ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

LESSONS AND CAROLS WITH HOLY EUCHARIST

December 28, 2025



Love Was Born at Christmas

2201 Dexter St., Denver, CO 80205
saintthomasdenver.org

St Thomas Episcopal Church offers sanctuary and spiritual renewal to everyone regardless of age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious background, social or economic circumstance, political affiliation or where you are on your spiritual journey. We welcome all who desire deep relationships and value our relationships with others over the differences that separate us.

Our Commitment

We believe all people are beloved of God and we strive to live and proclaim God's love through all our actions and words. As a community and as individuals, we **Lead with Love**, shine light in the darkness, create safe spaces and offer hope, courage, peace and strength for the journey. We are here for each other and for those in need of any kind. St. Thomas is a place of refuge for those who are wearied by the world and desire nourishment for the spirit and the soul. We welcome you to come as you are and to join us in the sacred task of loving a new world into being.

Learn More About St. Thomas

If you would like to learn more about St. Thomas, we invite you to visit our website (www.saintthomasdenver.org), subscribe to our weekly newsletter (link is on website), or schedule a conversation with our priest by emailing office@saintthomasdenver.org.

Inclusive Language:

At St. Thomas, we support and encourage the use of inclusive language. Towards that end we often choose more contemporary prayers and hymns for our worship service. However, we recognize that many parishioners also appreciate and love our traditional prayers and hymns that employ more patriarchal language. When such prayers or hymns are included in our worship, we encourage you to substitute the word or pronoun that most resonates with you when you pray or sing.

Preaching and Presiding this Week: The Rev. Terri Hobart

Music Leaders
Kari Miles
Angela Pleasants
Geoff Wodell
Brandon Bennett

Godly Play and Nursery
Maria Perez

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PROCESSIONAL *Angels from the Realms of Glory*

Hymn #93

Please stand as you are able.

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider Good news and great joy to all the world: today our savior is born in Bethlehem.
People **O come let us adore him!**
Presider Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.
People **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Hymn of Praise *Angels We Have Heard On High* **Hymn #96 V 1, 3**

Presider The Lord be with you
People **And also with you**
Presider 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 forever. **Amen.**

A Bidding Prayer
Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city. And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

First Reading
Please be seated.

Proclamation of the Light
Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it,"
proclaims the ancient word;
light stands firm against the dark landscape of reality,
warmth prances in rooms too long drafty.
Each of us holding a flickering candle;
seemingly insignificant one by one, yet magnificent when held together.
Each of us making a choice to stand in the light;
proclaiming the indisputable presence of unquenchable light.
Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it.
~Katherine Hawker

Hymn *It Came Upon On A Midnight Clear* **Hymn #89 V 1, 3**
Please stand as you are able.

Second Reading
Please be seated.

It Is Not Over
It is not over,
this birthing.
There are always newer skies
into which
God can throw stars.
When we begin to think
that we can predict the Advent of
God,
that we can box the Christ in a
stable in Bethlehem,
that's just the time
that God will be born
in a place we can't imagine and
won't believe.
Those who wait for God
watch with their hearts and not
their eyes,
listening
always listening
for angel words.
~ Ann Weems

Hymn *The Snow Lay On The Ground* **Hymn #110 V 1**
Please stand as you are able.

Third Reading
Please be seated.

People of Ceaseless Hope
[We] must be [people] of ceaseless hope…Every human act, every Christian act, is an act of hope. But that means [we] must be [people] of the present, [we] must live this moment - really live it, not just endure it - because this very moment, for all its imperfection and frustration, because of its imperfection and frustration, is pregnant with all sorts of possibilities, is pregnant with the future, is pregnant with love, is pregnant with Christ.
~ Walter Burghardt

Fourth Reading
Please be seated.

The Risk of Birth
This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war & hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.

That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honour & truth were trampled by scorn-
Yet here did the Saviour make his home.

When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn-
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth.
~ Madeleine L'Engle

Hymn *Hark The Herald Angels Sing* **Hymn #87 V 1**
Please stand as you are able.

Fifth Reading
Please be seated.

Nativity
"O inexpressible mystery and unheard paradox:
the Invisible is seen, the Intangible is touched ,
the eternal Word becomes accessible to our speech,
the Timeless steps into time,
the Son of God becomes the Son of Man."
~Saint Gregory of Nyssa

Sixth Reading
Please be seated.

"We are all meant to be mothers of God. What good is it to me if this eternal birth of the divine Son takes place unceasingly, but does not take place within myself? And, what good is it to me if Mary is full of grace if I am not also full of grace? What good is it to me for the Creator to give birth to his Son if I do not also give birth to him in my time and my culture? This, then, is the fullness of time: When the Son of Man is begotten in us."
~Meister Eckhart, 1260-1328, German Dominican monk

Hymn *What Child Is This?* **Hymn #115 V 1**
Please stand as you are able.

Seventh Reading

Please be seated.

Those Who Saw the Star

The Word, for our sake, became poverty clothed as the poor who live off the refuse heap.
The Word, for our sake, became a sob a thousand times stifled in the immovable mouth of the child who died from hunger.
The Word, for our sake, became danger in the anguish of the mother who worries about her child growing into adulthood.
The Word cut us deeply in that place of shame: the painful reality of the poor.
The Word blew its spirit over the dried bones of the churches, guardians of silence.
The Word awoke us from the lethargy which had robbed us of our hope.
The Word became a path in the jungle, a decision on the farm, love in women, unity among workers, and a Star for those few who can inspire dreams.

The Word became Light,
The Word became History,
The Word became Conflict,

The Word became indomitable Spirit, and sowed its seeds upon the mountain, near the river and in the valley, and those of good will heard the angels sing.
Tired knees were strengthened, trembling hands were stilled, and the people who wandered in darkness saw the light...
The Word became the seed of justice and we conceived peace...
The Word made justice to rain and peace came forth from the furrows in the land.
And we saw its glory in the eyes of the poor transformed into real men and women.
And those who saw the Star opened up for us the path we now follow.

~Julia Esquivel

Hymn *Star-Child, Earth-Child*

Please stand as you are able.



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Music: *Star-Child*, Carlton R. Young © 1994 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188.
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The Gospel of John John 1:1-19

Presider The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
People **Glory to you Lord Christ.**
After the gospel

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Peace
Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People **And also with you.**
The people greet one another with a sign of God's peace and then are seated.

The Invitation

Offertory Hymn *A Stable Lamp* **Hymn #104**
Please be seated.

During this hymn the offering is collected. We invite you to generously support the ministries of St. Thomas. If you give electronically, please place a giving card from the pew in the offering plate in lieu of your gift. Scan to donate:

venmo

Presentation Hymn *Joy to the World* **Hymn #100 V 1,4**
The congregation stands as the offering is brought forward.

The Great Thanksgiving

Remain standing.

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

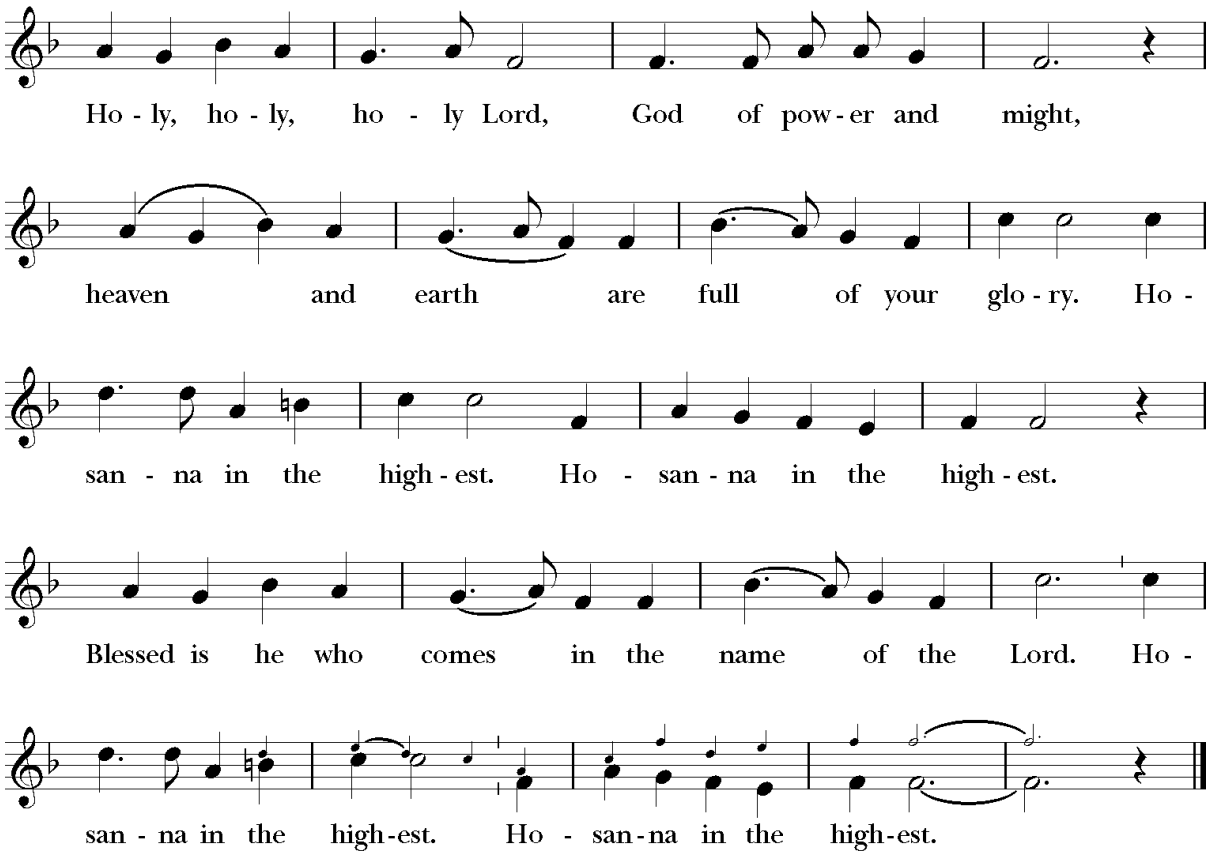
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

The Presider continues

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth because, in the incarnation of the Word, a new light has dawned upon the world; you have become one with us that we might become one with you in your glorious kingdom. 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:

Sanctus *Holy, Holy, Holy* LEVAS #255



The people stand or kneel as able.
Presider continues

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.

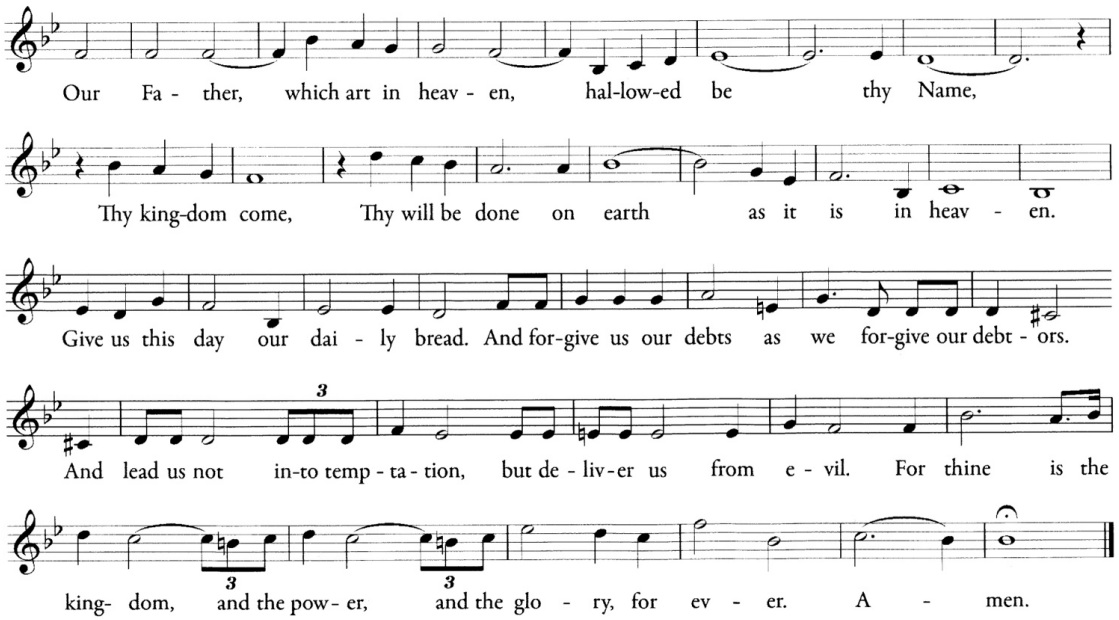
You delivered us from slavery, sustained us in the wilderness, and raised up prophets to renew your promise of salvation. Then, in the fullness of time, you sent your eternal Word, made mortal flesh in Jesus. Born into the human family, and dwelling among us, he revealed your glory. Giving himself freely to death on the cross, he triumphed over evil, opening the way of freedom and life.

On the night before he died for us, Our Savior Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his friends, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." As supper was ending, Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Presider and People
Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

Remembering his death and resurrection, we now present to you from your creation this bread and this wine. By your Holy Spirit may they be for us the Body and Blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. Grant that we who share these gifts may be filled with the Holy Spirit and live as Christ's Body in the world. Bring us into the everlasting heritage of your daughters and sons, that with Mary, Joseph, St. Thomas 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.**

The Lord's Prayer Malotte



The Fraction

Presider Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
People. Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Invitation

The Communion of the People

All are invited to eat at God's table. Gluten free wafers are available upon request. If you prefer to receive a blessing rather than the bread, please cross your arms over your chest. Please note, due to sanitation concerns, we do not allow intinction (dipping the bread in the wine.)

Communion Hymn *In the Bleak Midwinter* **Hymn #112**

Post Communion Prayer

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

All **Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Blessing

Please stand as you are able.

Presider May he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, bestow upon you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Recessional *Good Christian Friends Rejoice* **Hymn #107**

Dismissal

Presider Go in peace proclaiming the good news that Christ is born. Alleluia, alleluia.

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

ST. THOMAS
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

OUR WHY: To Lead With Love

LEAD WITH LOVE

WE LEAD WITH LOVE BY:

- Being an inclusive, welcoming space for all.
- Seeking the holy in ourselves, each other, and the world
- Making a difference in our community

CORE VALUES

- ATTEND TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES
  Through prayer, spiritual practices and formation, we weave our relationship with the Holy into the fabric of our daily lives. Prayer and discernment guide ministries and worship will be guided by discernment and prayer. (Foundational)
- CHOOSE LOVE
  We act from love not fear; build bridges not walls. (Foundational)
- CREATE AND SUSTAIN COMMUNITY
  We gather and care for each other. We cultivate deep relationships. We will prioritize our relationships with each other over the differences that separate us. (Foundational)
- WELCOME ALL
  All means all and all are welcome. We promote an inclusive culture by 1) fostering the skills to shift our cultural perspectives and appropriately adapt our behavior to bridge cultural differences; 2) cultivating the self-awareness and empathy needed to value difference in working toward equity. (Missional)
- HONOR DIVERSITY
  All are welcome. Our leadership, worship, music and ministry initiatives will reflect our diversity. (Missional)
- PROMOTE THE DIGNITY OF ALL
  Through formation, lobbying and other initiatives we prayerfully engage in social justice activities that promote and protect the dignity of all people. (Missional)
- CARE FOR CREATION
  We value our interdependence with creation and recognize our role as stewards. We incorporate practices that protect, sustain, and nourish our fragile earth and her inhabitants.
- ENGAGE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD
  We open our hearts and doors to our individual and church neighbors, strive to understand their needs and support them. (Missional)
- NURTURE THE NEXT GENERATION
  We offer, support and staff worship and formation opportunities for families and children. (Missional)
- CULTIVATE BEAUTY
  We tend to the beauty of our space, worship and music that evokes a sacred sense of awe, stillness and joy. (Missional)

Believe OUTLOUD