

# St. John's Episcopal Church



## Christmas Festival

Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 ~ 4pm

The Reverend John Beach  
Priest-in-Charge

### Prelude

### Words of Welcome

### Opening Hymn                    #83 ~ *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (verses 1-3)

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*

## Lighting of the Christ Candle

**Hope, peace, joy, and love.** Four candles, four promises continually offered to us by God, and all of them manifest in this one we light tonight:

***The Christ Candle.*** In Christ we find the hope of transformation, the peace that follows justice, the joy of self-fulfillment in community, and the love that encompasses us in all our diversity, empowering us to make our own unique contributions to this world. In Christ we find light and life, and the courage to be like him, answering his call and following in his footsteps.

*We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives, and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth-born of Mary, growing through childhood into an adult ministry, in all his life manifesting the peace, love, and justice of God; his voice undimmed by the centuries, his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago. Come to us, Lord Jesus. Be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives. May the light of your life be kindled in us, and lead us to the shining truth of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen*

## The Collect

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

## The Christmas Story - Luke 2:1-7

*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.*

## Hymn      #101 ~ *Away in a Manger*

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
close by me forever, and love me I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there

### The Christmas Story - Luke 2:8-14

*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!"*

### Hymn #87 ~ 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 the angelic host 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, off-spring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity.  
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel!

*Refrain*

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Risen with healing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,  
hail, the Sun of Righteousness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

*Refrain*

### The Christmas Story - Luke 2:15-20

*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.*

Hymn #109 ~ *The First Nowell* (verses 1-3)

The first Nowell the angel did say  
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,  
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

*Refrain:*

*Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,  
born is the King of Israel.*

They looked up and saw a star  
shining in the east beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light,  
and so it continued both day and night.

*Refrain*

And by the light of that same star  
three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent,  
and to follow the star wherever it went.

*Refrain*

The Christmas Story - **Matthew 2:1-11**

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:*

*‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”*

*Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.*

*Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.*

**Hymn**      #128 ~ *We Three Kings*

We three kings of Orient are,  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.

*Refrain:*

*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright;  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King for ever, ceasing never  
over us all to reign.

*Refrain*

Frankincense to offer have I:  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, gladly raising,  
worship him, God Most High.

*Refrain*

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

*Refrain*

Glorious now behold him arise,  
King and God and Sacrifice;  
heaven sings alleluia:  
alleluia the earth replies.

*Refrain*

**Christmas Message**

**Prayers of the People**

In joy and humility let us pray to the creator of the universe, saying, “**Lord, grant us peace.**”

By the good news of our salvation brought to Mary by the angel,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

By the mystery of the Word made flesh,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

By the birth in time of the timeless Son of God,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

By the manifestation of the King of glory to the shepherds and magi,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

By the submission of the maker of the world to Mary and Joseph of Nazareth,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

By the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan,  
hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

Grant that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; hear us, O Lord. **Lord, grant us peace.**

**Offertory Hymn**                    #100 ~ *Joy to the World*

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
let earth receive her King;  
let every heart prepare him room,  
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;  
let us our songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness,  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

## The Holy Communion

### Doxology

#380 vs. 3

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

### The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer

Officiant     The Lord be with you.

People        **And also with you.**

Officiant     Lift up your hearts.

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

Officiant     Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Officiant     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 sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

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

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

#S130 ~ *Holy, holy, holy*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of 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.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom. All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. 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.**

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

### The Lord's Prayer

**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, and 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

Officiant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

### Fraction Anthem #S164 ~ *Lamb of God*

Officiant The Gifts of God for the People of God. This is the Lord's table and all are welcome here.

### Distribution of Communion

*At St. John's, all are welcome at God's table.*



## Post-communion Prayer

### Blessing

#### Closing Hymn      #111 ~ *Silent Night, Holy 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.

### Dismissal

Officiant      Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.  
People          **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

### Postlude



### **Christmas Prayer List**

*(Feel free to include anyone not mentioned or inadvertently omitted)*

Barbara & Mel Witham, Josephine & Joseph DiTrapano, Douglas Palazzo, and Scott Carroll ~ Anna & John Falasca ~ James A. Felci, Mildred P. Felci, Joanne M. Felci, Paul & Elizabeth Felci, Vinnie Federici, Vincent & Mildred Federici, Donnie & Eleanor Bernbei, Tommy & Theresa Walles ~ Carl, Ida, Daniel, Robert, Jean, and Richard ~ Garnet & William Cox, Sr., Carol & William Cox, Jr., Dorothy & Richard Tarr, and Marilyn Tarr Schiappa ~ Russell Cutter, Eugene & Josephine Poti ~ Harlowe & Pauline Midland, Paul Fuhs, and Alan Merritt ~ The Davey Family: Edward, Madelyn, Frank, Eva, Frank (Jr.), Arlean, Arthur, and Marilyn, Louis & Laurine Seaboyer, and Kevin Lancaster ~ Abraham & Ethel Hashem, and Hermione & Charles Mears ~ Bill, Allan, and Margaret St. Clair, Norman & Bertha Calderwood ~ Holmes & Margaret Hurl, Marcia Hurl Foote, Helen Chase, Charles & Marjorie Aston ~ Agnes & Coley Rochefort, Anna & Peter, and Myron Manoogian ~ Stanley, Beulah, and Gary Kanarkiewicz, and Danny Mullen ~ Valerie and Victoria Bidmead, and Courtney Nicolo ~ Lisa Polese

### **In Thanksgiving**

Elizabeth, Phil, Paige, Gwyneth, Harrison, Emery, Lydia, and Michaela

### **Participants in our Christmas Eve services:**

The Rev. John Beach, Officiant & Priest-in-Charge  
Stephen Sikorski, Music Director  
Denise Beneteau & John Rogalski, Worship Leaders  
Kristina Palazzo & Colleen Marcotte, L.E.M.s

Julia Aston, Jeannine Cutter, Dibby LeBlanc, and Dee LeMay,  
Sandra Mears, and Kristina Palazzo - St. John's Altar Guild

**St. John's Episcopal Church**  
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