

Gloria in Excelsis!

✦
Christmas Eve

December 24th, 2020

MIDNIGHT MASS



*And the WORD Became Flesh
and Dwelt Among Us*



St. Stephen's

Episcopal Church † Lakeland, Florida

To Love and Serve God and Neighbor

“Hark, the Herald Angels Sing”

*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 man to dwell;
Jesus, our Emmanuel!
Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!*

*Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Risen with healing in his wings,
light and life to all he brings,
hail, the Sun of Righteousness!*

*hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!*



“The First Nowell”

*The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

*They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east beyond them far,
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*

*And by the light of that same star
three wise men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.*



“Away in a Manger”

*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 cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.*

*Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.*



“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen”

*God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay;
remember Christ our Savior
was born on Christmas Day,
to save us all from Satan’s power
when we were gone astray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

*From God our heavenly Father
a blessèd angel came
and unto certain shepherds*

*brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born
the Son of God by name.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*

*Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true love and charity
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
doth bring redeeming grace.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy!*



“It Came Upon a Midnight Clear”

*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.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,*

*and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds
the blessed angels sing.*

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife
the world has suffered long;
beneath the heavenly hymn have rolled
two thousand years of wrong;
and warring humankind hears not
the tidings which they bring;
O hush the noise and cease your strife
and hear the angels sing!*



“Dawn of Redeeming Grace”



Opening Hymn
“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

*O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him,
born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*God from God,
Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten
Son of God the Father;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

*Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God,
glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.*

Opening Acclamation

+ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our
hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

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.*

*Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

The First Reading

A Reading from Isaiah.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder. For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor. Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

(Isaiah 9:2-7)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Psalm

96

Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.

Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

Declare his glory among the nations*and his wonders among all peoples.

For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; he is more to be feared than all gods.

As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; but it is the Lord who made the heavens.

Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!

Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; ascribe to the Lord honor and power.

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; bring offerings and come into his courts.

Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; let the whole earth tremble before him.

Tell it out among the nations: “The Lord is King! he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity.”

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the Lord when he comes, when he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth.

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

The Second Reading

A Reading from Titus.

For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

(Titus 2:11-14)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

“Angels From the Realms of Glory” verse 1

*Angels, from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o’er all the earth;
ye, who sang creation’s story,
now proclaim Messiah’s birth:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.*

The Holy Gospel

+ + + The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke. Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

(Luke 2:1-20)

The Gospel of The Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

“Angels From the Realms of Glory” verse 2

*Shepherds in the field abiding,
watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with you is now residing;
yonder shines the infant Light:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.*

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

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: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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 and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He 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.

Prayers of the People

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
especially those on our prayer list and the suffering people of
the world.

**For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the
needy.**

For those serving in the armed forces, those wounded or
recovering in veterans' hospitals, those serving in combat and
those serving in safety.

For the peace and protection of God.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
**For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the
Truth.**

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, Greg our Bishop, David,
Rob, and Doug our clergy, and for all bishops and other
ministers;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For blessings upon Tyler and Sadee;
For healthy babies and a safe delivery.

For our schools, scouts, and all of the children and youth of
our parish.

**For your grace and their ever growing knowledge and love
of you.**

For our parish family.
Bind us together and draw us always closer to you.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life;
(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

We will exalt you, O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in
your eternal kingdom.
(you may add your own intercessions and thanksgivings)

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.
**Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your
compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown,
things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your
Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life,
to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ
our Lord. Amen.**

+ Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy
has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with
repentance and faith turn to him, have mercy upon you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and
strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting
life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you.



Christmas Morning Service at 10am
in the Sanctuary in person and livestreamed.
Sunday services at 9am, 10am, and 11am

The Offertory

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. (Ephesians 5:2)

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

*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.*

*For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King,*

and peace to men on earth.

*O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!*

The Presentation

All things come of thee, O Lord,
And of thine own have we given thee.

(1 Chronicles 29:14)

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. + Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

+ On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

+ After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

+ Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

+ Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.
AMEN.

And as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:
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, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Family Song

*Here we are, gathered together as a family
Bound as one, lifting up our voices to the King of kings
We sing Abba, Father, holy is Your name
Abba, Father, holy is Your name.*

These are the Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.



**Please stay at your seat. The clergy will
come to you with the consecrated Bread.**



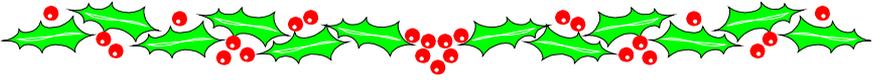
“Sing Alleluia”

The Prayer of Thanksgiving

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.



As the lights are dimmed for the Reading,
please light or illuminate your candles.



A Reading from John.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of a Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

(John 1:1-11)

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

“Silent Night”

*Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!*

*Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.*

The Blessing

+ May the peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and his son Jesus Christ and the blessing of God

Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen

Closing Hymn
“Joy to The World”

*Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
repeat the sounding joy.*

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love.*

The Dismissal

Let us go forth in the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!