



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR A

Service of Holy Eucharist

December 15, 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.

As is our practice, during Advent we are using Eucharistic Prayer 2 from *Enriching Our Worship*, the official Episcopal Church resource offering expansive language options to the *Book of Common Prayer*. It is a popular choice for Advent because of its language about the nativity: "To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God."

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

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

At the ringing of the bell, please stand.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

"Thy kingdom come!" (615, *The Hymnal 1982*)

The Presider says the following prayer as the Advent candle is lit

Come, O Holy One, breaker of chains and renewer of life! Open our eyes to your presence in all the earth. Stir us to proclaim gladly the signs of your love: the liberation of those oppressed, the healing of those frail and broken, springs of water in all the parched places, and Jesus Christ risen and alive, through whom we pray. **Amen.**

KYRIE ELEISON

S-86, *The Hymnal 1982*

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Presider: Let us pray.

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON

ISAIAH 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him * in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, * he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, * and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, * and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, * to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

THE SECOND LESSON

JAMES 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

All stand.

SEQUENCE HYMNO heavenly Word, eternal Light (63, *The Hymnal 1982*)**THE GOSPEL**

MATTHEW 11:2-11

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

All are seated.

THE SERMON

All stand.

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

Presider

O Wisdom from on high, O Holy Word of God, you oversee all creation with your strong yet tender care. In this Advent season of anticipation and longing, we pray to you, saying, “O come, O come, Emmanuel.”

Intercessor and People

Inspire and strengthen your universal church. Help your ministers, lay and ordained, carry the Good News of salvation to all who await the sign of your coming. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Lend your wisdom and compassion to those in authority around the world. Help them lead those held captive by injustice and conflict, into the freedom of justice and peace. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Inspire all people to be grateful occupants and faithful keepers of your wondrous creation. Help us to protect and preserve the earth, its lands and waters, and all its inhabitants. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Uphold and guide the people and ministries of St. Thomas's Church. Help us listen closely to you, and follow where you lead. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Comfort those who are grieving, lonely, discouraged, or depressed this holiday season. Help them find peace, love, hope, and joy. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Sustain those troubled by sickness, poverty, or violence. Help them to overcome adversity, so that they may be renewed. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Bring into your glorious presence those who have died. Help all people to find risen life in you. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Hear our additional prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, which we now offer either silently or aloud.

Presider

O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, come and shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death; O Emmanuel, God with us, come and save us, O Lord our God. **Amen.**

THE CONFESSION

Presider

Let us confess our sins to God. [*Silence is kept.*]

Presider and People

**God of all mercy,
we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.
We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.
We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done,
and the evil done on our behalf.
Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

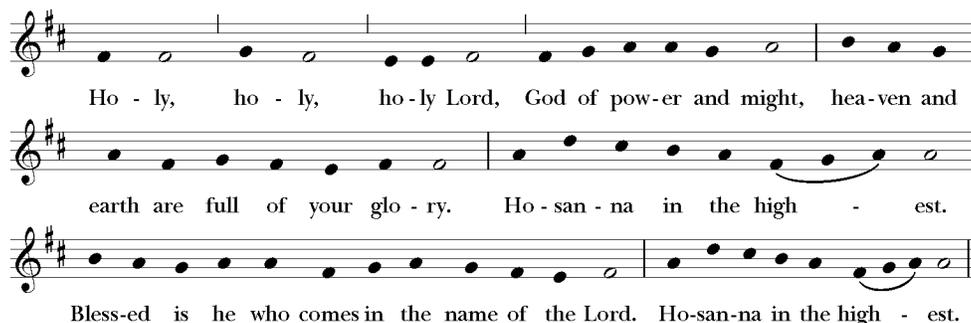
Presider

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through the grace of Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS

S-124, *The Hymnal 1982*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven 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.

Presider

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with Thomas and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **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.**

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

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

FRACTION ANTHEM

S-161, *The Hymnal 1982*

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

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.*

COMMUNION ANTHEM

Ave Maria

Ave Maria gratia plena Dominus tecum
benedicta tu in mulieribus. Alleluia.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women. Alleluia.

Words: Angelus (Luke 1:28,31) Music: Jacobus Clemens non Papa (c1510–c1555), à 5

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

**God of abundance, you have fed us
with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
you have united us
with Christ and one another; and you have made us one
with all your people in heaven and on earth.
Now send us forth
in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue for ever
in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

ADVENT BLESSING

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

FINAL HYMN

Come, thou long-expected Jesus (66, *The Hymnal 1982*)

DISMISSAL

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

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Day School Holiday News

Church folks are invited to contribute to the following collections for the Farnam Neighborhood House in New Haven:

- **Mitten Tree, Dec. 9-20.** Each student is asked to bring in a pair of new mittens or gloves for someone his or her own age to hang on the Christmas tree in the lobby of the School.
- **Christmas Toy Collection, Dec. 9-20.** A box will be placed in the school lobby for collection of toys. Gifts should be left unwrapped. No war toys, please.

Christmas Chapel & Reception: Friday, Dec. 20. Christmas Chapel is one of the highlights of life at St. Thomas's. It begins at 10:30 A.M. and includes a presentation of holiday songs and readings by our children. A Coffee Reception will begin at 8:30 A.M.



CHRISTMAS AT ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH

*All are invited to celebrate Christmas at St. Thomas's.
Be sure to invite your friends and family.*

Christmas Eve: Tuesday, December 24

4:00 P.M. Christmas Pageant and Holy Eucharist

3:45 P.M. Musical Prelude

This family-friendly service will include favorite carols sung by all.

The children will perform a re-enactment of the nativity.

We invite every child who wants to participate to come dressed as an angel, shepherd, or animal, or to borrow one of our costumes. Please arrive by 3:30 P.M.

10:00 P.M. Holy Eucharist with St. Thomas's Choir

9:30 P.M. Prelude of Organ Music for Christmas

Music will be sung by the St. Thomas's Choir and congregation.

Dr. Noah Horn, Director of Music and Organist,
will play a pre-service program of Christmas organ music.

Christmas Day: Wednesday, December 25

10:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist: Come-as-You-Are!

Wear your comfiest PJs, sweats, or loungewear to this casual all-ages service.

There will be carols and hymns sung by all, and, instead of a sermon, a reading of seasonal children's book.

First Sunday after Christmas: Sunday, December 29

10:00 A.M. Christmas Lessons & Carols with Holy Eucharist

Instead of a sermon, the Liturgy of the Word will include six scripture readings for Christmas, each paired with a favorite carol. Holy Eucharist will follow.

Announcements

Stay in touch! Subscribe to the Weekly Parish Enews and "like" St. Thomas's on Facebook.

Thank you to Noah and the Choir for the beautiful service of Advent Lessons & Carols last Sunday. What a blessing it was! And thank you to the Edwards-Chavira family for the lovely reception.

Christmas Eve Pageant Details. At the 4 pm service on Christmas Eve, the children of the parish will perform a re-enactment of the Nativity. We invite every child who wants to participate to come dressed as an angel, shepherd, or animal, or to borrow one of our costumes. Please arrive by 3:30 p.m.

Christmas Flower and Music Offerings. Please consider making a donation toward flowers for our beautiful Christmas celebration, or a general donation toward our music program. You can make the gift in honor or memory of someone important to you. All donations will be listed in the three Christmas bulletins. Giving envelopes are in the pews and at the doors; you can donate by check or using the link on our website Home page. **For inclusion in the Christmas bulletins, we must have your donation by TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17.**

Malawi Christmas Collection. For the past few years, the children have gathered coins for the Anglican Diocese of Northern Malawi's Orphan Feeding Program. Although Katherine and Derek have moved to a new parish, where Derek is serving as a priest, we would like to do one more collection that Katherine can take to Malawi in late January. She's going to do a rotation at Mzuzu Central Hospital on the labor and delivery floor to get more experience in an international healthcare setting. Please bring coins to the "Graffiti" Sunday school room by January 12, 2020. Containers will be available at Sunday services during Advent.

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!

Communion in the Pews. For the four Sundays of Advent (and, as usual, for Christmas Eve services) the congregation will stay in the pews for the Eucharistic prayer. Communion "in the round" will return for Christmas.

Next Delight Night (Parish Potluck): Friday, January 10, 6 p.m., in the Lounge. A great time was had by all at our December carol sing. (Thanks to Madison for playing piano!) Stay tune for details about the January program.

Winter Weather Closings. Winter arrived this week! If bad weather makes travel unsafe, Church activities WILL be canceled and the building will remain closed. This information will be communicated in four ways: (1) on our Facebook page; (2) with a special edition of the Enews; (3) with a notice on our website Home page; and (4) via WTNH, which broadcasts the information on TV and posts it online. We will attempt to give you plenty of warning, but we usually delay Sunday morning decisions until as late as possible. If New Haven declares a street parking ban, we will almost certainly close due to lack of parking. In short, if it snows, please check before you leave home!

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're taking December off.) We will be discussing the book *Just Mercy* by Bryan Stevenson. Look for details in the Enews.

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.

Alternative Giving for the Holidays. As you plan your Christmas/holiday gift list, please consider alternative giving - that is, consider making a donation in the recipient's honor to the charitable organization of your choice. One great option is the Episcopal Relief & Development Gifts for Life program. If you're interested in food insecurity, consider Loaves & Fishes or the Connecticut Food Bank.

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 & Preacher: The Rev. Keri Aubert
Choir Director & Organist: Dr. Noah Horn
Eucharistic Minister:
Crucifer:
Chalice:
Lectors: Jenny Chavira, Claire Scully
Intercessor: Judy Thompson
Vestry Host:
Ushers: Greg D'Andrea, Gail Curran, Katie Coleman
Sacristans: Claire Scully & Kids
Counters:
Coffee Hour Hosts: Greg & Alisa D'Andrea, Elsa Ward, Ginger Savo

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. Stephen's, Bloomfield; St. George's, Bolton; Trinity, Branford; Those who advocate at the local, state, national, or global level for the poor, the lonely, and the oppressed

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for:

Sokoto (Nigeria), El Salvador

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

China, Hong Kong, Macau

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)
Alexander Babbidge
Christopher Cavallaro
Don Edwards
William English
Jeralyn Fantarella
Kenneth Paul
Tony Reyes
Kathryn Crabb Scherer
Denise Terry
Heather Tookes Alexopoulos

ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL

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