



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

Liturgy of the Word with Christmas Pageant

December 24, 2020

6 P.M.

*The opening and closing voluntaries,
as well as the readings and music for the Christmas Pageant,
are being offered by the children and youth of St. Thomas's Church.
You are invited to sing along with all hymns/carols (while remaining muted).*

VOLUNTARY

The First Nowell (*arranged and performed by Isabel Dunlap*)

CANDLE LIGHTING

The Presider lights the Christmas candle and then says the following prayer

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

HYMN

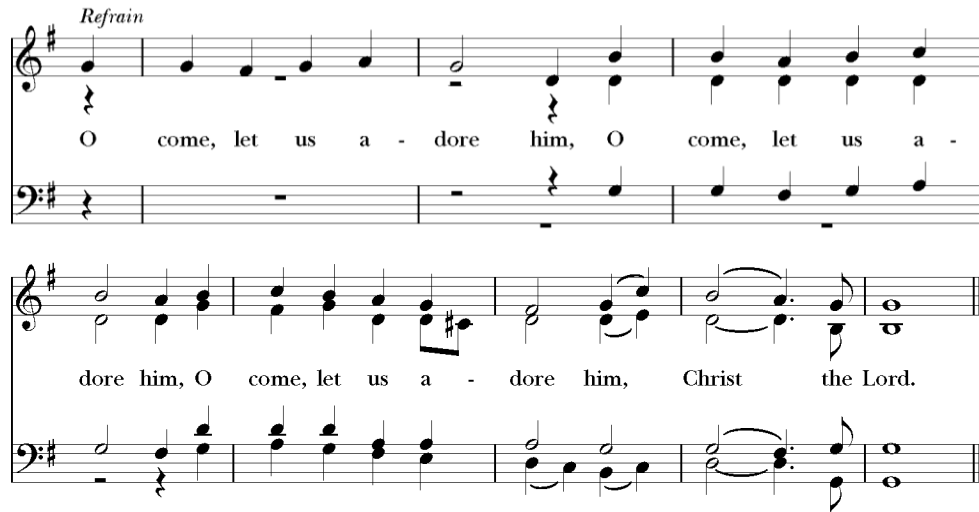
O come, all ye faithful (83, *The Hymnal 1982*) (*Virtual Choir*)

1 O come, all ye faith-ful, joy-ful and tri-um-phant, O
2 God from God, Light from Light e-ter-nal,
3 Sing, choirs of an-gels, sing in ex-ul-ta-tion,

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth-le-hem;
2 lo! he ab-hors not the Vir-gin's womb;
3 sing, all ye ci-ti-zens of heaven a-bove;

1 come, and be-hold him, born the King of an-gels;
2 on-ly-be-got-ten Son of the Fa-ther;
3 glo-ry to God, glo-ry in the high-est;

Refrain



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -
dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786), tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880) and others
 Music: *Adeste fideles*, present form of melody att. John Francis Wade (1711-1786); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906

OPENING ACCLAMATION

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

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

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born of a young woman: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

THE FIRST LESSON

LUKE 2:1, 3-5 (*Luca D'Andrea*)

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 (verse 1) (*Lucy and Annabel Sheehan*)

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 SECOND LESSON

LUKE 2:6-7 (*Annabel Sheehan*)

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 (verse 1) (*London D'Andrea with Greg D'Andrea*)

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 THIRD LESSON

LUKE 2:8-14 (*Luca D'Andrea*)

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 (verses 1 & 2) (*The Stricklan Family*)

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

THE FOURTH LESSON

LUKE 2:15-16 (*Lucy Sheehan*)

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 (verses 1 & 2) (*Madison Thompson*)

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 FIFTH LESSON

LUKE 2:17-20 (*Luca D'Andrea*)

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 (verses 1 and 5) (*Eden, Eli, & Asher Holton*)

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

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

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 SIXTH LESSON

MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-11 (*Annabel Sheehan*)

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 (*Virtual Choir*)

Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born 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 new-born King.

Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of a Virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see:
hail, the incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Hark, the herald-angels sing
glory to the new-born 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 new-born King.

THE SERMON

A FESTIVAL OF CRÈCHES

A slideshow of crèches belonging to the People of St. Thomas's Church, with the following music

In the bleak midwinter (*Maggie Lieberman*)

What child is this (*Evanna Lai*)

O holy night (*Sherezade Panthaki*)

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

Presider

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

Intercessor and People

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hear the concerns and gratitude of your people here gathered, offered silently or aloud. *[You may unmute yourself to offer a prayer intention.]*

Presider

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

THE PEACE

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

People: **And also with you.**

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your ongoing financial support of St. Thomas's Church is especially appreciated at this time. To give online with a debit or credit card, go to the Home page of the Church website (www.stthomasnewhaven.org), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, you can simply [CLICK HERE](#). Know also that the Church office is able to process checks that have been mailed. Thank you!

As worship resumes, you are invited to light a candle for the singing of Silent night, holy night

HYMN

Silent night, holy night (111, *The Hymnal 1982*) (*Hannah Goodwillie and Joy Wang*)

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God,
all is bright round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child.
at the sight, glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face,
Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in hea - ven - ly
heaven - ly hosts—sing al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sa - vior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy
peace. Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace.
born! the Sa - vior, is born!
birth. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885)
Music: *Stille Nacht*, melody Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863); harm. Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910)

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.**

A PRAYER OF COMMUNION [*The Rev. Keri Aubert*]

Presider and People

God of abundant love, we thank you for nurturing us with this holy gathering of holy people. When we are alone, remind us of the communion we share with one another and with you. When we are hungry, show us the banquet that you are preparing for the redemption of the world. Keep peace in our hearts, so that we can sow peace in the world, walking in gladness the way of your beloved child, in the power the Holy Spirit. Amen.

CHRISTMAS BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

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

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -
 2 Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our
 *3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, re -
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow far
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, and

heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

1 and heaven and na - ture sing, and
 2 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 3 far as the curse is found, far
 4 and won - ders of his love, and

sing, and heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 as the curse is found,
 won - ders of his love,

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt. Music: *Antioch*, George Frideric Handel (1685-1759); adapt. and arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

VOLUNTARY

We Three Kings (*arranged and performed by Alex Chavira*)

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Christmas Offerings

*Jakki Flanagan & Keri Aubert, in memory of Mary Ann & Pat Flanagan,
Ginny & AJ Aubert, and Dorothy Asch*

Robert & Lorna Herdt, in memory of Clara Roesch

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

Dwight Miller

Gary Robison

Don & Denise Terry



Announcements

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

For their contributions to our worship this evening, a hearty THANK YOU goes out to:

- The St. Thomas’s children and youth, for tonight’s offerings of word and music
- Denise Terry, for organizing the Pageant
- All Virtual Choir participants
- Choir Section Leaders Hannah Goodwillie, Evanna Lai, Maggie Lieberman, Sherry Panthaki, and Joy Wang
- Noah Horn, for somehow pulling it all together

This Sunday, December 27, 10 a.m. ECCT-Wide Virtual Festival of Lessons & Carols: Pre-recorded and streaming on ECCT’s YouTube Channel (no separate St. Thomas’s worship that day). Instead of hosting our own worship service, we’re encouraging everyone to worship with your fellow Episcopalians from around Connecticut. Find the link in the Enews. **Regular Sunday morning worship returns on January 3.**

The Church office is closed for the holidays and will reopen Monday, January 4. The church staff will mostly be off, though Julie will be managing routine facility maintenance that must be done when the schoolchildren are away. For pastoral emergencies, contact Keri as usual.

Bible Study: The Gospel of Matthew: Wednesday, December 30, 7:30 p.m.: Week 8: Matthew 26-27: Death and Resurrection. We’re wrapping up the year by wrapping up the Gospel of Matthew. See the Enews for details.

Vestry Nominations are open! Please get your nominations for parish leadership to Kyle Holton by January 11.

The New Year is coming ... so if you haven’t fulfilled your 2020 financial commitment to St. Thomas’s, please consider doing so before the end of the year. And if you have, THANK YOU!



Serving This Evening

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Keri Aubert

Musician: Dr. Noah Horn

Intercessor: Don Edwards



*Wishing you a very
MERRY CHRISTMAS
and a
BLESSED NEW YEAR!*

*We look forward
to seeing you
in 2021!*

Leadership at St. Thomas's

Church Vestry

Kyle Holton (Senior Warden)

Denise Terry (Junior Warden)

Ricardo Chavira (Treasurer)

Linda Meyer (Clerk)

Greg D'Andrea

Bill English

Chris Martinez

Alexandria Robison

Catherine Stricklan

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 Criscuolo (Chair)

John Forrest (Vice-Chair)

Heather Tookes Alexopoulos (Treasurer)

Eileen O'Donnell (Secretary)

Alexander Babbidge Christopher Cavallaro

William English Jeralyn Fantarella

Linda Meyer Kenneth Paul

Denise Terry (Parish Junior Warden)

The Rev. Keri Aubert (President, Day School Corp.)

Gina Panza (Head of School)

ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL

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