



The Episcopal Church of St. James the Less



Christmas Day
Saturday, December 25, 2021
10:00 a.m. – Via Zoom

Christmas Day

The Word of God

Welcome

Prelude

Opening Hymn

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 and mean and lowly,
lived on earth our Savior holy.

We, like Mary, rest confounded
that a stable should display
heaven's Word, the world's creator,
cradled there on Christmas Day,
yet this child, our Lord and brother,
brought us love for one another.

Presider The Word become flesh and dwelt among us.

People **We behold his glory, Alleluia.**

The Collect of the Day

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

All Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born this day of a pure virgin: 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 First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

How beautiful upon the mountains
 are the feet of the messenger who announces peace,
who brings good news,
 who announces salvation,
 who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices,
 together they sing for joy;
for in plain sight they see
 the return of the LORD to Zion.

Break forth together into singing,
 you ruins of Jerusalem;
for the LORD has comforted his people,
 he has redeemed Jerusalem.

The LORD has bared his holy arm
 before the eyes of all the nations;
and all the ends of the earth shall see
 the salvation of our God.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalm

Psalm 97

Read responsively by full verse.

The LORD is King;
let the earth rejoice; *
 let the multitude of the isles be glad.

Clouds and darkness are round about him, *
 righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.

A fire goes before him *
 and burns up his enemies on every side.

His lightnings light up the world; *
 the earth sees it and is afraid.

The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, *
 at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

The heavens declare his righteousness, *
 and all the peoples see his glory.

Confounded be all who worship carved images
and delight in false gods! *

Bow down before him, all you gods.

Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, *
 because of your judgments, O LORD.

The Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1-4

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation

Celtic Alleluia



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Gospel

John 1:1-14

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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.

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Reflections

The Rev. Daphne Cody

The Statement of Faith

from Daily Prayer for All Seasons, page 44

We are not alone; we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

The Prayers of the People

adapted from Intercessions for the Christian People, p. 77

Intercessor For the church of Christ, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and may care for the needs of God's people in all corners of the world, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor For peace in our troubled world, that the darkness of war and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor For all those in need of our prayers: those who are fearful or isolated during the pandemic, those who are homeless, those who are unemployed, those who are hospitalized, those who are imprisoned in body or soul, and those for whom this season is not of joy but of trial and sadness, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor For all those who are sick in all different ways, that their illnesses may be turned into health and their sorrow into rejoicing, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor For those who labor over the holidays on behalf of others: doctors and nurses, police officers and firefighters, soldiers and sailors, gas station attendants, transportation and delivery workers, and all those whose work prevents them from being with those they love, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Intercessor In thanksgiving we remember the lives of those who have gone before us in faith. That we, like them, may remain faithful to the end and live forever in the light of your eternal glory, we pray to you, O Lord.

People **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Peace

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Offertory

Love Came Down at Christmas

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894), alt. Music: *Gartan*, melody from *Petrie Collection of Irish Melodies, Part II*, 1902; harm. David Evans (1874-1948)
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The Holy Communion

The Great Thanksgiving

Enriching Our Worship, Prayer 1

It is truly right, and good and joyful,
to give you thanks, all-holy God,
source of life and fountain of mercy.

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh,
you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts,
to give the knowledge of your glory
in the face of your son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore, joining with Angels and Archangels
and with the faithful of every generation,
we lift our voices with all creation as we sing:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and
 might. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
 God of pow'r and might. Heav - en and earth are
 full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the
 high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the
 high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Blessed are you, gracious God,
 creator of the universe and giver of life.
 You formed us in your own image
 and called us to dwell in your infinite love.

You gave the world into our care
 that we might be your faithful stewards
 and show forth your bountiful grace.

But we failed to honor your image
 in one another and in ourselves;
 we would not see your goodness in the world around us;
 and so we violated your creation,
 abused one another,
 and rejected your love.

Yet you never ceased to care for us,
and prepared the way of salvation for all people.

Through Abraham and Sarah
you called us into covenant with you.
You delivered us from slavery,
sustained us in the wilderness,
and raised up prophets
to renew your promise of salvation.

Then, in the fullness of time,
you sent your eternal Word,
made mortal flesh in Jesus.

Born into the human family,
and dwelling among us,
he revealed your glory.

Giving himself freely to death on the cross,
he triumphed over evil,
opening the way of freedom and life.

Bring us into the everlasting heritage
of your daughters and sons,
that with St. James the Less and all your saints,
past, present, and yet to come,
we may praise your Name for ever.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
to you be honor, glory, and praise,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

And now, 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 Prayer for Spiritual Communion

Let us say together:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into my heart. Cleanse and strengthen me with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let me never be separated from you. May I live in you, and you in me, in this life and in the life to come. Amen.

Closing Prayer

O God,

We feel your presence through our compassionate community and vibrant worship.

Compel us by our baptism to follow Jesus.

Form our church to be a source of hope, love, and acceptance.

Unite us as we seek to be a church

Responsive, connected, dedicated

To serve our neighbors and larger communities. Amen.

The Blessing

May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace; 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

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle-men, let noth - ing you dis - may;
 2 From God our heaven - ly Fa - ther a bless - ed an - gel came
 3 "Fear not, then," said the an - gel, "Let noth - ing you af - fright;
 4 Now to the Lord sing prais - es, all you with - in this place,

re - mem - ber Christ our Sa - vior was born on Christ-mas Day,
 and un - to cer - tain shep - herds brought tid - ings of the same:
 this day is born a Sa - vior of a pure vir - gin bright,
 and with true love and char - i - ty each o - ther now em - brace;

to save us all from Sa - tan's power when we were gone a - stray.
 how that in Beth - le - hem was born the Son of God by name.
 to free all those who trust in him from Sa - tan's power and might."
 this ho - ly tide of Christ - mas doth bring re - deem - ing grace.

Refrain

O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com-fort and
 joy; O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

Keyboard and guitar should not sound together.

Words: London carol, 18th cent.; Copyright © by permission of Fleming H. Revell Company. Music: *God Rest You Merry*, melody from *Little Book of Christmas Carols*, ca. 1850; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944) Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Presider Let us bless the Lord.
 People Thanks be to God.

Participants are invited to stay online for a few minutes to wish one another glad tidings of the season.