



# St. Thomas Episcopal Church

## The Order of Worship for Christmas Eve

December 24, 2020 † 7:00 PM

*Window: The Nativity*

**Piano Prelude** "What sweeter music"

John Rutter (b. 1945)

**Jazz Quartet** "The First Nowell"

Smiths Station Jazz Quartet; Roger Redden, coach

### Greeting

Alleluia. To us a child is born: O come, let us adore him. Alleluia.

### Processional Hymn 83 (vss.1, 2, 3, 6) O Come All Ye Faithful

Recorded by Trinity Episcopal Church

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.

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*

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

## The Lessons

**First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7**

RCL 8

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

**Music for flute and organ** Lo, how a rose e'er blooming

arr. Peter Crisafulli

Kellie Henry, *flute*; Rick McKnight, *organ***Second Lesson: Luke 2:1-14**

RCL 9

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 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. While they were there, the time came for her 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. 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!"

**Sequence Hymn 96** Angles we have heard on high

St. Thomas Choir

**Gospel: John 1:1-14**

RCL 13

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 as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

**Music for flute and organ** “Lully, Lulla, Lullay”

arr. Peter Crisafulli  
Kellie Henry, *flute*; Rick McKnight, *organ*

## Sermon

### The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

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 let us pray to the Lord.

Loving God, on this holy night your Son our Savior was born in human flesh. Renew your Church as the body of Christ. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this night there was no room for your Son in the inn. Protect with your love those who have no home, those who fear eviction, and all who live in poverty. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness. Bring comfort and hope to all who suffer from the sadness of our world and particularly the sadness of this year. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.' Strengthen those who work for peace, justice, and understanding in this nation and around the world. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy. Give us grace to preach the gospel of Christ's redemption, even when our hearts are breaking. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger. Bless our homes and all whom we love, and bless those who have no home or who long to be with loved ones in this season. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night, heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven. Hold in your hand all who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom, and those whose faith is known to you alone. Holy God, hear our prayer.

On this holy night, angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph, and all the saints, through him who is your Word made flesh, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

## Cantique de Noel (O Holy Night)     Debbie Anderson, *soprano*

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining, it is the night of the dear Savior's birth;  
long lay the world in sin and error pining, 'till he appeared and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn;

Fall on your knees, Oh hear the angel voices!  
O night divine! O night when Christ was born.  
O night, O holy night, O night divine.

Truly He taught us to love one another; His law is Love and His gospel is Peace;  
chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother, and in his name all oppression shall cease,  
sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we; let all within us praise his Holy name!

Music: Adolphe Adams (1803-1856)

Words: Placide Cappeau (1808-1877) tr., John Sullivan Dwight

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! Christ, 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)

Concluding Collects

The Blessing

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)

## Announcements

**CVEM film:** We are excited to invite you to a Virtual Discussion of 'The Black Candle' on Sunday, Dec. 27 at 5 p.m. The Black Candle is a "documentary about the struggle and triumph of African-American family, community, and culture, using Kwanzaa as a vehicle to celebrate the African-American experience. The seven principles of Kwanzaa (unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith) are so important to African-Americans today. The documentary explores the holiday's growth out of the Black Power Movement in the 1960s to its present-day reality as a global, pan-African holiday embraced by over 40 million celebrants." We hope you'll join us as we continue to explore and learn about multi-faceted issues of justice in our common life together. All are welcome. Simply watch the film before Dec. 27. You can do that for FREE right here. <https://tubitv.com/movies/560779/the-black-candle>. To receive a link to the zoom meeting register at <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join-link>

**Zoom Caroling Party:** Zoom caroling party on Sunday, December 27, at 7 pm. Share a carol or simply enjoy the music of others. Gather with St. Thomas friends and family for Christmas Caroling - 2020 style! Using Zoom, we will share carols with one another this season. Children, youth, and adults are welcome to play, sing, hum, or share in anyway a favorite carol of the season. Click here to sign up to share! You don't have to share a carol to participate. Let us know you're coming and you'll get a zoom link sent to your email. You will receive the link to the event in your order confirmation email, and in a reminder email before the event starts.

**New Year's Eve Worship on the Lawn:** It's been a tough year. End 2020 by turning to God for help and strength. Register on Eventbrite to let us know you're coming.

**Christmas Photo Booth:** Many St. Thomas members have a custom of taking Christmas pictures by the altar at St. Thomas. We are bringing the custom outside for 2020. Stop by our photo booth any time to take a family picture or a selfie. And share your photo on our Facebook page as a way of greeting the congregation.

**End of year giving:** St. Thomas welcomes year-end gifts of cash or stock. Contributions for 2020 must be received in the church office by December 31. Cash gifts may be mailed to 2100 Hilton Avenue, Columbus, GA 31906, or dropped in the mail slot on the door between the Nave and Parlor. For information on how to make a donation of stock please contact Patty Slembariski in the church office on Wednesday or Thursday from 9 AM – 4 PM: 706-324-4264 or [patty@stthomasatlanta.org](mailto:patty@stthomasatlanta.org)

**Office hours for the holidays:** The church building and office will be closed December 25, 28, and January 1. Daily newsletters will be sent each weekday of Christmas season with a message and music for each day.