

The First Sunday after Christmas

December 31, 2023 8:45am



Welcome Guests and Visitors! We are glad you are here. If you are new to St. Thomas, stop by the Reception Desk in the lobby and identify yourself to our clergy and people so we may properly welcome you. You may also fill out an "I'm New" card located on the backs of the chairs in the church. If you need assistance with the order of service, feel free to ask the person next to you.

Auditory Assistance is available – ask an usher or a greeter about obtaining a hearing device.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Prelude

At the sound of the bells, all stand for the Entrance of the Ministers into the church.

Opening Hymn

Go Tell it on the Mountain

John W. Work, Jr.

Chorus:

***Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere
Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born***

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo above the earth
Rang out the angel chorus that hailed the Savior's birth

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn

All standing, the Celebrant says

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People ***And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.***

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.**

Gloria

Angels We Have Heard on High

Praise Band: Verse 1 Congregation: Refrain

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Refrain: ***Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.***

The Collect

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.**

Children pre-school through 3rd grade will process to Children's Church.

The First Reading: *Isaiah 61:10-62:3*

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations. ^{62:1}For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch. ²The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give. ³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The word of the Lord.

Response ***Thanks be to God.***

The Psalm: *Psalms 147:13-21*

¹³***Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; ****

praise your God, O Zion;

¹⁴***For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; ****

he has blessed your children within you.

¹⁵***He has established peace on your borders; ****

he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁶***He sends out his command to the earth, ****

and his word runs very swiftly.

¹⁷***He gives snow like wool; ****

he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

¹⁸*He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
who can stand against his cold?*
¹⁹*He sends forth his word and melts them; *
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.*
²⁰*He declares his word to Jacob, *
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.*
²¹*He has not done so to any other nation; *
to them he has not revealed his judgments.*
Hallelujah!

The Second Reading: *Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7*

²³Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. ²⁴Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

^{4:4}But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. ⁶And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

The Word of the Lord.

Response Thanks be to God.

Gospel Hymn *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* (verse 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 host proclaim Christ is born in Bethlehem!*

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

Holy Gospel: John 1:1-18

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

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

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And 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. ¹⁵(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.'") ¹⁶From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.

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

Gospel Response Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (verse 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 a man with us to dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel!***

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

The Sermon

Nicene Creed

All stand.

***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

All remain standing. Deacon or other leader

In waiting on your return, we lift our prayers saying, **Hear our Prayer. . .**

The Priest closes the prayers with a Collect.

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept. Leader and People

***Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.***

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

The Peace

All stand.

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

*The children will return from
Children's Church.*

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

HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Music

While Shepherds Watched

Handel/Tate

*While shepherds watched their flocks by night all seated on the ground
The angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around. And glory shone around
Fear not said he for mighty dread had seized their troubled mind
Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and all mankind. To you and all mankind
To you in David's town this day is born of David's line
The Savior who is Christ the Lord and this shall be the sign. And this shall be the sign
The heavenly Babe you there shall find to human view displayed
All meantly wrapped in swathing bands and in a manger laid. And in a manger laid
Thus spake the seraph and forthwith appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God who thus addressed their joyful song. Addressed their joyful song
All glory be to God on high and to the earth be peace
Good will hence forth from heaven to men begin and never cease. Begin and never cease*

Offertory

Celebrant All things come of thee, O Lord.
People ***And of thine own have we given thee.***

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer B

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People ***And also with you.***
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People ***We lift them to the Lord.***
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People ***It is right to give him thanks and praise.***
Celebrant It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

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

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and
might, Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of power and might, hea - ven 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.

Celebrant We give thanks to you, O God . . .

. . . Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

***We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;***

And we offer our sacrifice and thanksgiving . . .

. . . By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

People and Celebrant

***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 Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

Fraction Anthem

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People ***Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.***

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him
n your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

COMMUNION INSTRUCTIONS

We invite everyone who has been baptized by water in any Christian tradition to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers.

If you have a wheat allergy, please tell one of the clergy administering communion and we will see that you receive a rice wafer instead.

Communion Music *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear*

Sears/ Willis

*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold
Peace on the earth good will to men from heaven's all gracious King
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing*

*Still thro' the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled
And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing
And ever o'er its Babel sounds, the blessed angels sing*

*And ye beneath life's crushing load whose forms are bending low
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow
Look now for glad and golden hours, come swiftly on the wing
O rest beside the weary road and hear the angels sing*

*For lo the days are hastening on by prophet bards foretold
When with the ever-circling years comes round the age of gold
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing*

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long
Beneath the angel strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong
And man at war with man hears not the love song which they bring
O hush the noise ye men of strife and hear the angels sing*

We Three Kings

John Henry Hopkins Jr

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain moor and mountain, following yonder star

Chorus:

*O star of wonder star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading still proceeding
Guide us to Thy perfect light*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain, gold I bring to crown Him again
King forever ceasing never, over us all to reign

Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a Deity nigh
Prayer and praising all men raising, worship Him God on high

Myrrh is mine its bitter perfume, breathes a life of gathering gloom
Sorrowing sighing bleeding dying, sealed in the stone cold tomb

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and sacrifice
Alleluia alleluia peals through the earth and skies

Sending Forth

When a Lay Eucharistic Visitor is to take the sacrament to those hospitalized, ill at home or home-bound, the following is said:

In the name of this congregation, go forth bearing these holy gifts; that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

*Congregation **We who are many are one body,
because we all share one bread; one cup. Amen.***

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant and People

***Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us
as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.***

Christmas Blessing

Closing Hymn

Good Christian Friends Rejoice

John Mason Neale

*Good Christian men rejoice with heart and soul and voice
Give ye heed to what we say, news news Jesus Christ is born today
Ox and ass before Him bow and He is in the manger now
Christ is born today. Christ is born today*

*Good Christian men rejoice with heart and soul and voice
Now ye hear of endless bliss, joy joy Jesus Christ was born for this
He has opened heaven's door and man is blessed evermore
Christ was born for this. Christ was born for this*

*Good Christian men rejoice with heart and soul and voice
Now ye need not fear the grave, peace peace Jesus Christ was born to save
Calls you one and calls you all to gain His everlasting hall
Christ was born to save. Christ was born to save*

Dismissal

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

Postlude

Auld Lang Syne

To request prayers, please fill out the "Pray" card located on the backs of the chairs. We invite you to list your specific concerns and leave them in the Prayer Request box at the back of the church, place them in the offering plate, or bring them to the church office. Prayers of the People are written weekly. Normally they are offered for three weeks, but any request may be resubmitted as needed.

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