



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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The Second Sunday of Christmas

January 3, 2021

Morning Prayer: Rite Two

Prelude

We Three Kings

Hopkins

Opening sentence

p. 75

Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy, which will come to all the people; for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. *Luke 2:10, 11*

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister 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.**

The Bishop when present, or the Priest, stands and says

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

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.

p. 80

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 for ever. Amen.**

Alleluia. To us a child is born: **Come let us adore him. Alleluia.**

The Venite (all recite in unison)

p. 82

Come, let us sing to the Lord; *

let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation.

**Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving *
and raise a loud shout to him with psalms.**

For the Lord is a great God, *

and a great King above all gods.

In his hand are the caverns of the earth, *

and the heights of the hills are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, *

and his hands have molded the dry land.

Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, *

and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. *

Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Psalm 84:1-8 (*read responsively by whole verse*)

¹ **How dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! ***

**My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.**

² **The sparrow has found her a house**

**and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts,
my King and my God.**

³ **Happy are they who dwell in your house! ***

they will always be praising you.

⁴ **Happy are the people whose strength is in you! ***

whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.

⁵ **Those who go through the desolate valley will find it a place of springs, ***

for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.

⁶ **They will climb from height to height, ***

and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.

⁷ LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.

⁸ **Behold our defender, O God; *
and look upon the face of your Anointed.**

**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. A-men.**

The First Lesson

Jeremiah 31:7-14

A reading from the book of Jeremiah.

Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel."

See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame, those with child and
those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.
They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.
I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.
I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Song Of Praise

Angels From The Realms Of Glory

Smart

The Second Lesson

Ephesians 1:3-6,15-19a

A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Canticle 16: The Song of Zechariah *Benedictus Dominus Deus*

Luke 1:68-79

(read responsively by whole verse)

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.

He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.

**He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.**

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,

**Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.**

**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. A-men.**

The Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

A reading from the Gospel of Matthew.

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." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, 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. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Lector The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God**

Sermon

The Apostles' Creed

p. 96

Officiant and People together

**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.

p. 97

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

**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.**

Then follows one of these sets of Suffrages

B

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;

R. **Govern and uphold them, now and always.**

V. Day by day we bless you;

R. **We praise your name for ever.**

V. Lord, keep us from all sin today;

R. **Have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy.**

V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;

R. **For we put our trust in you.**

V. In you, Lord, is our hope;

R. **And we shall never hope in vain.**

The Collect of the Day

O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

A Collect for Sundays

p. 98

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Collect for Peace

p. 99

O God, the author of peace and lover of concord, to know you is eternal life and to serve you is perfect freedom: Defend us, your humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in your defense, may not fear the power of any adversaries; through the might of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Prayer for Mission

p. 101

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. **Amen.**

For the Human Family

p. 815

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

For the Sick

p. 459

Heavenly Father, giver of life and health: Comfort and relieve your sick servants **Ashley Burnett, Jeanine Wilson, Al Cowand, Randy Tyler, Ben Procter, Joan Leggett, Kay Barnacascel, Becky Godwin, John Tolbert, Coley McCally, Karen Gudiksen, Bobbie and Rendol Cobb, Libby Smith, Marian Watts, Lena Evans, Charles Taylor Spruill, Larry Watson, Julia Credle, Joey Ezelle, Racheal Coward, Peggy Parker, Sylvia Dawson, David Dunn, Elsie Benson, Riley Raines, Andy Walker, Will Copeland, Mary Gillam, Rita Hoggard, Gina Rascoe, Kimberly Sena, those with COVID-19, and others known to us**, and give your power of healing to those who minister to their needs, that they may be strengthened in their weakness and have confidence in your loving care; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Prayer from Episcopal Relief and Development (revised)

Compassionate God, source of all comfort, we pray for the people whose lives have been devastated by recent disasters of hurricane, tornado, fire and flood. Bring them comfort, we pray. Protect the vulnerable. Strengthen the weak. Have mercy on all those working to provide relief and to feed the hungry. And may our response to their suffering be generous and bring you praise. For we ask it in Jesus' Name. **Amen.**

For those who have died

Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of comfort: Deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn, especially the families of Lindy Blackburn and Archie Skirving; that, casting all their care on you, they may know the consolation of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Authorized intercessions and thanksgivings may follow.

The General Thanksgiving

p. 101

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.**

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

p. 102

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Officiant may then conclude with the following

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.** *Romans 15:13*

Postlude

Go Tell It On The Mountain

Ray

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Officiant: The Rev. Bonnie Smith

Organist: Tom Parker

Altar: Shirley Cooper, Cham Trowell, Jane Hall

Lector: John Tyler

Soloist: Marti Tyler

Ushers: Norman Perry, Free Perry

Hostesses: Kristin Warren, Mollie Perry, Anne Farless

Money Counters: John Tyler, Janet Capehart

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you for observing proper precautions for any gatherings during COVID-19: wear a mask, wash your hands, and wait 6 feet apart between households.

Under COVID-19 guidelines, the following changes must be made to our worship:

- Offering plates will not be passed. Please deposit your offering in the designated basket as you arrive or exit. Or you may mail your offering to St. Thomas' Episcopal Church, PO Box 400, Windsor, NC 27983.
- Congregational and choral singing are not permitted. A soloist is allowed, while physical distancing and wearing a face covering.
- Nursery care and children's Sunday School cannot be offered. New coloring and activity sheets are available each Sunday.
- No receptions or meals may be offered before or after worship.
- Please limit use of church restrooms.

Please take your printed bulletin home or drop it in the designated recycling container.

Small water bottles are available for your use.

Weather permitting, we will continue with outdoor worship next Sunday at 11:00 a.m., with video on Facebook. (As long as Bertie County remains in the red or orange zone, we are limited to 10 people inside.)

The vestry has elected John Tyler, Marti Tyler, and Jaquelin Perry as delegates to the virtual diocesan convention on February 13. Tra Perry was elected as alternate delegate.

Thank you to Dickie Hall, Free Perry, and Cham Trowell who are completing 3 years of vestry service. Congratulations to Pat Ivey, Steve Trowell, and John Tyler who were elected to the vestry at the annual meeting.

During the vestry meeting on December 21, Joe Rhea submitted his resignation as a vestry member. The vestry elected Janet Capehart to fill the remainder of his term.

The vestry and Bishop Skirving have agreed to postpone his visitation, which had been scheduled for January.

You are invited to join the diocesan-wide “Journey through East Carolina” through February 7, 2021. Details are available at <https://www.ecdio.org/journey.html>