



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

Service of Christmas Lessons & Carols with
Holy Eucharist

December 29, 2019

10 A.M.

If you are new or visiting ...

Welcome! After the service, please come to Coffee Hour (in the Lounge on the 2nd floor) for food and fellowship. Please consider filling out a blue visitor information card (located in the pew rack). You can use the form to request a nametag, and next Sunday it will be waiting for you on the table just inside the main church entrance.

Families with small children: Three seating areas at the front of the church are reserved for families with small children: the area under the array of paper cranes (for children age 3 and under), and the areas in front of the two front pews (for children age 10 and under). For safety, every child should be accompanied by a caregiver.

Education for All Ages takes place from 9 to 9:45 A.M. on most Sundays during the academic year.

Wireless access in the Sanctuary is accessible by connecting to wireless network STEC – Guest. Your device will open a web browser and St. Thomas's website. Sunday bulletins are posted on the website's Bulletin Archive. We aim to reduce printing by encouraging worshippers to use their smart devices to follow the order of service.

Restrooms for men and women are located on the second floor. Go through the red double doors at the front of the church, up the stairs to the left, and to the far end of the hallway. An **all-gender restroom (with baby changing table)** is in the Vesting Room, located opposite the red double doors at the front of the church.

All are invited to receive Holy Communion. Baptism is not required; church membership is not required. **Gluten-free bread** is available at each communion station; **non-alcoholic wine** is available from the chalice bearer at the center. Any difference will be explained during the announcements.

To receive Holy Communion hold out your hands, and the server will place bread in them. If you wish to receive wine, please sip it from the common cup, using both hands to guide the chalice to your lips.

To follow along with the service you will need this service bulletin as well as The Hymnal 1982 (the blue book in the pew racks). In The Hymnal 1982, hymn numbers beginning with "S" are in the front section of the book.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), BWV 599

At the ringing of the bell, please stand.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

The first Nowell (109, *The Hymnal 1982*)

OPENING ACCLAMATION

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

People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

Glory to you, Giver of all good gifts! We offer you glad thanks and praise for every blessing from your love, and especially for the best gift of yourself in the child Jesus. **Amen.**

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

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.**

All are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2,6-7

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. 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 this.

All stand.

CAROL

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming (81, *The Hymnal 1982*)

All are seated.

THE SECOND LESSON

LUKE 1:26-35,38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The LORD is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the LORD God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the LORD; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

All stand.

CAROL

Hark! the herald angels sing (87, *The Hymnal 1982*)

All are seated.

THE THIRD LESSON

LUKE 2:1,3-7

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

All stand.

CAROL

O little town of Bethlehem (78, *The Hymnal 1982*)

All are seated.

THE FOURTH LESSON

LUKE 2:8-16

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.

All stand.

CAROL

While shepherds watched their flocks by night (94, *The Hymnal 1982*)

All are seated.

THE FIFTH LESSON

MATTHEW 2:1-12

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.

All stand.

CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear (89, *The Hymnal 1982*)

All are seated.

THE SIXTH LESSON

JOHN 1:1-14

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.

All stand.

CAROL

Of the Father's love begotten (82, *The Hymnal 1982*)

THE NICENE CREED

Presider and People

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, 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Intercessor and People

In the stillness of this holy season of Christmas, let us pray to God, saying, “God of love, hear our prayer.”

Christians around the world are celebrating the birth of your son, Jesus. Unite us in faith, that we may shine with one light, and scatter all darkness. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

You pierced the cosmic silence with the utterance of your Word made flesh. Inspire leaders everywhere with your message of compassion and reconciliation. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

By joining heaven and earth in your son, you affirmed the holiness of our earthly habitation. Encourage all people to bless it, and to keep it a hallowed home for all its occupants. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

The Messiah is born, and promise is born anew. Renew our hope, individually and as a community, and strengthen the bonds we share with others, both within and beyond these walls. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Shepherds heard and conveyed your angel’s good news of great joy. Give us grace to understand and share your gospel of love. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Multitudes of heavenly host proclaimed glory to you and peace on earth. Kindle in our hearts the courage and strength to work for justice and liberation. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus came to us as a baby cradled in a borrowed bed of straw, because there was no room at the inn. Open our eyes and hearts to the needs of the homeless and the hungry. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

You sent Jesus to illuminate all who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death. Tend the embers of comfort and healing for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

By making Jesus incarnate in the world, you offered to all people the blessing of holiness. Lend your glory to those who have died, and at the last day gather us all in your eternal life. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the concerns and gratitude of your people here gathered, offered silently or aloud.

Presider

God of love, the feast of Christmas reminds us that you are with us at all times and in all places; hear our prayer, and send your Holy Spirit to guide us more certainly upon the way of your Holy Child, Jesus the Christ. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

*The People greet one another with a sign of peace, and then are seated for brief announcements, after which the People remain seated for the **Offertory Music**, and during which the collection is taken.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OFFERTORY MUSIC

*During the singing of the **Offertory Hymn**, the Ushers carry the gifts forward. The People follow and encircle the altar. You are encouraged to position children where they can see. Standing time is approximately 15 minutes. If you are unable to stand, you may sit in one of the chairs arranged near the altar, move to the front row of pews, or remain where you are.*

OFFERTORY HYMN

In the bleak midwinter (112, *The Hymnal* 1982)

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
 4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:
 cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim throng - ed the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow — on — snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf - ficed
 but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
 if I were a wise — man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord — God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Music: *Cranham*, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

THE HOLY COMMUNION
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B

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

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:

Presider and People

**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.

Presider

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,

Presider and People

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

Presider

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 [_____ and] all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of all your children; 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 forever. **AMEN.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

You are invited to say the Lord's Prayer in the language of your choice.

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, forever and ever. Amen.
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THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the consecrated bread. A period of silence is kept.

Presider: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People: Therefore let us keep the feast.
Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

All are invited to receive Holy Communion at God's table in this church. Baptism is not required; church membership is not required. Please proceed to the most conveniently located station to receive communion, and then return to your seat via a side aisle. Gluten-free bread is available at each station; non-alcoholic wine is available from the chalice bearer at the center. To receive a blessing instead of communion, approach the priest with your arms crossed over your chest. After all have received communion, the People remain seated for a period of silence. Then all stand.

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray.

Presider and 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

May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into ones things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

FINAL HYMN

Joy to the world (100, *The Hymnal 1982*)

DISMISSAL

Presider: [*The Presider dismisses the People.*]

People: **Thanks be to God.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Christmas Postlude
Wilbur Held (1914–2015)

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Announcements

Stay in touch! Subscribe to the Weekly Parish Enews and “like” St. Thomas’s on Facebook.

Merry Christmas! May you have a happy and safe New Year’s Eve, and may 2020 be a year of abundant blessings for you and yours.

We’re trying something new for **today’s liturgy**: instead the usual pattern of readings and a homily, our Liturgy of the Word will include six **lessons and carols for the Christmas season**. Besides providing a post-Christmas break for your regular preacher, this gives everyone another chance to sing our favorite carols before they go away until next year. We hope you enjoy it – but let us know what you think. And thanks to Madison Thompson for subbing on organ!

A note of appreciation for the many volunteers who made possible our lovely Christmas services. The church was beautiful, the music was wonderful, and the pageant was exactly what it needed to be! We were happy to see such great attendance on Christmas Eve, including a lot of Day School families here for the pageant.

Next Delight Night (Parish Potluck): Friday, January 10, 6 p.m., in the Lounge. Stay tuned for details about the January program.

Thanks to the Holton and Hagens-Herd families for staffing our hot chocolate table during the December 22 Edgerton Park Luminary Walk. We gave away a lot of hot chocolate, shared a festive time with folks from around the area, and maybe even spread the word out about our great church. We hope to have more park-related events in 2020, so look out for opportunities to join in the fun.

Holiday Office Closing. The Church office will be closed next week, returning to regular hours on Monday, January 6. Observing the same closing dates as the Day School allows for routine facility maintenance during this period. The staff will be checking email periodically during this time. For pastoral emergencies, contact Keri as usual.

Season of Racial Justice and Reconciliation Book Group. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 15, at 7:30 p.m., in the Lounge. We will discuss the book *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Look for details in the Enews.

Malawi Christmas Collection. For the past few years, the children have gathered coins for the Anglican Diocese of Norther Malawi's Orphan Feeding Program. Although Katherine and Derek have moved to a new parish, we are doing one more collection that Katherine can take to Malawi in late January. Please bring coins to the "Graffiti" Sunday school room by January 12, 2020. Containers will be available at Sunday services during Advent.

Vestry Nominations are open! Please get your nominations for parish leadership to Denise Terry by January 7.

Winter/Spring 2020 Coffee Hour Sign-Up. Please use the link in the Enews to sign up to host Sunday Coffee Hour from January 5 to June 7, 2020. Unfilled slots will be populated by the parish office after January 5. We strive to pair experienced hosts with newcomers. Thank you for participating in this important parish ministry!

Christian Community Action. The Sunday School children are putting together “Blessing Bags” for people who lack reliable housing. Help by donating new long athletic socks, individually wrapped standard size bars of soap, individual tubes of toothpaste, deodorant, and travel size shampoos and lotions.

Adult DIY Bible Study: Meet in the Day School Lobby every Sunday at 9 a.m. All are welcome for informal conversation about the Bible readings of the day. It's always interesting and fun.

Loaves & Fishes. Please donate non-perishable food items.

Our Little Free Library always needs books. Just pop them in yourself.

For more information and announcements, see our website and last week’s Weekly Parish Enews.

Serving Today

Presider: The Rev. Keri Aubert
Organist: Madison Thompson
Eucharistic Minister: Kyle Holton
Crucifer: Chris Martinez
Chalice: Judy Thompson
Lectors: Five to be recruited from the congregation
Intercessor: Judy Thompson
Vestry Host:
Usher: Gary Robison
Sacristans: Kyle Holton & Kids
Counters:
Coffee Hour Hosts: No formal coffee hour

This Week's Prayer Intentions

Pray for those in any need or trouble, especially:
Bonnie, Drew, Dwight, Franklin, John, Sally

Pray for those who have died.

In the Episcopal Church in Connecticut Cycle of Prayer, pray for:

St. Mark's, Bridgeport; St. Mark's, Bridgewater; Good Shepherd, Bristol and Plainville; For soup kitchens and food pantries, and all ministries that feed those who go without

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for:

Gahini (Rwanda), Gambia (West Africa)

In the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, pray for:

Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine

Leadership at St. Thomas's

Church Officers and Vestry

Kyle Holton (Senior Warden)
Denise Terry (Junior Warden)
Ricardo Chavira (Treasurer)
Linda Meyer (Clerk)
Thomas Hogan
Elizabeth Peters
Alexandria Robison
Catherine Stricklan
Joann Sweasy
The Rev. Keri Aubert (Rector)

Church (Volunteer) Associate Priests

The Rev. Canon K. Dexter Cheney
The Rev. Jakki Flanagan

Day School Board of Trustees

Gina Panza (Head of School)
The Rev. Keri Aubert (President, Day School Corp.)
Gina Criscuolo (Chair)
John Forrest (Vice-Chair)
Tracey Meares (Treasurer)
Eileen O'Donnell (Secretary)
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Tony Reyes
Kathryn Crabb Scherer
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Heather Tookes Alexopoulos

ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL

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