



# ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

Service of Holy Eucharist

December 17, 2023 10 A.M.

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## St. Thomas's Church Welcomes Everyone

Wherever you happen to be on your spiritual journey, **there is a place for you here**, and we invite you to participate as fully as you wish. There is a saying in the Episcopal tradition that answers many a question: “All *may*, some *do*, but none *must*.” We gather to feast on Word and sacrament and song, to learn and inquire, to enjoy relaxed fellowship and find mutual support. And we are sent out to be the Body of Christ in the world, to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

**To participate in worship today** all you need is this bulletin. If you are new or visiting, we invite you to consider filling out a **blue information card** (located in the pew rack). You can use it to request a **nametag**, which will be waiting for you on the table inside the main entrance.

**All church spaces are accessible.** Handicapped parking and a wheelchair ramp are located in back of the building; a lift for access to the second floor is located at the stairway.

Restrooms are located on the second floor. Go through the double doors near the pulpit, upstairs to the second floor, and to the far end of the hallway. A **gender-neutral restroom with baby changing table** is in the Vesting Room, located opposite the double doors near the pulpit.

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

**Wireless access in the Sanctuary** is accessible by connecting to wireless network STEC – Guest. Your device will open a web browser and the St. Thomas's website. Bulletins are posted in the website's Bulletin Archive. To reduce printing, we encourage worshippers to use their smart devices to follow the service.

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**St. Thomas's Church is located on Eansketambawg (Quinnipiac) land.** This acknowledgment compels us to pause: in gratitude for the Quinnipiac and other Algonquin-speaking stewards of the territory that is now Connecticut; in regret for Christianity's participation in the colonization of the Americas; and in faith that God's reconciling power will bring true healing to the Earth and all its inhabitants.

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# VOLUNTARY

Praise to the Lord

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

*At the ringing of the bell, please stand.*

## HYMN

Hark! the glad sound! (72, *The Hymnal* 1982)

*Descant*

4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, thy wel - come

1 Hark! the glad sound! the Sa - vior comes, the Sa - vior  
 2 He comes, the pri - soners to re - lease in Sa - tan's  
 3 He comes, the bro - ken heart to bind, the bleed - ing  
 4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, thy wel - come

shall pro - claim; and heaven's e - ter - nal

prom - ised long; let ev - ery heart pre -  
 bond - age held; the gates of brass be -  
 soul to cure; and with the trea - sures  
 shall pro - claim; and heaven's e - ter - nal

arch - es ring with thy be - lov - ed Name.

pare a throne, and ev - ery voice a song.  
 fore him burst, the i - ron fet - ters yield.  
 of his grace to en - rich the hum - ble poor.  
 arch - es ring with thy be - lov - ed Name.

## OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider: Blessed are you, holy and living One.

People: **You come to your people and set them free.**

Come, O Holy One, as the water of life and refiner's fire! Strengthen us with courage for your work of justice that in all the creation and among every people your peace may be established and your joy abound, through Jesus our Deliverer. **Amen.**

## KYRIE ELEISON

S 86, *The Hymnal 1982*

Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e  
e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son. Chri - ste e -  
le - i - son. Chri - ste e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.  
Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son. Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

## 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 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;

to comfort all who mourn;  
 to provide for those who mourn in Zion—  
 to give them a garland instead of ashes,  
 the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
 the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.  
 They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
 the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.  
 They shall build up the ancient ruins,  
 they shall raise up the former devastations;  
 they shall repair the ruined cities,  
 the devastations of many generations.  
 For I the LORD love justice,  
 I hate robbery and wrongdoing;  
 I will faithfully give them their recompense,  
 and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.  
 Their descendants shall be known among the nations,  
 and their offspring among the peoples;  
 all who see them shall acknowledge  
 that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.  
 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,  
 my whole being shall exult in my God;  
 for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
 he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
 as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
 and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
 For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
 and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
 so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise  
 to spring up before all the nations.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM 126** (*Sung by the Choir*)

Ivor Algernon Atkins

- 1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, \*  
then were we like those who dream.
- 2 Then was our mouth filled with laughter, \*  
and our tongue with shouts of joy.
- 3 Then they said among the nations, \*  
“The LORD has done great things for them.”
- 4 The LORD has done great things for us, \*  
and we are glad indeed.
- 5 Restore our fortunes, O LORD, \*  
like the watercourses of the Negev.

- 6 Those who sowed with tears \*  
will reap with songs of joy.
- 7 Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed, \*  
will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

## THE SECOND LESSON

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*All stand.*

## HYMN

O heavenly Word, eternal Light (84, *The Hymnal* 1982)



1 O heaven - ly Word, e - ter - nal Light, be - got - ten  
2 pour light up - on us from a - bove, and fire our  
3 and when, as judge, thou draw - est nigh the se - crets  
4 O let us not, for e - vil past, be driv - en  
\* 5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the



1 of the Fa - ther's might, who in these lat - ter days wast  
2 hearts with ar - dent love, that, as we hear thy truth to -  
3 of our hearts to try, to rec - om - pense each hid - den  
4 from thy face at last, but with thy saints for ev - er -  
5 Spi - rit, ev - er One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry



1 born for bless - ing to a world for - lorn;  
2 day, all wrong de - sires may burn a - way;  
3 sin and bid the saints their reign be - gin;  
4 more be - hold thee, love thee, and a - dore.  
5 be from age to age e - ter - nal - ly.

Words: Latin, ca. 7th cent.; tr. *Hymnal* 1982. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *O Heiland, reiss*, melody from *Rheinländisches Deutsches Catholisches Gesangbuch*, 1666; harm. *Orgelbuch Zum Gesangbuch Der Evangelisch-Reformierten Kirchen Der Deutschsprachigen Schweiz*, 1926.

## THE GOSPEL

JOHN 1:6-8, 19-28

Presider: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to John.

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

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.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Presider: The Gospel of the Lord.

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

*All are seated.*

## THE SERMON

*After the sermon, all remain seated for a period of silence. Then all stand.*

## AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH FOR ADVENT

*[The Rev. Kay Sylvester, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Tustin, CA]*

*Presider and People*

**Because of You, O God,  
we are people of hope,  
even though the night of winter is upon us.**

**Because of You, Divine Presence,  
we are people of peace,  
even though violent speech  
and bared teeth surround us.**

**Because of You, Christ who is coming,  
we are people of joy,  
even though the leaves have fallen  
and the music has stopped.**

**Because of You, Spirit of Life,  
we are people of love,**

even though we see  
the diminishment of human dignity all around us.

We call upon You, ever-blessed One,  
for strength and purpose,  
for gratitude and generosity,  
for the grace to bring light,  
and the nourishment of your grace,  
and the thirst-quenching stream of your justice  
into the world that You love  
with an everlasting love.

Come among us and set us free. Amen.

### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE [*The Rev. Keri Aubert*]

#### *Intercessor and People*

O Wisdom from on high, holy Word of God, you sustain the universe with infinite love. In this Advent season of longing and anticipation, we pray to you, saying, “O come, O come, Emmanuel.”

Unite and uphold your universal church. Help your ministers, lay and ordained, carry the Good News of salvation to all who await a 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 oppression and strife, into the freedom of justice and peace. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Inspire all people to be grateful occupants and devoted caretakers of your wondrous creation. Help us preserve Earth’s lands, waters, and atmosphere, and protect the creatures who inhabit them. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Accompany us as we navigate the losses and uncertainties in our lives and our society. Help us find courage and companionship for all that lies ahead. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

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

Restore those suffering from sickness, poverty, violence, or addiction. Help them overcome adversity and find fullness of life. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Gather into your glorious presence those who have died. Help all Christians find resurrection in you. **O come, O come, Emmanuel.**

Hear our additional prayers of thanksgiving and intercession, which we now offer either silently or aloud. [*You are invited to offer your prayer intentions.*]

#### *Presider*

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

## THE CONFESSION OF SIN

*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.**

## THE PEACE

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

**People:** And also with you.

*Please remain in place while greeting your neighbors with a sign of peace. You may then be seated for brief announcements and the **Offertory Anthem**, during which the altar is prepared.*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Your ongoing financial support of St. Thomas's Church is sincerely appreciated. We will not be passing a collection plate today; collection plates are located at the doors. To give online with a debit or credit card, go to the Home page of the Church website ([www.stthomasnewhaven.org](http://www.stthomasnewhaven.org)), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, you may simply [CLICK HERE](#). Thank you!*

## OFFERTORY SENTENCE

### OFFERTORY ANTHEM

This is the record of John

This is the record of John,  
when the Jews sent priests and Levites  
from Jerusalem to ask him,  
Who art thou?  
And he confessed and denied not, and said plainly,  
I am not the Christ.

And they asked him,

Then said they unto him,  
What art thou? that we may give an answer unto them  
that sent us.  
What sayest thou of thyself?  
And he said, I am the voice of him that crieth in the  
wilderness,  
Make straight the way of the Lord.



What art thou then? Art thou Elias?  
 And he said, I am not.  
 Art thou the prophet?  
 And he answered, No.

Words: John 1:19-23 Music: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

*During the singing of the **Offertory Hymn**, the Presider sets the table, and the People come forward to encircle the altar for the Eucharistic prayer. You are encouraged to position children where they can see. Standing time is approximately 15 minutes. If this is difficult for you, please feel free to sit in a chair near the altar or in the front row of pews. You may also remain where you are.*

## OFFERTORY HYMN      There's a voice in the wilderness crying (75, *The Hymnal* 1982)



1 There's a voice in the wil - der - ness cry - ing, a\_\_\_\_  
 2 O\_\_\_\_ Zi - on, that bring - est good tid - ings, get thee  
 3 but the word of our God\_\_\_\_ en - du - reth, the\_\_\_\_

call from the ways un - trod: Pre - pare in the des - ert a  
 up to the heights and sing! Pro - claim to a des - o - late  
 arm of the Lord is strong; he stands in the midst\_\_\_\_ of

high - way, a high - way for our God! The\_\_\_\_  
 peo - ple the com - ing of their King. Like the  
 na - tions, and he will right the wrong. He shall

val - leys shall be ex - alt - ed, the  
 flowers of the field they\_\_\_\_ per - ish, like  
 feed his\_\_\_\_ flock like a shep - herd, the

lof - ty hills brought low; make straight all the crook - ed  
 grass our works de - cay, the power and pomp of  
 lambs he'll gent - ly hold; to pas - tures of peace he'll

pla - ces where the Lord our\_\_\_\_ God\_\_\_\_ may go!  
 na - tions shall\_\_\_\_ pass like a dream\_\_\_\_ a - way;  
 lead them, and\_\_\_\_ bring them\_\_\_\_ safe to his fold.

Words: James Lewis Milligan (1876-1961), alt. Music: *Ascension*, Henry Hugh Bancroft (1904-1988). Copyright © 1938, H. Hugh Bancroft.

## THE HOLY COMMUNION

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: ENRICHING OUR WORSHIP 2

*Celebrant*                      *People*

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

*Celebrant*                      *People*

Lift up your hearts. 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.

*Presider*

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

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

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.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

*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 Mary, 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**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

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

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your Name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins,**

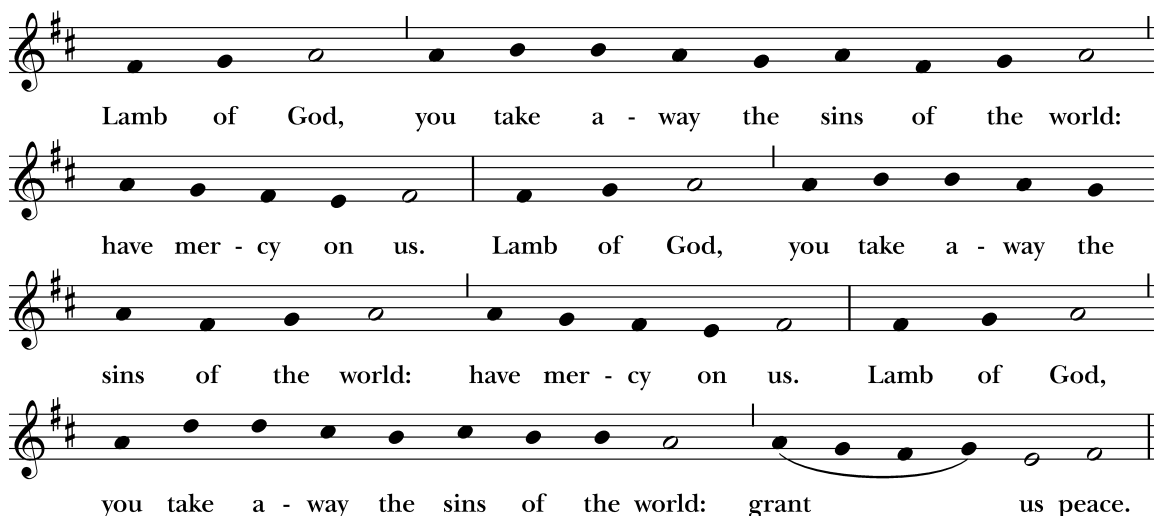
**as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial,  
and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

## **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

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

## FRACTION ANTHEM

S 161, *The Hymnal 1982*



Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

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. For the distribution of communion, the priest will come to you. Extend your hands, and the priest will place the bread in them. Please return to your seat before you raise your mask to consume it. To receive a blessing instead of communion, cross your arms over your chest.*

## COMMUNION ANTHEM

O Radiant Dawn

O Radiant Dawn, Splendor of eternal Light,  
Sun of Justice:  
come, shine on those who dwell in darkness  
and the shadow of death. Amen.

Isaiah had prophesied, "The people who walked  
in darkness have seen a great light;  
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom  
a light has shone."

Words: Antiphon for December 21 Music: James Macmillan (b. 1959), *The Strathclyde Motets*, 2007

*After all have received communion, 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

*Presider*

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.**

## HYMN

Tell out, my soul (438, *The Hymnal* 1982)



1 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of the Lord!  
 2 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of his Name!  
 3 Tell out, my soul, the great-ness of his might!  
 4 Tell out, my soul, the glo-ries of his word!

Un - num - bered bless - ings give my spi - rit voice;  
 Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;  
 Powers and do - min - ions lay their glo - ry by.  
 Firm is his prom - ise, and his mer - cy sure.

ten - der to me the prom - ise of his word;  
 his mer - cy sure, from age to age the same;  
 Proud hearts and stub - born wills are put to flight,  
 Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of the Lord

in God my Sa - vior shall my heart re - joice.  
 his ho - ly Name— the Lord, the Might - y One.  
 the hun - gry fed, the hum - ble lift - ed high.  
 to chil - dren's chil - dren and for ev - er - more!

Words: Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926); based on *The Song of Mary*. Copyright © 1962 by Hope Publishing Company Carol Stream, IL 60188. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission. Music: *Woodlands*, Walter Greatorex (1877-1949), alt. By permission of Oxford University Press.

## DISMISSAL

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

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*You may be seated for the voluntary or exit the church.*

## VOLUNTARY

Postlude on “Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme”, op. 78, no. 18  
 Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877-1933)

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## Announcements

*For all the latest news and information, see last week's edition of the Weekly Parish Enews. From the Parish website Home page ([www.stthomasnewhaven.org](http://www.stthomasnewhaven.org)), click Enews Archive for the latest edition or Enews (subscribe) to subscribe.*

### Stewardship Season Wraps Up

Our formal Stewardship Season has concluded, but it's not too late to participate. Please consider whether you will start giving or change your giving. If the answer is YES: Inform Parish Administrator [Julie Kelly](#), and if you will give automatically/electronically (highly encouraged!), set up your payment via the Donate button on the website or your bank's bill pay portal.

For all that you give to support the ongoing life of our community, THANK YOU!

**Upcoming Worship Schedule.** During our leadership transition, we will have a combination of lay-led worship and services led by supply clergy. Please join us!

December 17	Eucharist with Rev. Derek Stefanovsky preaching and presiding
December 24	10 AM Advent IV Morning Prayer and Nativity Pageant with Jennifer Herdt presiding
December 24	5 PM, Eucharist with Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp preaching and presiding
December 31	Morning Prayer led by Sheldon Campbell (w/ sermon)
January 7	Feast of the Epiphany Eucharist with Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp preaching and presiding
January 14	Morning Prayer led by Alexandria Robison (w/ sermon)
January 21	Eucharist with Rev. Mo Peitler-Lederman preaching and presiding
January 28	Morning Prayer led by Sheldon Campbell (w/ sermon)

**TODAY** The Reverend Derek Stefanovsky will preach and preside on **December 17**. Derek was a parishioner and seminarian at St. Thomas's from 2016-2019 while studying at Yale Divinity School/Berkeley Divinity School, and is delighted to be back as supply clergy. Following his time at St. Thomas's, Derek spent three years as associate rector at St. Luke's, Darien, and now serves as priest-in-charge of St. Peter's Grace, Monroe. Derek and his spouse, Katherine, live in Stamford, where Katherine practices family medicine.

On **December 24, 10 AM**, Senior Warden Jennifer Herdt will be leading morning prayer. Jennifer has been a member of St. Thomas's since moving to the area in 2010, together with husband Jan Hagens and children Cora and Adam (now both college students). A longtime singer in the St. Thomas's choir and onetime Sunday School teacher, Jennifer is a member of the faculty at Yale Divinity School in the field of Christian Ethics. Jennifer earned her B.A. from Oberlin College and M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton University. She has written books on sympathy, religion and faction, ethical formation, and virtue ethics. In her free time, Jennifer enjoys hiking, running, and cooking.

On **December 24, 5 PM Christmas Eve**, the Reverend Dr. Carolyn Sharp is with us as preacher and presider. A biblical scholar and professor of homiletics at Yale Divinity School, Carolyn has written commentaries on Joshua, Jeremiah 26-52, and Micah. Carolyn is interested in how preaching can deepen the formation of Christian community via biblically grounded theology, prophetic witness, feminist perspectives on power, and ecotheology. Carolyn is serving as St. Thomas's Preacher-in-Residence. She stands ready to offer resources to lay preachers in our congregation, and will gladly discuss Gospel proclamation (in and beyond the pulpit) with anyone who wishes at Coffee Hour.

## **Advent and Christmas**

### **Christmas Offerings to St. Thomas's**

Please consider making a seasonal gift to the church. You may designate it as general donation, or direct it to the flower fund or the music fund. All memorial and honorarial gifts will be acknowledged in the Christmas bulletin and the Enews. Giving envelopes are in the pews and at the doors; you can also donate by check or online using [this link](#). For inclusion in the Christmas bulletin, we must have your donation by MONDAY, DECEMBER 18.

### **Christmas Eve Worship**

**December 24, 10 AM:** Morning Prayer led by Jennifer Herdt and Nativity Pageant (See the Sunday School note about pageant prep.)

**December 24, 5 PM:** Service of Holy Eucharist led by Preacher-in Residence The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp

**December 25, Christmas Day:** No service

A new **Nativity Crèche** is on display at St. Thomas's on the children's altar. Sally Edwards and Denise Terry had several conversations with Rev. Keri Aubert about finding a new set portraying Baby Jesus in the manger. They had looked at some possible choices, but did not make a final selection. This fall Denise worked with parish administrator Julie Kelly to obtain this crèche in memory of Sally and in honor of Keri.

## **Sunday School**

### **Advent and Christmas:**

Sunday School classes will meet during the 10 AM service on December 17.

On Sunday morning, December 24, the children will present a Nativity Pageant as part of the 10 a.m. Morning Prayer service for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. If you are having children visit for the holiday and would like to have them take part, please let me know. We have lots of costumes. This program is coordinated by Denise Terry ([terry.df@gmail.com](mailto:terry.df@gmail.com)).

**Coffee Hour Activity** -- On Sunday, December 17, please take a few minutes to write a cheerful note to a child who will be spending the holidays in the hospital at Yale-New Haven. There will be cards and pens on a table in the lounge. Thank you!!

### **Interested in joining St. Thomas's Choir?**

The St. Thomas's Choir sings for Sunday morning and special liturgies during the program year, offering anthems, canticles and psalms. The choir includes volunteers and professional section leaders. Its repertoire is drawn from the rich tradition of Anglican choral music, spanning many centuries.

The St. Thomas's Choir rehearses on Sundays at 9 a.m. and from 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m., from September to June. New members are always welcome; an ability to read music and prior choral experience is desirable.

Contact Linda Meyer at [lindarossmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:lindarossmeyer@gmail.com)

**Donating Clothing for Loaves and Fishes.** Our support for the clothing ministry is ongoing. Please be thoughtful in your selection of items. Current specific requests include: men's/women's jeans; men's short-sleeved shirts, sweaters, jackets, shoes, new socks; spring and summer clothing. Bring donations to St. Thomas's (leave them in the tub at the Whitney Ave. entrance) or to Loaves and Fishes (Thurs-Sat, 9-11 a.m., in the driveway at 57 Olive St.).

**Coffee Hour Hosting Sign-Up Link.** You are invited to consider hosting coffee hour at St. Thomas's following Sunday worship. Would you like to contribute to St. Thomas's coffee hour, but don't know how to operate the coffee maker? Do you have a treat from your kitchen or favorite neighborhood bakery that you would love to share, but you are not sure that you can manage a whole coffee hour? Sign up to be a coffee hour helper! It's easy: look at the signup sheet (electronic or paper) and sign up as a "Helper." Contact the coffee hour host to discuss what you can bring and how you can help out. Then, discover how fun it is to help make fellowship happen! Visit this link to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F4AACAD2CABFE3-coffee> and add your contact info in the comment box. You may also access the Parish Directory on our homepage, [www.stthomasnewhaven.org](http://www.stthomasnewhaven.org) for contact information. [Julie Kelly](#) in the Parish Office can provide the directory password. Thank you for contributing to our time of fellowship!



## **Serving Today**

**Presider & Preacher:** The Rev. Derek Stefanovsky

**Music Director:** Matthew Cramer

**Organist:** Noah Klein

**Eucharistic Minister:**

**Lector:** William English

**Intercessor:**

**Sacristan:**

**Ushers:** Gary Robison

**Coffee Hour:** Bob & Lorna Herdt, Denise Terry

**Vestry Host:**

## **Leadership at St. Thomas's**

### **Preacher-in-Residence**

The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp

### **Church Vestry**

Jennifer Herdt (Senior Warden)

Linda Meyer (Junior Warden)

Bill English (Treasurer)

Denise Terry (Clerk)

Madeleine Anderson

Max Ballardo

Claire Scully

## **This Week's Prayer Intentions**

**Pray for those in any need or trouble, especially:** the people of Russia and the people of Ukraine; the people of Gaza and the people of Israel; all who are afflicted by war and natural disaster

**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; Calvary St. George's, Bridgeport; 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:** The Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea

**In the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, pray for:** Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, and the Mainland of China

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**ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL**  
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Julie Kelly, Administrator ♦ [j.kelly@stthomasnewhaven.org](mailto:j.kelly@stthomasnewhaven.org)