



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

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The Celebration of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ

December 24, 2021

5:15 p.m.

Prelude

Silent Night

arr. Ray

The worship space is dark, or partially so, when the service is to begin.

The Officiant greets the people with these words.

Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

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... The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. *John 1:1-5, 9*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The candles at the Altar are now lighted, as are other candles and lamps as may be convenient.

Hymn #25-All Sing

O Gracious Light

The Eighth Tune

- 1. O Gracious Light, Lord Jesus Christ,
in you the Father's glory shone.
Immortal, holy, blest is he,
And blest are you, his holy Son.**
- 2. Now sunset comes, but light shines forth,
the lamps are lit to pierce the night.
Praise Father, Son, and Spirit: God
who dwells in the eternal light.**
- 3. Worthy are you of endless praise,
O Son of God, Life-giving Lord;**

Wherefore you are through all the earth
and in the highest heaven adored.

Hymn #83-All Sing

O come all ye faithful

Adeste fideles

¹ 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;

Refrain:

*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.*

² God from God,
Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten Son of the Father; *[Refrain]*

³ Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest; *[Refrain]*

⁶ Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing; *[Refrain]*

The Christmas Pageant

Solo

Once in royal David's city

Irby

Scene I Luke 2:1-5

Mary and Joseph journey to Jerusalem

Hymn #79– All Sing

O little town of Bethlehem

St. Louis

**¹ 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.
² For Christ is born of Mary, and, gathered all above
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.**

Scene II Luke 2:6-7 *Jesus is born in a stable in Bethlehem*

Hymn #101– All Sing

Away in a manger

Mueller

**¹ Away in a manger, no crib for a 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.**

**² The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

Scene III Luke 2:8-14 *Shepherds are told by the angels of the Birth*

Hymn #94– All Sing

While shepherds watched their flocks by night

Winchester Old

**¹ While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down,
and glory shone around.**

**² "Fear not," said he, for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind;
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind.**

**³ "To you, in David's town, this day
is born of David's line
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord;
and this shall be the sign:**

4. "The heavenly Babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid."

Scene IV Luke 2:15-19 *Shepherds go to the manger*

Hymn #109 – All Sing

The first Nowell

The First Noel

1. The first Nowell the angel did say
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain:

**Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
born is the King of Israel.**

2. 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. (Refrain)

3. 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. (Refrain)

Scene V Matthew 2:1-2, 7-11 *The Wise Men visit*

Children's chorus

Joy to The World

Antioch

Organ Voluntary

Angels We Have Heard on High

French Carol

(Photos may be taken during the organ voluntary.)

The Apostles' Creed

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.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Officiant and People

**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.**

That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That there may be peace to your Church and to the whole world,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may depart this life in your faith and fear,
and not be condemned before the great judgment seat of Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the communion of St.
Thomas and all your saints, entrusting one another and all our life to Christ,
We entreat you, O Lord.

The Collect of the Day

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 Song of Simeon *Nunc Dimittis* Luke 2:29-32

(all chant the canticle on the following tone)



© 1936, Jerome Webster Meachen.

Lord, you now have set your servant ***free*** *
to go in peace as you have ***promised;***
For these eyes of mine have seen the ***Savior,*** *
whom you have prepared for all the world to ***see:***
A Light to enlighten the ***nations,*** *
and the glory of your people ***Israel.***

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.***

Hymn #87- All sing *Hark! The herald angels sing*

Mendelssohn

**1. 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 hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!**

Refrain:

***Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the newborn King!***

**2. 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 Immanuel! (*Refrain*)**

**3. 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! (*Refrain*)**

Postlude

Joy to the World

arr. Ray

MINISTERS OF THE LITURGY

Celebrant: The Rev. Bonnie J. Smith

Organist: Tom Parker

Narrator: Cham Trowell

Singers: Members of the St. Thomas Choir, Mike Spruill, soloist

Altar Guild: Marti Tyler, Agnes Powell, Alice Pittman, and Rosanna Rhea

Hostesses: Cathy Wilson, Nancy Joyner, and Clara Blanchard

Counters: Jaquelin Perry and Dean Fisk

Ushers: Norman Perry and Steve Trowell

Thank you to all altar & flower guild members who decorated for the Christmas season.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Eucharist will be celebrated inside the church nave at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, December 26.

The Rev. Sonny Browne will celebrate the sacrament of Holy Eucharist at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Roxobel, on Sunday, December 26 at 5:00 p.m.

Thank you to everyone who has submitted your 2022 pledge. If you have not already done so, please consider prayerfully what God is calling you to give to St. Thomas in 2022. Pledge cards are available in the narthex and on the chest outside Cooper Hall.

The nursery, children's Sunday school, and adult Bible study will resume on January 9.

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND GREENERY

IN MEMORY

**Robert & Margaret Sessoms
Reg & Cor Sessoms
Ewla Sessoms Gray
Annie Gray Burden**

By: Douglas & Jill Sessoms

**Jack Cooper
Tony Bowen**

By: Shirley Cooper

**Jack Cooper
John Tyler
Verna Perry**

By: Dickie & Jane Hall

Our Parents

By: Norman & Jaquelin Perry

**Finn Dunn
Nancy Rascoe**

By: Kristin Warren

**Carolyn Copeland
Duck Everett
Fred Spencer**

By: Ed Rawls and Cham Trowell

**Bo Worthington
Mary & Sam Worthington
Bill Humphrey**

By: Janet Worthington

IN THANKSGIVING

Our Children and Grand Children

By: Norman & Jaquelin Perry

IN HONOR

Alaina & Aliannah Bowen

By: Shirley Cooper

**Brown & Walter Miller
Katherine & Edward Rawls**

By: Ed Rawls & Cham Trowell