

THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Raleigh, NC

December 24, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.

THE GATHERING

The people gather in silence

Greeting

Three Olde' Christmas Carols

Hymn #105 God rest you merry, gentlemen

Hymn #89 It came upon the midnight clear

Hymn #107 Good Christian friends, rejoice

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath—Theme: Light (Welcome Home)

The appointed leaders approach the Christmas Wreath and begin with the following:

Reader This night, this night is a night to remember. A night when home broke in on us. A night when we were not forgotten or alone or abandoned. This night. This night is the night when here and there became one, when past and future combined in a breathless present. This is a night when we are home, in ourselves, in this community, in the God who loved us enough to walk beside us.

People **We gather in the night to proclaim the light. We shrug off despair and embrace hope. We set aside conflict and choose peace. We push away despair by claiming joy. We overcome hate by rising into love. Because this night we know, even in the shadows of our doubts, we know that we are loved. That's what it means to be home.**

The Christ Candle and all the candles of the wreath are lit.

Reader We light these candles, hoping to become the light, hoping to radiate light by how we live. We light these candles to create a space called home in this place, in our place, in inner places. We light these candles to declare that unto us a Savior is born, who is Christ the Lord. Welcomed home by angels singing and shepherds kneeling. Welcomed home by those like us who have worshiped for thousands of years. Welcomed home again tonight, right here, right now, in us.

People **It's time to be home.**
(Source: adapted, Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy 2021, Derek Weber)

Voluntary Greensleeves (From Four Carol Preludes), Richard Purvis

Opening Sentences

Presider An angel said to the shepherds gathered there, "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."

People **Amen! Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place.
Let us go forth in the name of Christ.**

Entrance Hymn #83 O come, all ye faithful

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be his kingdom now and forever. Amen.**
The Word became flesh and dwells among us.
And we see his glory. Amen and Amen!

The Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hymn of Praise #96 Angels we have heard on high

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 WORD OF GOD

Isaiah 9:2-7

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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 96 (Prayed responsively)

Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.

Sing to the LORD and bless his Name;
proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.

**Declare his glory among the nations
and his wonders among all peoples.**

**For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised;
he is more to be feared than all gods.**

**As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols;
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.**

**Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence!
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!**

Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples;
ascribe to the LORD honor and power.

Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name;
bring offerings and come into his courts.

Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness;
let the whole earth tremble before him.

Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is King!
he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;
he will judge the peoples with equity."

Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder and all that is in it;
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.

Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the LORD when he comes,
when he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with his truth.

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn #115 What child is this, who, laid to rest

✦ The Holy Gospel Luke 2:1-20

People The holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke.
Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these

words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

People The Gospel of the Lord.
 Praise to you Lord Christ.

The Homily A marked period of silence follows the Homily.

The Nicene Creed

**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

Sisters and brothers, rejoicing in the love of God that has taken flesh among us in Christ Jesus, let us confidently bring to the Lord the petitions of our heart this Christmas night, saying: Lord, hear our prayer.

For the believing community throughout the world, especially those in positions of leadership, that they might always work to give glory to God and to bring peace to our earth, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the church gathered in this place, that we might always bear the good news of God's living presence in our world, towards deepening of Christmas faith and living that faith in love, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those caught in the cycle of prejudice, hostility, and fear; for those burdened by the yoke of injustice, terrorism, hunger, and war; and for all our brothers and sisters in any need that the light and life that is the Lord might touch their hearts this night and may judge ours for our complicity in such systems, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the homeless, and for the children born in the midst of poverty and pain, that there be room at the inn for all God's people, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those suffering in addiction and for the sick and the dying among us especially, Rudolph **McEwan**, Ryoko **Roberts**, Beth **Plumeri**, Leah **Underwood**, Becky **Toole**, David **Robbins**, Sarah **Robbins**, Valerie **Aguirre**, Vickie **LoMonte**, Judy **Wray**, David **Myher**, Elayne **Karickoff**, Ruth **Mufandaedza**, Lee **Witcher**, Audrey **Witcher**, Deanna **Hill**, Sophia **Vaughan Morning**, Mary **Mainwaring**, Katie **Critcher**, Dave **Bowman**, Denise **Davis**, Carmen **Reeve**, James **Barber**, Celia **Nail**, Betty **Johnson**, William **Nail**, Ginny **Barber**, Janice **Fowlkes**, Harriet **Banner**, Susan **Tobie**, Hugh **Stohler** and Rpaul **Smith**, and for those who care for them, that the God whose love extends from the wood of the manger to the wood of the cross might bless them this night with the gift of peace, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For **Miles** Davis (31st) who celebrates a birthday this week. Let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For our own needs. *[Here other intercessions may be offered each ending with, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**]*

For those who die violent deaths rooted in racism, misogyny and homophobia and for those who mourn them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the more than 800,000 citizens in this country and the millions across the globe who have died from COVID-19 and for those who mourn them, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who will die tonight; unsuspecting and unprepared, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who have died in the peace of Christ, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

The Presider offers a concluding Collect.

The Exchange of Peace

Presider The peace of Christ be always with you.
People **And also with you.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Ingathering of Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Hymn #109 The first Nowell the angel did say

Presider: All things come from you, O God.
People: **And of your own have we given you.**

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And al-so 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 him thanks and praise.

It is truly right to glorify you, Father, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever. Fountain of life and source of all goodness, you made all things and fill them with your blessing; you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance. Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we sing,

Service Music #S129 Sanctus *Holy, holy, holy Lord*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole

creation new. And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he took bread, and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he 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 shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you, and we pray to you, Lord our God.

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace. Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ, and those whose faith is known to you alone; bring them into the place of eternal joy and light.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, (with ___) and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, forever and ever.



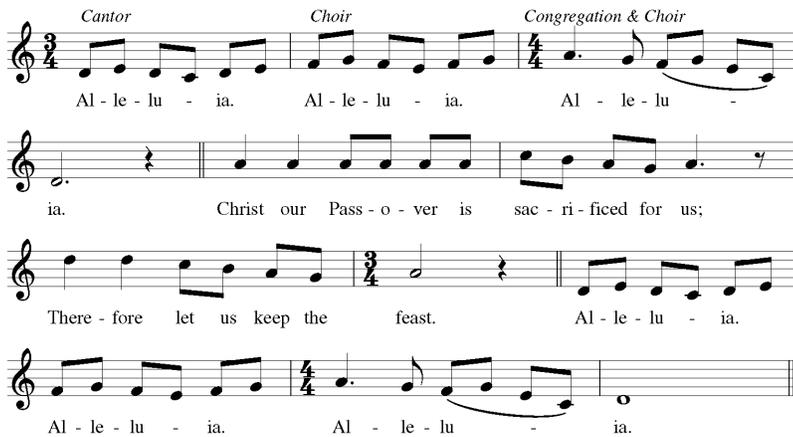
The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Presider breaks the consecrated bread also known as 'The Fraction'.

The Fraction Anthem:



The Fraction Anthem musical score is written on four staves. The first staff is divided into three parts: 'Cantor' (3/4 time), 'Choir' (3/4 time), and 'Congregation & Choir' (4/4 time). The lyrics are: 'Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.' The second staff continues the lyrics: 'ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;'. The third staff continues: 'There - fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.' The fourth staff concludes with: 'Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.' The score includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, time signatures, and rests.

Please remain masked during the distribution of Communion.

Healing Prayers

After receiving communion, those who desire healing prayer and anointing, may do so by gathering at the prayer desk located near the Chrismon Tree. There, a prayer partner will pray for you.

Communion Hymns

Hymn#78 O little town of Bethlehem

Hymn #87 Hark! The herald angels sing

Prayer after Communion

The people stand or kneel.

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

The Christmas Blessing

May Almighty God, who sent his son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Candlelight Hymn #111 Silent night, holy night

THE SENDING

✦ The Beginning of the Holy Gospel John 1:1-18

People The beginning holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John.
 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.

Silence is kept.

(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

People The Gospel of the Lord.
 Praise to you Lord Christ.

Hymn #100 Joy to the world! the Lord is come

Dismissal

Deacon Alleluia, Alleluia. Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**

Voluntary

The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, Presider
The Rev. Dr. Ruthann Savage-King, Deacon
Ms. Denise Davis, Sub-Deacon
Mr. John Massenburg, Organist
With deep appreciation to the Altar Guild and Worship Committee

Upcoming Christmas and Epiphany Services

All are welcome to join us.

Sunday, Dec. 26, 10:00 am; The First Sunday after Christmas Day

A Service of Lessons and Carols with Holy Communion

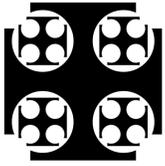
Come let's continue the joy of Christmas through prayers, sacred readings and joyful carols.

Wednesday, Jan. 5, 2021, 5:00 pm, The Twelfth Night – Eve of Epiphany Service

On this we night, we celebrate the revelation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. This revelation is marked by the visitation of the Magi to the Savior's crib to bear sacred gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.



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Website: www.stmarks-ral.org, Rector: The Rev. Tyrone Fowlkes, Rector's Email: tfowlkes@stmarks-ral.org



Notes regarding tonight's service

You must wear a mask covering your nose and mouth at all times.

All are welcome to participate in the service of Holy Communion and, at the appropriate time, may come forward to receive Communion which will be offered in one kind, **bread only** and will be administered by the Presider.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions and for the safety of all who are gathered here, the following guidelines must be adhered to in order to receive Holy Communion.

1. Follow the directions of the Presider and/or ushers who will guide you and help facilitate the flow of traffic.
2. Wear your mask. Maintain 6ft. of distance between yourself and others who are not in your household.
3. When approached by the Presider, simply stretch out your hands to receive the consecrated bread.
4. **Do not remove your mask in the presence of the Presider. Rather, you will receive the consecrated bread in your hands and take it back to your seat.**
5. At the appointed time, the Presider may direct the removal of masks for Communion as the entire Assembly will consume the consecrated bread together.
6. After you have received the consecrated bread, quickly place your mask back on.
7. If you wish to participate in this service but would not like to receive Communion, you may come forward for a blessing. You will indicate this by crossing your arms across your chest and with hand stretched over you. Without physically touching you, the Presider will extend his hand over you and offer you a blessing.
8. Continue to wear your mask and maintain 6ft. of distance between yourself and others for the duration of the service and your time on campus.

Thank you for being a part of our assembly.

Please take this service bulletin home with you.
If you would rather it be recycled, then simply leave it on your seat upon exiting.