

*The Eve of the Nativity*

December 24, 2024

4:00pm

**THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**Opening Hymn 83 (v. 1-3 and 6).....“O Come All Ye Faithful”**

O come, all ye faithful,  
joyful and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;  
come, and behold him,  
born the King of angels;

*Refrain:*

*O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him,  
Christ the Lord.*

God from God,  
Light from Light eternal,  
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
only-begotten Son of the Father; *[Refrain]*

Sing, choirs of angels,  
sing in exultation;  
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;  
glory to God, glory in the highest; *[Refrain]*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing; *[Refrain]*

*Celebrant*      Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*All*              **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

*Celebrant*      The Lord be with you.

*All*              **And also with you.**

*Celebrant*      Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.

*All*              **Amen.**

**Gloria – Hymn 96 (v. 1-3)**..... “Angels We Have Heard on High”

Angels we have heard on high,  
sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
and the mountains in reply  
echoing their joyous strains.

*Refrain:*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo,  
gloria in excelsis Deo.*

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
which inspire your heav'nly song? *[Refrain]*

Come to Bethlehem and see  
him whose birth the angels sing;  
come, adore on bended knee  
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. *[Refrain]*

**The First Lesson**..... **Isaiah 9:2-7**

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--  
on them light has shined.  
You 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.  
For 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.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
For 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.  
His 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

*Reader*      The Word of the Lord.  
*People*      **Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 96** (*said responsively by whole verse*)

*Reader*      Sing to the Lord a new song;  
                  sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

*People:*      **Sing to the Lord and bless his Name;  
                  proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**

*Reader*      Declare his glory among the nations  
                  and his wonders among all peoples.

*People*      **For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised;  
                  he is more to be feared than all gods.**

*Reader*      As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;  
                  but it is the Lord who made the heavens.

*People*      **Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!  
                  Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!**

*Reader*      Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples;  
                  ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

*People*      **Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name;  
                  bring offerings and come into his courts.**

*Reader*      Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;  
                  let the whole earth tremble before him.

*People*      **Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King!  
                  he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;  
                  he will judge the peoples with equity."**

*Reader*      Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
                  let the sea thunder and all that is in it;  
                  let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

*People*      **Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy  
                  before the Lord when he comes,  
                  when he comes to judge the earth.**

*Reader*      He will judge the world with righteousness  
                  and the peoples with his truth.

**The Epistle**.....**Titus: 2:11-14**

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

*Reader*      The Word of the Lord.  
*People*        **Thanks be to God.**

**Sequence Hymn 87 (v. 1-2)**.....“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

Hark! the herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the newborn King:  
peace on earth, and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!"  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with th'angelic hosts proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Refrain:*  
*Hark! the herald angels sing,*  
*"Glory to the newborn King"*

Christ, by highest heaven adored,  
Christ, the everlasting Lord,  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb:  
veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail th'incarnate Deity,  
pleased with us in flesh to dwell,  
Jesus, our Immanuel. [*Refrain*]

**The Gospel**.....**Luke 2:1-20**

*Deacon:*      The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.  
*All:*            **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And 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.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see-- I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

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

When 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." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*Deacon:*     The Gospel of the Lord.  
*All:*         **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Sermon** ..... The Rev. Kathleen Liles

### **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:**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit**

**he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.**

**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.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He 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.**

### **The Prayers of the People**

*Celebrant:* On this holy night in which God joins heaven and earth, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all those in need.

*Leader:* We pray for those who struggle with faith. Help them to know that there is more to life than what we see, give them profound, undeniable experiences of you, and fill them with your love, peace, comfort, care, and attention.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for lay and ordained leaders who serve the church. Help them to proclaim your word across our world.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are surrounded by violence of any kind. Protect all those in harm's way and bring an end to abuse, racism, gun violence, and war.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all those who govern, lead, and serve in the military. Turn their hearts and minds towards you that they may honor the earth and its diverse races, cultures, and religions. Help them to promote your justice and truth in the world.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are cold, hungry, and have no place to lay their heads. Comfort, nourish, and give warmth to those in need.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are isolated, depressed, anxious, grieving or facing illness this Christmas season. Draw near to them. Heal them. Help them to know your presence. Give them your peace and compassion.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died, especially Estelle Taylor. We thank you that they are in your nearer presence. Give us grace to trust them to your care.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

On this Holy night, open all our hearts to your presence, deepen and strengthen our faith, help us to seek your light and hope in you.

Lord, in your mercy,  
**Hear our prayer.**

*Celebrant:* Grant us these things, O Father, for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, who brought light and life into the world, and now lives and reigns with you and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever

*All* Amen.

### **The Peace**

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*All* **And also with you.**

**Offertory Hymn Piano Solo** ..... “Oh, Holy Night”

## **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

### **The Great Thanksgiving**

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

*All* **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

*All* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*All* **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

*The Celebrant continues*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*All*.....**Sanctus S 130**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

*The Celebrant continues*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*All*       **We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;**

*The Celebrant continues*



And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

**All            Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

### **The Breaking of the Bread**

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.*

*Celebrant*     Jesus, Lamb of God:  
**People**        **have mercy on us.**

*Celebrant*     Jesus, bearer of our sins:  
**People**        **have mercy on us.**

*Celebrant*     Jesus, redeemer of the world:  
**People give us your peace.**

*Celebrant*     The Gifts of God for the People of God.

**Communion Hymn Piano Solo** .....“The First Nowell”

*Please stand. Say together*

**Post-Communion Prayer**

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**The Christmas Blessing** (*please stand*)

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. **Amen.**

May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love. **Amen.**

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

**Closing Hymn 111** .....“Silent Night”

Silent night, holy night,  
all is calm, all is bright  
round yon virgin mother and child.  
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,  
sleep in heavenly peace.  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,  
shepherds quake at the sight,  
glories stream from heaven afar,  
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
Christ, the Savior, is born!  
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night,  
Son of God, love's pure light  
radiant beams from thy holy face,

with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

### **The Dismissal**

*Deacon*        Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

*People*        **Thanks be to God.**