



# ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

Service of Morning Prayer & Christmas Pageant

December 24, 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

Gabriel's Message  
Michael Bedford (b. 1949)

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

## HYMN

The angel Gabriel from heaven came (265, *The Hymnal* 1982)

1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from hea - ven came,  
 2 "For know a bless - ed Mo - ther thou shalt be,  
 3 Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head,  
 4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

his wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame;  
 all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee,  
 "To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said,  
 in Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn,

"All hail," said he, "thou low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,  
 thy Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,  
 "my soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly Name."  
 and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say—

most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!  
 most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!  
 Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!  
 "Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy," Glo - ri - a!

Words: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924). Music: *Gabriel's Message*, Basque carol; harm. Edgar Pettman (1865-1943). Copyright © 1961 B. Feldman and Co Ltd., trading as H. Freeman & Co. Reproduced by permission of EMI Music Publishing Ltd. 138-140 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0LD, England.

## OPENING SENTENCE

*Officiant*

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together. *Isaiah 40:5*

## ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

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

Come, O Holy One, as the morning light after a wakeful night! Keep us mindful that at any moment you may ask of us an accounting of our lives; help us to love you and love one another in all we do, and so clothe us with your light that we may bring others to love you also, through Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

## THE CONFESSION OF SIN

*Officiant*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. [*Silence is kept.*]

*Officiant and People*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*Officiant*

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

## THE INVITATORY

**Officiant:** Lord, open our lips.

**People:** And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

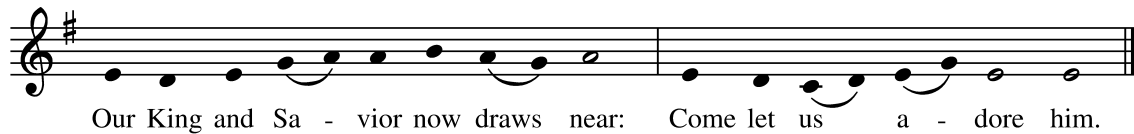
*Officiant and People*

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

**JUBILATE** (*Sung by the Choir*)

**S 41**, *The Hymnal 1982*  
**S 294**, *The Hymnal 1982*

*At the beginning of the Invitatory Psalm, and at all times marked [Ant.], the People sing the following antiphon:*



Setting: Plainsong, Mode 4; adapt. Norman Mealy (1923–1987).  
© 1979, The Church Pension Fund.

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands; \*  
serve the Lord with gladness  
and come before his presence with a song. [Ant.]

Know this: The Lord himself is God; \*  
he himself has made us, and we are his;  
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture. [Ant.]

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;  
go into his courts with praise; \*  
give thanks to him and call upon his Name. [Ant.]

For the Lord is good;  
his mercy is everlasting; \*  
and his faithfulness endures from age to age. [Ant.]

*All are seated.*

**PSALM 89:1-4, 19-26** (*Sung by the Choir*)

Stephen Darlington

- 1 Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; \*  
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.
- 2 For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; \*  
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.
- 3 “I have made a covenant with my chosen one; \*  
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:
- 4 ‘I will establish your line for ever, \*  
and preserve your throne for all generations.’”
- 19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people: \*  
“I have set the crown upon a warrior  
and have exalted one chosen out of the people.
- 20 I have found David my servant; \*  
with my holy oil have I anointed him.
- 21 My hand will hold him fast \*  
and my arm will make him strong.
- 22 No enemy shall deceive him, \*  
nor any wicked man bring him down.

23 I will crush his foes before him \*  
and strike down those who hate him.  
24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, \*  
and he shall be victorious through my Name.  
25 I shall make his dominion extend \*  
from the Great Sea to the River.  
26 He will say to me, 'You are my Father, \*  
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'"

## THE FIRST LESSON

2 SAMUEL 7:1-11, 16

When the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the LORD: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the LORD of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## THE SECOND LESSON

ROMANS 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith – to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God**

My soul doth magnify the Lord, \*  
and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.  
For he hath regarded \*  
the lowliness of his handmaiden.  
For behold from henceforth \*  
all generations shall call me blessed.  
For he that is mighty hath magnified me, \*  
and holy is his Name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him \*  
throughout all generations.  
He hath showed strength with his arm; \*  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seat, \*  
and hath exalted the humble and meek.  
He hath filled the hungry with good things, \*  
and the rich he hath sent empty away.  
He remembering his mercy hath holpen his servant Israel, \*  
as he promised to our forefathers,  
Abraham and his seed 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.

Words: Luke 1:46-55    Music: Herbert Howells (1892-1983), *Gloucester Service*, 1946

*During the fourth and fifth readings of the Christmas Pageant, the People are invited to recite the lines shown in **bold type**.*

### **THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**

*Presented by Lucia, Annabel, and Caroline Sheehan; Fern and Otis Vierling; Julian and Clara Vinocur.*

#### **THE FIRST READING**

LUKE 1:26-35

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.

**HYMN**

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

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
“Peace on the earth, good will to men, from heaven’s all-gracious King.”  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

**THE SECOND READING**

LUKE 2:1, 3-5

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.

**HYMN**

O little town of Bethlehem (79, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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

**THE THIRD READING**

LUKE 2:6-7

While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary 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**

Away in a manger (101, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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 FOURTH READING**

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

Angels we have heard on high (96, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

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

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

## THE FIFTH READING

LUKE 2:15-16

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.

## HYMN

Once in royal David’s city (102, *The Hymnal 1982*)

Once in royal David’s city  
stood a lowly cattle shed,  
where a mother laid her baby  
in a manger for his bed:  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven,  
who is God and Lord of all,  
and his shelter was a stable,  
and his cradle was a stall;  
with the poor, the scorned, the lowly,  
lived on earth our Savior holy.

## THE SIXTH READING

LUKE 2:17-20

When the shepherds 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

We three kings of Orient are (128, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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

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

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

## THE SEVENTH READING

MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-11

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.”



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.

## HYMN

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

Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the newborn King!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!  
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim  
Christ is born in Bethlehem!  
Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the newborn King!

Christ, by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of the Virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail the incarnate Deity.  
Pleased as man with us to dwell;  
Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the newborn King!

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,  
risen with healing in his wings;  
mild he lays his glory by,  
born that man no more may die,  
born to raise the sons of earth,  
born to give them second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing  
glory to the newborn King!

*The Pageant participants return to their places. Then all stand.*

## THE APOSTLES' CREED

*Officiant and People*

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## THE PRAYERS

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us 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.**

Officiant: Show us your mercy, O Lord;

**People: And grant us your salvation.**

Officiant: Clothe your ministers with righteousness;

**People: Let your people sing with joy.**

Officiant: Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;

**People: For only in you can we live in safety.**

Officiant: Lord, keep this nation under your care;

**People: And guide us in the way of justice and truth.**

Officiant: Let your way be known upon earth;

**People: Your saving health among all nations.**

Officiant: Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;

**People: Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.**

Officiant: Create in us clean hearts, O God;

**People: And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.**

*Officiant*

*(The Collect of the Day)* Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*(A Collect for the Renewal of Life)* O God, the King eternal, whose light divides the day from the night and turns the shadow of death into the morning: Drive far from us all wrong desires, incline our hearts to keep your law, and guide our feet into the way of peace; that, having

done your will with cheerfulness during the day, we may, when night comes, rejoice to give you thanks; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*(A Collect for Mission)* O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*(A Prayer for Peace)* Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The Officiant may add prayers of intercession and thanksgiving.*

*All are seated.*

### **OFFERTORY ANTHEM** *(Sung by the Schola)*

There is a flower

There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,  
The root thereof is called Jesse,  
A flow'r of price;  
There is none such in paradise.

This flow'r is fair and fresh of hue,  
It fadeth never, but ever is new;  
The blessed branch this flow'r on grew  
Was Mary mild that bare Jesu;  
A flow'r of grace;  
Against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed hereof was Goddes sand,  
That God himself sowed with his hand,  
In Nazareth that holy land,  
Amidst her arbour a maiden found;  
This blessed flow'r  
Sprang never but in Mary's bower.

When Gabriel this maid did meet,  
With 'Ave Maria' he did her greet;  
Between them two this flow'r was set  
And safe was kept, no man should wit,  
Till on a day  
In Bethlem it could spread and spray.

When that fair flow'r began to spread  
And his sweet blossom began to bed,  
Then rich and poor of ev'ry land  
They marvelled how this flow'r might spread,  
Till kinges three  
That blessed flower came to see.

[Alleluia.]

Angels there came from heaven's tower  
To look upon this freshele flow'r,  
How fair he was in his colour  
And how sweet in his savour;  
And to behold  
How such a flow'r might spring in gold.

There is a flow'r sprung of a tree,  
The root thereof is called Jesse,  
A flow'r of price;  
There is none such in paradise.

*All stand.*

Words: John Audelay (15<sup>th</sup> cent.)    Music: John Rutter (b. 1948)

## THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING

*Officiant and People*

**Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.**

## THE PEACE

**Officiant:** 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.*

## WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

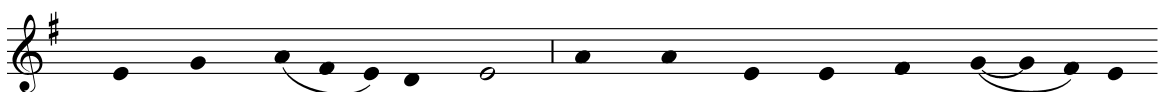
*Your financial support is sincerely appreciated. To give online, go to the Church website Home page ([www.stthomasnewhaven.org](http://www.stthomasnewhaven.org)), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, simply [CLICK HERE](#). Thank you!*

*All stand.*

## HYMN

O come, O come, Emmanuel (56, *The Hymnal 1982*)

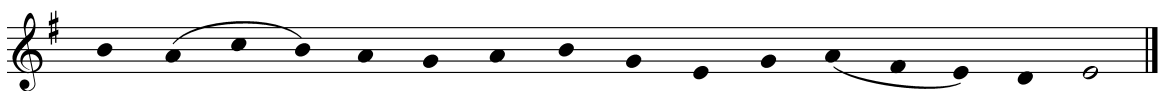
(Dec. 23) 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som  
 (Dec. 17) 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest  
 (Dec. 18) 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy  
 (Dec. 19) 4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from  
 (Dec. 20) 5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen  
 (Dec. 21) 6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us  
 (Dec. 22) 7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the  
 (Dec. 23) 8 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som



1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile  
 2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge  
 3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the  
 4 Sa - tan's ty - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to  
 5 wide our heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on  
 6 by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of  
 7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - sions  
 8 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile



1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.  
 3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.  
 4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!  
 5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y.  
 6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.  
 7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.  
 8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.



Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

*The stanzas may be used as antiphons with "The Song of Mary" on the dates given.*

Words: Latin, ca. 9th cent.; ver. *Hymnal 1940*, alt. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*, plainsong, Mode 1, Processionale, 15th cent.; adapt. Thomas Helmore (1811-1890); acc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937).

## DISMISSAL AND CONCLUDING SENTENCE

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

*Officiant*

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine:  
Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and  
ever. **Amen.** *Ephesians 3:20,21*

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

## **VOLUNTARY**

Gigue on “Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Aaron David Miller (b. 1972)

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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.*



## ***Christmas Offerings***

*Leslie Kearney in memory of Olga, Lester, Anna, Paul, and Josef*

*James Mansfield in memory of Robert & Sharon Mansfield, Leo and Elenor Brunelle,  
Kenneth & Caroline Mansfield, Roy Graham & Sally Lawson*

*Chris & Roseanne Martinez*

*Dwight Miller*

*Gary Robison*

## ***Heartfelt gratitude to ...***

*Denise Terry and the Children of the Parish,  
for the Christmas Pageant and the joy you always set in our hearts*

*The St. Thomas’s Choir,  
for helping us to worship God through the beauty of music*

### ***Soprano***

*Morgen Campbell  
Cora Hagens  
Jennifer Herdt  
Maggie Lieberman  
Sherezade Panthaki  
Alexandria Robison*

### ***Alto***

*Faith Brill  
Nancy Campbell  
Elijah McCormack  
Heather Robison*

### ***Tenor***

*Sheldon Campbell  
Gene Stenger*

### ***Bass***

*Benjamin Ferriby  
Bob Herdt  
Richard Rose*

**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 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)
February 4	Eucharist with Rev. Mo Peitler-Lederman preaching and presiding

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.

On Sunday, **December 31**, Sheldon Campbell will be preaching and leading the congregation in Morning Prayer. Sheldon Campbell was born in Tulsa, and grew up in Kansas City and Houston. He has an M.D. and Ph.D. from Baylor College of Medicine, and is currently Associate Chief for Laboratory Medicine at VA Connecticut Healthcare, and Professor of Laboratory Medicine at Yale School of Medicine, specializing in diagnostic microbiology, and where he's also an award-winning teacher. He was a lifelong Methodist prior to coming to St. Thomas, so it would be wise to pay particular attention to his sermons in case he tries to slip in any heretical ideas.

### **Christmas Worship**

**December 24, 10 AM:** Morning Prayer led by Jennifer Herdt and Nativity Pageant

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

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

**The church office will be closed through Monday, January 1.**

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.

### **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:** Jennifer Herdt  
**Music Director:** Matthew Cramer  
**Organist:** Noah Klein  
**Lector:** Bob Herdt  
**Ushers:** Gary Robison  
**Coffee Hour:** Jennifer Herdt  
**Vestry Host:** Jennifer Herdt

### **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. Luke/St. Paul, Bridgeport; St. John's, Bridgeport; St. Mark's, Bridgeport; For the children of the world, the Bishops' Fund for Children, and all ECCT ministries for children at risk

**In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for:** The Episcopal Church in the Philippines

**In the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, pray for:** Japan, North Korea, South Korea

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**ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY  
SCHOOL**  
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**(203) 777-7623 ♦ [www.stthomasnewhaven.org](http://www.stthomasnewhaven.org)**

Matthew Cramer, Music Director  
Noah Klein, Organist  
♦ [music@stthomasnewhaven.org](mailto:music@stthomasnewhaven.org)  
Julie Kelly, Administrator ♦ [j.kelly@stthomasnewhaven.org](mailto:j.kelly@stthomasnewhaven.org)