

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2020

ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Newton Lower Falls, Massachusetts

www.st-marys-episcopal.org

(617) 527-4769

Holy Eucharist, Rite II
December 24, 2020

Christmas Eve

Prelude
Carols for Harp and Choir

Still, Still, Still

Austrian carol, arr. Norman Luboff

Still, still, still
one can hear the falling snow.
For all is hushed, the world is sleeping
Holy Star its vigil keeping
Still, still still
one can hear the falling snow.

Sleep, sleep, sleep
tis the eve of our Saviour's birth.
The night is peaceful all around you
Close your eyes, let sleep surround you,
Sleep, sleep, sleep,
tis the eve of our Saviour's birth.

Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come.
While guardian angels without number
you as you sweetly slumber.
Dream, dream, dream
Of the joyous day to come.

Hallelu!

Traditional, arr. Stephen Paulus

Down in a valley
Sing hallelu!

What did she name him?
Sing hallelu!

Mary had a baby,
Sing hallelu!

Named him Jesus,
Sing hallelu!

This Little Babe

from *Ceremony of Carols*, Benjamin Britten

This little Babe so few days old is come to rifle Satan's fold;
All hell doth at his presence quake, though he himself for cold do shake;
For in this weak unarmèd wise the gates of hell he will surprise.

With tears he fights and wins the field, his naked breast stands for a shield,
His battering shot are babish cries, his arrows looks of weeping eyes,
His martial ensigns Cold and Need, and feeble flesh his warrior's steed.

His camp is pitchèd in a stall, his bulwark but a broken wall;
The crib his trench, haystalks his stakes; of shepherds he his muster makes;
And thus, as sure his foe to wound, the angels' trumps alarum sound.

My soul, with Christ, join thou in fight; stick to the tents that he hath pight.

Within his crib is surest ward; this little Babe will be thy guard.

If thou wilt foil thy foes with joy, then flit not from this heavenly Boy.

-Robert Southwell (1561 - 1595)

What Child

Paul Lohman

What child is this, who laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

Refrain

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,
Come, peasant king, to own him;
The King of Kings salvation brings,
Let loving hearts enthrone him.

Refrain

Welcome

The Rev. Ann Bonner-Stewart

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Opening Hymn 83:

O Come All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

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 God 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

Opening Acclamation

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

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

Celebrant: Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

See how the shepherds,
summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither
bend our joyful footsteps;

Refrain

Child, for us sinners
poor and in the manger,
we would embrace thee, with love and awe;
who would not love thee,
loving us so dearly?

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

Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear?
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

See him in a manger laid
whom the angels praise above.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid
while we raise our hearts in love.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

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.

People: **Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 62:6-12

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels;

all day and all night they shall never be silent.

You who remind the Lord,
take no rest,

and give him no rest
until he establishes Jerusalem
and makes it renowned throughout the earth.

The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:

I will not again give your grain
to be food for your enemies,

and foreigners shall not drink the wine
for which you have labored; but those who garner it shall eat it
and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it
in my holy courts.

Go through, go through the gates,
prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples.

The Lord has proclaimed
to the end of the earth:

Say to daughter Zion,
"See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him."

They shall be called, "The Holy People,
The Redeemed of the Lord";

and you shall be called, "Sought Out,
A City Not Forsaken."

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

Psalm 97 (BCP, page 726)

Dominus regnavit

1 The Lord is King;
let the earth rejoice; *
let the multitude of the isles be glad.

2 Clouds and darkness are round about him, *
righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.

3 A fire goes before him *
and burns up his enemies on every side.

4 His lightnings light up the world; *
the earth sees it and is afraid.

5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, *
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

6 The heavens declare his righteousness, *
and all the peoples see his glory.

7 Confounded be all who worship carved images
and delight in false gods
Bow down before him, all you gods!

8 Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, *
because of your judgments, O Lord.

9 For you are the Lord,
most high over all the earth; *
you are exalted far above all gods. (

10 The Lord loves those who hate evil; *
he preserves the lives of his saints
and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.

11 Light has sprung up for the righteous
and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.

12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, *
and give thanks to his holy name.

Second Reading: Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn 78

O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

Forest Green

The Gospel

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People: **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.

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

A Christmas Story

Andrew Heintz

Homily

The Rev. Ann Bonner-Stewart

Anthem

I Wonder as I Wander Appalachian Carol, arr. John Jacob Niles

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die
For poor on'ry people like you and like I,
I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,
And the promise of ages it did then recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,
He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.

I wonder as I wander...

The Prayers of the People for Christmas

As we celebrate Jesus's birth, let us pray for the needs of the world and everyone in need of prayer. The response will be, "**Hear our prayer.**"

For the church, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news and care for God's people in all corners of the world, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For peace in our world, that war, violence and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For everyone in particular need of prayer: the homeless, the unemployed, the hungry, everyone who is hospitalized, everyone who is imprisoned in body or soul, and all those for whom this season is not only one of joy but also a time of trial, sadness, or grief, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For those who work on Christmas on behalf of others: doctors and nurses, musicians and clergy, bus and taxi drivers, pilots and flight attendants, retail clerks and cleaning crews, emergency responders, and anyone whose work may prevent them from sharing Christmas Eve or Christmas Day with those they love, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For all observing winter feasts and holy days this month, including but not limited to Hanukkah, the festival of lights in the Jewish tradition, and Kwanza, which celebrates African heritage, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For everyone who is sick, that they may know your healing grace in body, mind, and spirit, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For the many who are in mourning, particularly during these past nine months, when it has been very difficult, and occasionally nearly impossible, to offer and receive comfort in the ways in which we are accustomed, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

For everyone who has died, that we may know that those who have gone before us have been embraced by your love and mercy, we pray to you, O Lord. **Hear our prayer.**

The Peace (*Please greet one another in the name of Christ.*)

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Anthem

In the Bleak Midwinter

Harold Darke

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away when He comes to reign.
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day,
A breast full of milk, and a manger full of hay;
Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.

What can I give Him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him: give my heart.

-Christina Rossetti

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

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

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Celebrant:

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, became fully human 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:

Sanctus

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.**

Then 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,

Celebrant and People

**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 the blessed Mary and 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. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant: Let's pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us.

People and Celebrant:

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

Alleluia.

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast.

Alleluia.

The Invitation

All are welcome at God's Table.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

said in unison

In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of your church where your blessed Body and Blood are being offered, I desire to offer you praise and thanksgiving. I present to you my soul and body, with the earnest wish that I may ever be united to you. And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to you, and embrace you with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate you from me. May I live in you, and you live in me, both in this life, and in the life to come. Amen.

Hymn 111

Silent Night

Stille Nacht

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.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
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.

Postcommunion Prayer

BCP 365

Celebrant: Let us pray.

People 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 Blessing

Hymn 87

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

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 the angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

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 the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with man to dwell;
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Risen with healing in his wings;
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.

—Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt.

The Dismissal

Celebrant
People

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!
Thanks be to God!

Postlude

Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her
(From heaven above to earth I come)

F. W. Zachau

Service Participants and Information

The Reverend Ann Bonner-Stewart, Rector and Officiant
Kirsten Johnson, Director of Music
Andrew Heintz, Director of Christian Education
Denise Flanagan, Administrative Assistant

St. Mary's Adult Choir

Soloists:

Kate Harrington, soprano
Melanie Donnelly, alto
Glen Wright, tenor
Nathan Hylan, bass

Instrumentalists:

Deborah Fabisiewicz, harp
Eric Ritter, guitar
Tom Duprey, trumpet

Musicians of the Diocese

Lectors

Nat Gorton & Paul Pyzowski

Video & Audio

Andrew Heintz & Nick Pyzowski & Paul Pyzowski

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