

Holy Eucharist
Christmas Eve

Sunday, December 24, 2023— 8:00 p.m.



St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Los Gatos, California

Hark the Herald

Unless she was poor, the prettiest girl
always got to be Mary. Her mother
had to promise a new blue cape. There were
no other parts for girls, except the crowd
scene at the inn. And even Mary said
nothing, looked fragile, and was still.
I finally opted for the bright archangel,
conveniently sexless and with the longest speech.

Balanced on scaffold I sang hosannahs,
one of a shaky heavenly host.
Jostling through the scruffy straw the shepherds
giggled and were sore afraid, while Joseph—
who really doesn't matter much—cinched up
his faded bathrobe and sighed with impotence.

Wobbling forward under precarious
crowns the kings of heavenly wisdom gazed
on the clever cardboard trough that held a
low-watt bulb, which lighted up us Gentiles.
With empty shoe box wrapped in foil, a tall
contrivance that once held spray cologne, and
someone's grandma's sewing box the infant
was presented his predestined treasures.
I thought the gifts peculiar even then.

Down from my laddered perch I peered at what
I never dreamed was tragedy. Drama
rarely invades our innocence. And yet
what I looked on was the entire plot:
Birth, family, Shepherd King, Message from God,
the bitter Myrrh. There is no other play.

Nayan McNeill (1968)

The Holy Eucharist

Preludes

Pastoral Symphony from Messiah

G.F. Handel

O Holy Night

Adolphe Adam

Anthem

*Introit: Hodie,
Christus Natus Est*

Benjamin Britten

Hodie Christus Natus est.

Today Christ is born.

Hodie salvador apparuit.

Today the Savior has appeared.

*Hodie in terra canunt angeli
laetantur archangeli*

Today the angels sing,
the archangels rejoice.

Hodie exultant just dinettes

Today the righteous rejoice, saying,

Gloria in excelsis Deo, Alleluia

Glory to God in the highest.

Opening Hymn 83

“O come, all ye faithful”



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,
 *4 See how the shep - herds, sum - moned to his cra - dle,
 *5 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,



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;
 4 leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
 5 we would em - brace thee, with love and awe;



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;
 4 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;
 5 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?

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

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant 
Bless - ed be God: Father, Son, and Ho - ly Spi - rit.

People 
And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ev - er. A - men.

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.**

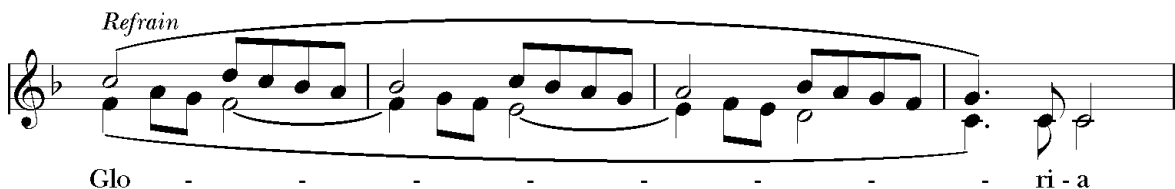
Hymn 96 (Gloria)



1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why these songs of hap - py cheer?
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.
What great bright - ness did you see? What glad tid - ings did you hear?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -
 - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

The Collect for Christmas Eve

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Celebrant Let us pray.

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 First Lesson

Isaiah 9:2–7

A Reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

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 The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 96

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song; *
 sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; *
 proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations *
 and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; *
 he is more to be feared than all gods.

- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; *
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.
- 6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! *
Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
- 7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; *
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.
- 8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; *
let the whole earth tremble before him.
- 10 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.”
- 11 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.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
before the Lord when he comes, *
when he comes to judge the earth.
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness *
and the peoples with his truth.

The Second Lesson

Titus 2:11–14

A Reading from the Letter to Titus.

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.

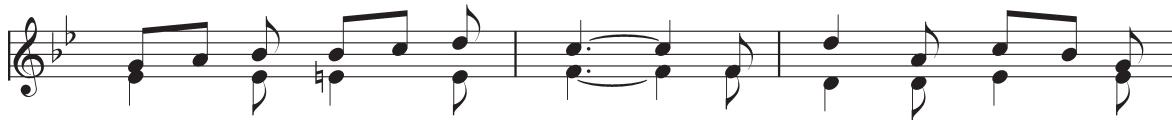
Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Hymn 89

"It came upon a midnight clear"



1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
 2 Still through the clov - en skies they come with
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the
 4 For lo! the days are haste - ning on, by



glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing
 peace - ful wings un - furled, and still their heaven - ly
 world has suf - fered long; be - neath the heaven - ly
 pro - phets seen of old, when with the ev - er -



near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
 hymn have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;
 cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they
 and war - ring hu - man - kind hears not the
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its



heaven's all - gra - cious King." The world in sol - emn
 bend on hov - ering wing, and ev - er o'er its
 tid - ings which they bring; O hush the noise and
 an - cient splen - dors fling, and all the world give



still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
Ba - bel - sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
cease your strife and hear the an - gels sing!
back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Words: Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876), alt. Music: *Carol*, Richard Storrs Willis (1819-1900).

The Holy Gospel

Luke 2:1–20

Clergy The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

People **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.

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

The Sermon

The Rev. Ricardo Avila

The Nicene Creed

Said by all

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:
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.

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, who with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified, who 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

Form VI

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

Silence

For all people in their daily life and work;
For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;
For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;
For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;
For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;
For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael, our Presiding Bishop, Lucinda, our Bishop,
and for all bishops and other ministers;
For all who serve God in God's Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation, hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life, and we will exalt you,
O God our King;
And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

Silence.

The People may add their own petitions.

The Celebrant concludes with a suitable Collect.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Welcome and Announcements

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem

How Great Our Joy

Craig Courtney

While by the sheep we watched at night
Glad tidings brought an angel bright.
How great our joy!

There shall be born so he did say
in Bethlehem a child today.
How great our joy!

There shall a child lie in a stall.
This child who shall redeem us all.
This gift of God we'll cherish well.
That ever joy our hearts shall fill.
Praise we the Lord.
How great our joy!

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

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

S 130

Celebrant and People

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.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ 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."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,
We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;

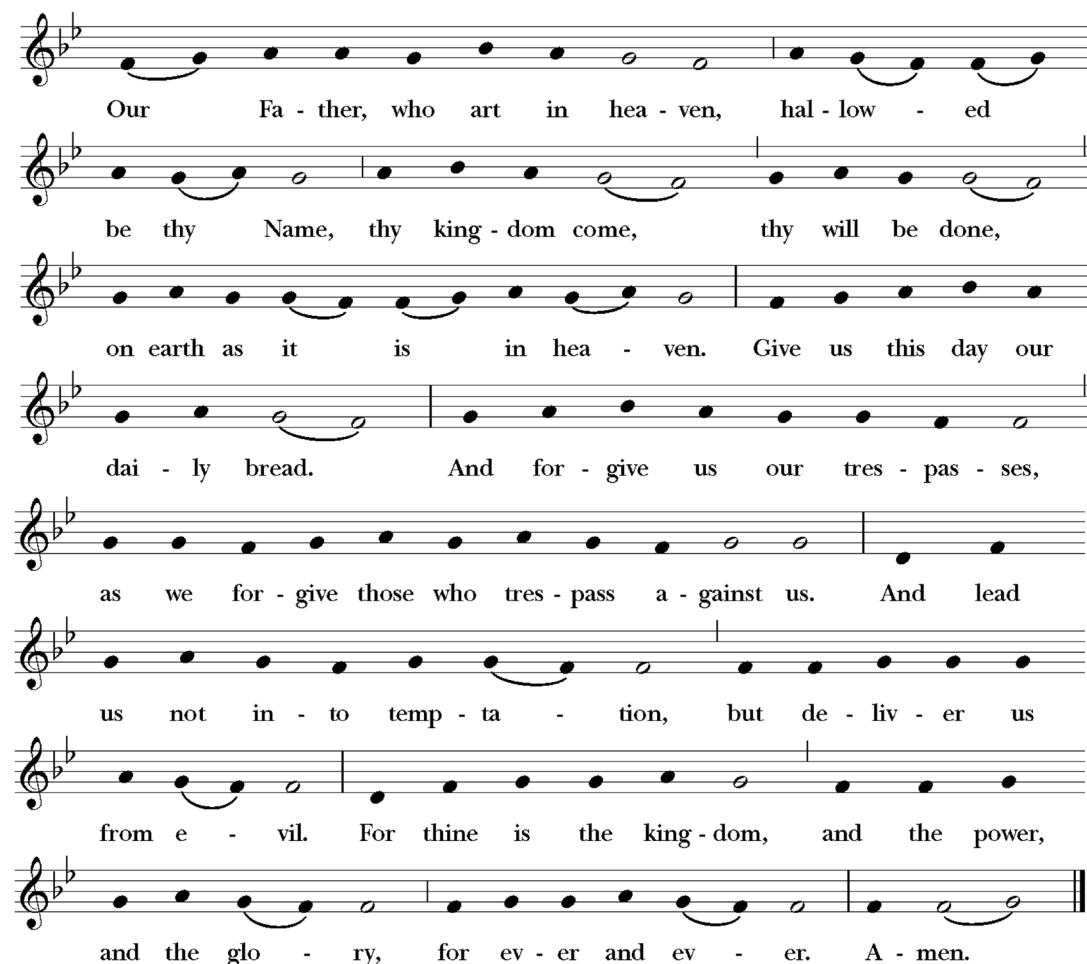
And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with the blessed Virgin Mary, blessed Joseph, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray,



Our Fa - ther, who art in hea - ven, hal - low - ed
be thy Name, thy king - dom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in hea - ven. Give us this day our
dai - ly bread. And for - give us our tres - pas - ses,
as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us. And lead
us not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us
from e - vil. For thine is the king - dom, and the power,
and the glo - ry, for ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

The Breaking of the Bread

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.

Communion Hymn 101

“Away in a manger”



1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
* 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
but lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing he makes.
close by me for ev - er, and love me I pray.



The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,



the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is night.
and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

Communion Hymn 112

“In the bleak midwinter”



1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
 4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?



earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
 cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim thron - ed the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;



snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow — on — snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf - ficed
 but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
 if I were a wise — man, I would do my part;



in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord — God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 wor - shipped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Music: *Cranham*, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

Communion Hymn 111

“Silent night, holy night”



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.

Post-Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

Said by all

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.

A 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.**

Closing Hymn 100

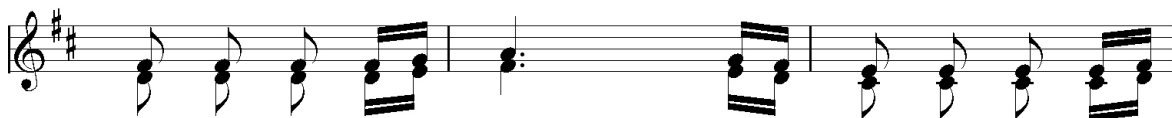
“Joy to the world!”



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



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.

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt. Music: *Antioch*, George Frideric Handel (1685-1759); adapt. and arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

The Dismissal

The Celebrant dismisses the people, and they respond

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Sussex Carol

Trad. English Carol



Servers—December 24, 2023

Celebrant/Preacher	The Rev. Ricardo Avila
Lay Assistant	Roger Fleming
Thurifer	Warren Hackbarth
Acolyte	William Bonnell
Torch Bearers	Pablo Alvarez and Camila Nava
Lectors	Kirk Young & Ron Victor
Organ	Laura Green
Violinist	Ashaan Ayer
Flutist	Allison Green
Singers	St. Luke's Choir
Live-streaming Director	Art Feather
Ushers	Jim Graham & Ron Victor
Altar Guild	Carol Graham & Gigi Fait



Cover: *Nativity (Adoration of the Shepherds)*
by Antonio da Correggio (1489–1534) b. Italy

*St. Luke's Episcopal Church is a place of peace, beauty,
and relationship that reflects God's saving presence
through our rich Tradition, our intellectual curiosity,
and our work in the wider community.*

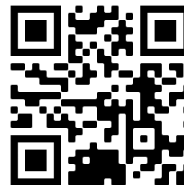
Saint Luke's Clergy & Staff

Rector	The Rev. Ricardo Avila revrico@stlukeslg.org
Assisting Clergy	The Rev. Ernest Cockrell The Rev. R. Clark Emerson The Rev. Nayan McNeill, Ph.D. The Very Rev. William S. Stafford, Ph.D.
Music Director	Ms. Laura Green lauragreen@stlukeslg.org
Parish Administrator	Mr. Michael King office@stlukeslg.org
Treasurer	Mr. Art Feather afeather@stlukeslg.org
Altar Guild Coordinator	Ms. Carol Graham
Outreach/Pantry Director	Ms. Jo Greiner
Rector Emeritus	The Rev. David R. Breuer

Saint Luke's Vestry • vestry@stlukeslg.org

Toni Dick (Senior Warden)	Grady Jeter
Genevieve Cleveland (Junior Warden)	Jane Ogle
Glenn Katz (Clerk)	Martha Sterne
Kelly Conway	Colin Whitby-Stevens
John Culwell	

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