for Nico and Neko, their two rescue dogs.
- The Loesel family, in thanksgiving for all God's blessings.
- Alissa & Dan Novak and family, in loving memory of Robert Novak and in thanksgiving for their family and friends.
- Jan Rassenfoss and Alan Swanson, in thanksgiving for family and friends.
- Alla Rusz, in loving memory of Richard Rusz and in thanksgiving for her St. John's family.
- Jason Shutters, in thanksgiving for another Christmas together.
- Jan Wendel, in loving memory of Doris and Charles Regan, Kevin Beretta and Tom Wendel.
- Nancy and Larry Wood, in thanksgiving for friends and family.

IN OUR PRAYERS

- † Peter Knobel, hospitalized
- † Rena Leinberger, cancer diagnosis 11/12/23
- † Family and Friends of Hing You Tam Siu, mother-in-law of Jim Dossa, who passed away
- † Family & friends of Viola Gonder, mother of Craig Gonder, who died 8/7/23
- † Congratulations to Dano Johnson & Emily Mock, who were married June 17, 2023
- † Family & friends of Richard Rusz, who died 6/6/23
- † Family & friends of Karen Daugherty, aunt of Erin Rasmussen, who died 5/8/23
- † Family & friends of Joan Schinler, who died 5/5/23
- † Sarah Rink, hospitalized after a fall 3/8/23
- † Family & friends of Ruby Winter, who died 1/10/23
- † Steve Morrison, son of Tom & Judy Morrison, recovering from back surgery 1/1/23
- † Family & friends of Marge Bennett, loved one of Kristen Daniels, who died 11/17/22
- † Margaux Tauszig, granddaughter of Wolf Peddinghaus
- † Natalie Domchenko & Hilaire Sainson, sister of Olga Domchenko and sister's husband, in need of healing
- † Karen Brunn, daughter of Dave & Lyn Brunn, recovering from spinal cord injury
- † Mindy Davis, seeking permanent housing, 2/23/22
- † Lorraine Beutelspacher, moved to new home in Arizona 2/3/23