



ST. THOMAS'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

Service of Holy Eucharist

December 24, 2023

5 P.M.

Welcome! Merry Christmas!

Wherever you happen to be on your spiritual journey, **there is a place for you here**, and we invite you to participate as fully as you wish. There is a saying in the Episcopal tradition that answers many a question: “All *may*, some *do*, but none *must*.” We gather to feast on Word and sacrament and song, to learn and inquire, to enjoy relaxed fellowship and find mutual support. And we are sent out to be the Body of Christ in the world, to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.

To participate in worship today all you need is this bulletin. If you are new or visiting, we invite you to consider filling out a **blue information card** (located in the pew rack). You can use it to request a **nametag**, which will be waiting for you on the table inside the main entrance.

All church spaces are accessible. Handicapped parking and a wheelchair ramp are located in back of the building; a lift for access to the second floor is located at the stairway.

Restrooms are located on the second floor. Go through the double doors near the pulpit, upstairs to the second floor, and to the far end of the hallway. A **gender-neutral restroom with baby changing table** is in the Vesting Room, located opposite the double doors near the pulpit.

Three seating areas at the front of the nave are reserved for **families with small children**: the area under the array of paper cranes (for children age 3 and under), and the two areas in front of the front pews (for children age 10 and under). For safety, every child should be accompanied by a caregiver.

Wireless access in the Sanctuary is accessible by connecting to wireless network STEC – Guest. Your device will open a web browser and the St. Thomas’s website. Bulletins are posted in the website’s Bulletin Archive. To reduce printing, we encourage worshippers to use their smart devices to follow the service.

St. Thomas’s Church is located on Eansketambawg (Quinnipiac) land. This acknowledgment compels us to pause: in gratitude for the Quinnipiac and other Algonquin-speaking stewards of the territory that is now Connecticut; in regret for Christianity’s participation in the colonization of the Americas; and in faith that God’s reconciling power will bring true healing to the Earth and all its inhabitants.

MUSICAL PRELUDE

In Dulci Jubilo
Gésu Bambino
Chorale Prelude on “Es ist ein’ Ros’ entsprungen”

arr. Ian Higginson (b. 1959)
Pietro A. Yon (1886-1943)
Johannes Brahms (1833-1897)

INTROIT *(Sung by the Schola)*

There is a flower

There is a flow’r sprung of a tree,
The root therof is callèd Jesse,
A flow’r of price;
There is none such in paradise.

This flow’r is fair and fresh of hue,
It fadeth never, but ever is new;
The blessed branch this flow’r on grew
Was Mary mild that bare Jesu;
A flow’r of grace;
Against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed hereof was Goddes sand,
That God himself sowed with his hand,
In Nazareth that holy land,
Amidst her arbour a maiden found;
This blessed flow’r
Sprang never but in Mary’s bower.

When Gabriel this maid did meet,
With ‘Ave Maria’ he did her greet;
Between them two this flow’r was set
And safe was kept, no man should wit,
Till on a day
In Bethlem it could spread and spray.

When that fair flow’r began to spread
And his sweet blossom began to bed,
Then rich and poor of ev’ry land
They marvelled how this flow’r might spread,
Till kinges three
That blessed flower came to see.

[Alleluia.]

Angels there came from heaven’s tower
To look upon this freshele flow’r,
How fair he was in his colour
And how sweet in his savour;
And to behold
How such a flow’r might spring in gold.

There is a flow’r sprung of a tree,
The root thereof is callèd Jesse,
A flow’r of price;
There is none such in paradise.

Words: John Audelay (15th cent.) Music: John Rutter (b. 1948)

At the ringing of the bell, please stand.

HYMN

O come, all ye faithful (83, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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

Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802-1880) and others. Music: *Adeste fideles*, present form of melody att. John Francis Wade (1711-1786); harm. The *English Hymnal*, 1906.

OPENING ACCLAMATION

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

People: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

The presider says the following while the Advent and Christmas candles are lit.

Glory to you, Giver of all good gifts! We offer you glad thanks and praise for every blessing from your love, and especially for the best gift of yourself in the child Jesus. **Amen.**

The Presider says the following as the Baby Jesus is added to the Creche

Holy One, you have entered our dangerous world as a baby, entrusted to the care of human arms and hearts; you call us to walk your way of vulnerability and tenderness, with firm resolve, by the grace of your indwelling Spirit. Lead us to serve and protect all your beloved children, with thankfulness and courage, in the name of your child Jesus, our Redeemer. **Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE

Hark! the herald angels sing (87, *The Hymnal 1982*)

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the e - ver - last - ing Lord;
3. Hail, the heaven - born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness!

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners re - con - ciled!
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
Light and lift to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty.
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an - gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!
 Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Refrain

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt.;
 Music: *Mendelssohn*, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: 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.**

All are seated.

THE FIRST LESSON

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: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

PSALM 96 (*Sung by the Choir*)

David Hurd

- 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

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.**

All stand.

HYMN

Of the Father's love begotten (82, *The Hymnal 1982*)

Please note: this hymn will be performed in equal note values.



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten, ere the worlds be -
2 O that birth for ev - er bless - ed, when the Vir - gin,
3 Let the heights of heaven a - dore him; an - gel hosts, his
4 Christ, to thee with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
prais - es sing; powers, do - min - ions, bow be - fore him,
Ghost, to thee, hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing,



he the source, the end - ing he, of the things that
bore the Sa - vior of our race; and the Babe, the
and ex - tol our God and King; let no tongue on
and un - wea - ried prais - es be; hon - or, glo - ry

are, that have been, and that fu - ture
world's Re - deem - er, first re - vealed his
earth be si - lent, ev - ery voice in
and do - min - ion, and e - ter - nal

years shall see, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
sa - cred face, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
con - cert ring, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!
vic - to - ry, ev - er - more and ev - er - more!

This hymn may be performed in equal note values: ♪♪♪♪

Words: Marcus Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348-410?); tr. John Mason Neale (1818-1866) and Henry Williams Baker (1821-1877), alt. Music: *Divinum mysterium*, Sanctus trope, 11th cent.; adapt. *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; acc. Bruce Neswick (b. 1956).

THE GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1-20

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

People: **Gloria 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.

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

All are seated.

THE SERMON

After the sermon, all remain seated for a period of silence. Then all stand.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Presider

In the stillness of this holy season of Christmas, let us pray to God, saying, “God of love, hear our prayer.”

Intercessor and People

Christians around the world are celebrating the birth of your Son, Jesus. Unite us in faith, that we may shine with one light, and scatter all darkness. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

You pierced the cosmic silence with the utterance of your Word made flesh. Inspire leaders everywhere with your message of compassion and reconciliation. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

By joining heaven and earth in your Son, you affirmed the holiness of our earthly habitation. Encourage all people to bless it, and to keep it a hallowed home for all its occupants. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

The Messiah is born, and promise is born anew. Renew our hope, individually and as a community, and strengthen the bonds we share with others, both within and beyond these walls. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Shepherds heard and conveyed your angel’s good news of great joy. Give us grace to understand and share your gospel of love. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Multitudes of heavenly host proclaimed glory to you and peace on earth. Kindle in our hearts the courage and strength to work for justice and liberation. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Jesus came to us as a baby cradled in a borrowed bed of straw. Open our eyes and hearts to the needs of those who lack food or shelter. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

You sent Jesus to illuminate all who dwell in the shadow of death. Tend the embers of comfort and healing for all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

By making Jesus incarnate in the world, you offered to all people the blessing of holiness. Lend your glory to those who have died, and at the last day gather us all in your eternal life. God of love, **hear our prayer.**

Hear the concerns and gratitude of your people here gathered, offered silently or aloud.
[You are invited to offer your prayer intentions.]

Presider

God of love, the feast of Christmas reminds us that you are with us at all times and in all places; hear our prayer, and send your Holy Spirit to guide us more certainly upon the way of your Holy Child, Jesus the Christ. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

*Please remain in place while greeting your neighbors with a sign of peace. You may then be seated for brief announcements and the **Offertory Anthem**, during which the altar is prepared.*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Your ongoing financial support of St. Thomas's Church is sincerely appreciated. We will not be passing a collection plate today; collection plates are located at the doors. To give online with a debit or credit card, go to the Home page of the Church website (www.stthomasnewhaven.org), and click GIVE NOW. If you are viewing this document electronically, you may simply [CLICK HERE](#). Thank you!

OFFERTORY SENTENCE

OFFERTORY ANTHEM (*Sung by the Choir*)

The Sussex Carol

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring.
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before his grace
Then life and health come in its place.
Angels and all with joy may sing
All for to see the new born King.

Then why should we on earth be so sad
Since our Redeemer made us glad?
When from our sin he set us free
All for to gain our liberty?

All out of darkness we have light
Which made the angels sing this night.
Glory to God and peace to men
Now and for evermore. Amen!

Words: Anonymous, possibly 17th century Music: David Willcocks (1919–2015)

*During the singing of the **Offertory Hymn**, the Presider sets the table, and the People come forward to encircle the altar for the Eucharistic prayer. You are encouraged to position children where they can see. Standing time is approximately 15 minutes. If this is difficult for you, please feel free to sit in a chair near the altar or in the front row of pews. You may also remain where you are.*

OFFERTORY HYMN

God rest you merry, gentlemen, (105, *The Hymnal 1982*)



1 God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, let noth - ing you dis - may;
 2 From God our heav - en - 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.



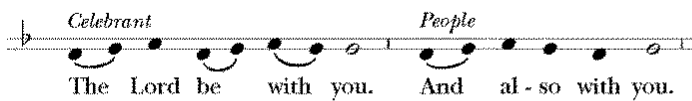
Refrain
 O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and



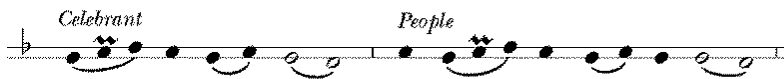
joy; O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

Words: London carol, 18th cent. 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.

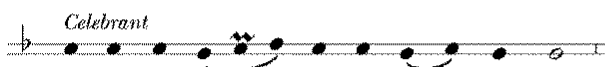
THE HOLY COMMUNION
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B



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.

Presider

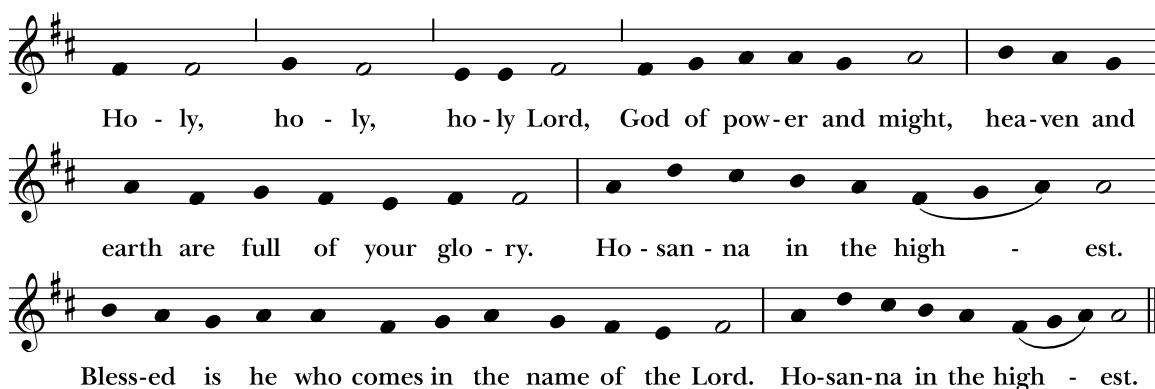
It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

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 124, *The Hymnal 1982*



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. 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.

Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

Presider

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,

Presider and People

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

Presider

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 Thomas and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of all your children; 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 forever. **AMEN.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

You are invited to say the Lord's Prayer in the language of your choice.

**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. A period of silence is kept.

Presider: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

Presider: The Gifts of God for the People of God.

All are invited to receive Holy Communion at God's table in this church. Baptism is not required; church membership is not required. For the distribution of communion, the priest will come to you. Extend your hands, and the priest will place the bread in them. To receive a blessing instead of communion, cross your arms over your chest.

COMMUNION ANTHEM (*Sung by the Schola*)

Praeter rerum seriem

Praeter rerum seriem
 Parit Deum et hominem
 Virgo mater.
 Nec vir tangit virginem,
 Nec prolis originem
 Novit pater.

Beyond the normal chain of events
 the Virgin Mother
 gives birth to God and to a man.
 No man touches the Virgin,
 nor does the father know
 the origin of his offspring.

Virtus sancti spiritus
 Opus illud caelitus
 Operatur.
 Initus et exitus
 Partus tui penitus
 Quis scrutatur?

The power of the Holy Spirit
 achieves from Heaven
 this miracle.
 Who examines deeply
 the ins and outs
 of your giving birth?

Dei providentia
 Haec disponit omnia
 Tam suave,
 Et pios caelestia
 Transfert in palatia.
 Puer ave.

It is the providence of God
 which arranges all these things
 so delightfully,
 and transports the devout
 into the palaces of heaven.
 Hail, Child!

Words: Anonymous (Latin hymn), adapted Calvisius Music: Sethus Calvisius (1556-1615), 1603

COMMUNION ANTHEM (*Sung by the Choir*)

In the bleak mid-winter

In the bleak mid-winter
 Frosty wind made moan;
 Earth stood hard as iron,
 Water like a stone;
 Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
 Snow on snow,
 In the bleak mid-winter
 Long ago.
 Our God, heaven cannot hold Him
 Nor earth sustain;
 Heaven and earth shall flee away
 When He comes to reign:
 In the bleak mid-winter
 A stable-place sufficed
 The Lord God Almighty—
 Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him whom Cherubim
 Worship night and day,
 A breastful of milk
 And a mangerful of hay;
 Enough for Him whom angels
 Fall down before,
 The ox and ass and camel
 Which adore.
 What can I give him,
 Poor as I am?—
 If I were a Shepherd
 I would bring a lamb,
 If I were a Wise Man
 I would do my part,—
 Yet what I can I give him,—
 Give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830–1894), 1872 Music: Harold Darke (1888–1976), 1909

After everyone has received communion and the altar has been cleared, the servers will begin lighting the handheld candles. Please feel free to take the flame from an aisle torch and share it with your neighbors. When all handheld candles are lit, the electric lights will be dimmed, and the congregation will remain seated to sing “Silent night, holy night.”

POSTCOMMUNION HYMN

Silent night, holy night (111, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885). Music: *Stille Nacht*, melody Franz Xaver Gruber (1787-1863); harm. Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910).

All stand.

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Presider: Let us pray.

Presider and People

**Almighty and everliving 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.**

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.**

HYMN

Joy to the world! the Lord is come (100, *The Hymnal 1982*)

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

- 1 and heaven and na - ture sing, and
- 2 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
- 3 far as the curse is found, far
- 4 and won - ders of his love, and

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.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 as the curse is found,
 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).

DISMISSAL

Presider: *[The Presider dismisses the People.]*

People: **Thanks be to God.**

You may be seated for the voluntary or exit the church.

VOLUNTARY

Antioch: Carillon
 Mary Beth Bennett (b. 1954)

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Announcements

For all the latest news and information, see last week's edition of the Weekly Parish Enews. From the Parish website Home page (www.stthomasnewhaven.org), click Enews Archive for the latest edition or Enews (subscribe) to subscribe.



Christmas Offerings

Leslie Kearney in memory of Olga, Lester, Anna, Paul, and Josef

*James Mansfield in memory of Robert & Sharon Mansfield, Leo and Elenor Brunelle,
Kenneth & Caroline Mansfield, Roy Graham & Sally Lawson*

Chris & Roseanne Martinez

Dwight Miller

Gary Robison

Heartfelt gratitude to ...

*Denise Terry and the Children of the Parish,
for the Christmas Pageant and the joy you always set in our hearts*

*The St. Thomas's Choir,
for helping us to worship God through the beauty of music*

Soprano

*Morgen Campbell
Cora Hagens
Jennifer Herdt
Maggie Lieberman
Sherezade Panthaki
Alexandria Robison*

Alto

*Faith Brill
Nancy Campbell
Elijah McCormack
Heather Robison*

Tenor

*Sheldon Campbell
Gene Stenger*

Bass

*Benjamin Ferriby
Bob Herdt
Richard Rose*

Upcoming Worship Schedule. During our leadership transition, we will have a combination of lay-led worship and services led by supply clergy. Please join us!

December 24	10 AM, Advent IV Morning Prayer and Nativity Pageant with Jennifer Herdt presiding
December 24	5 PM, Eucharist with Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp preaching and presiding
December 31	Morning Prayer led by Sheldon Campbell (w/ sermon)
January 7	Feast of the Epiphany Eucharist with Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp preaching and presiding
January 14	Morning Prayer led by Alexandria Robison (w/ sermon)
January 21	Eucharist with Rev. Mo Peitler-Lederman preaching and presiding
January 28	Morning Prayer led by Sheldon Campbell (w/ sermon)
February 4	Eucharist with Rev. Mo Peitler-Lederman preaching and presiding

On **December 24, 10 AM**, Senior Warden Jennifer Herdt will be leading Morning Prayer. Jennifer has been a member of St. Thomas's since moving to the area in 2010, together with husband Jan Hagens and children Cora and Adam (now both college students). A longtime singer in the St. Thomas's choir and onetime Sunday School teacher, Jennifer is a member of the faculty at Yale Divinity School in the field of Christian Ethics. Jennifer earned her B.A. from Oberlin College and M.A. and Ph.D. from Princeton University. She has written books on sympathy, religion and faction, ethical formation, and virtue ethics. In her free time, Jennifer enjoys hiking, running, and cooking.

On **December 24, 5 PM Christmas Eve**, the Reverend Dr. Carolyn Sharp is with us as preacher and presider. A biblical scholar and professor of homiletics at Yale Divinity School, Carolyn has written commentaries on Joshua, Jeremiah 26–52, and Micah. Carolyn is interested in how preaching can deepen the formation of Christian community via biblically grounded theology, prophetic witness, feminist perspectives on power, and ecotheology. Carolyn is serving as St. Thomas's Preacher-in-Residence. She stands ready to offer resources to lay preachers in our congregation, and will gladly discuss Gospel proclamation (in and beyond the pulpit) with anyone who wishes at Coffee Hour.

On Sunday, **December 31**, Sheldon Campbell will be preaching and leading the congregation in Morning Prayer. Sheldon Campbell was born in Tulsa, and grew up in Kansas City and Houston. He has an M.D. and Ph.D. from Baylor College of Medicine, and is currently Associate Chief for Laboratory Medicine at VA Connecticut Healthcare, and Professor of Laboratory Medicine at Yale School of Medicine, specializing in diagnostic microbiology, and where he's also an award-winning teacher. He was a lifelong Methodist prior to coming to St. Thomas, so it would be wise to pay particular attention to his sermons in case he tries to slip in any heretical ideas.

Christmas Worship

December 24, 5 PM: Service of Holy Eucharist led by Preacher-in Residence The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp

December 25, Christmas Day: No service

The church office will be closed through Monday, January 1.

A new **Nativity Crèche** is on display at St. Thomas's on the children's altar. Sally Edwards and Denise Terry had several conversations with Rev. Keri Aubert about finding a new set portraying Baby Jesus in the manger. They had looked at some possible choices, but did not make a final selection. This fall Denise worked with parish administrator Julie Kelly to obtain this crèche in memory of Sally and in honor of Keri.

Interested in joining St. Thomas's Choir?

The St. Thomas's Choir sings for Sunday morning and special liturgies during the program year, offering anthems, canticles and psalms. The choir includes volunteers and professional section leaders. Its repertoire is drawn from the rich tradition of Anglican choral music, spanning many centuries.

The St. Thomas's Choir rehearses on Sundays at 9 a.m. and from 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m., from September to June. New members are always welcome; an ability to read music and prior choral experience is desirable.

Contact Linda Meyer at lindarossmeyer@gmail.com

Donating Clothing for Loaves and Fishes. Our support for the clothing ministry is ongoing. Please be thoughtful in your selection of items. Current specific requests include: men's/women's jeans; men's short-sleeved shirts, sweaters, jackets, shoes, new socks; spring and summer clothing. Bring donations to St. Thomas's (leave them in the tub at the Whitney Ave. entrance) or to Loaves and Fishes (Thurs-Sat, 9-11 a.m., in the driveway at 57 Olive St.).

Coffee Hour Hosting Sign-Up Link. You are invited to consider hosting coffee hour at St. Thomas's following Sunday worship. Would you like to contribute to St. Thomas's coffee hour, but don't know how to operate the coffee maker? Do you have a treat from your kitchen or favorite neighborhood bakery that you would love to share, but you are not sure that you can manage a whole coffee hour? Sign up to be a coffee hour helper! It's easy: look at the signup sheet (electronic or paper) and sign up as a "Helper." Contact the coffee hour host to discuss what you can bring and how you can help out. Then, discover how fun it is to help make fellowship happen! Visit this link to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0F4AACAD2CABFE3-coffee> and add your contact info in the comment box. You may also access the Parish Directory on our homepage, www.stthomasnewhaven.org for contact information. [Julie Kelly](#) in the Parish Office can provide the directory password. Thank you for contributing to our time of fellowship!



Serving Today

Presider & Preacher: The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp

Music Director: Matthew Cramer

Organist: Noah Klein

Eucharistic Minister:

Lector:

Intercessor: Max Ballardo

Sacristan:

Ushers: Gary Robison

Vestry Host:

Leadership at St. Thomas's

Preacher-in-Residence

The Rev. Dr. Carolyn Sharp

Church Vestry

Jennifer Herdt (Senior Warden)

Linda Meyer (Junior Warden)

Bill English (Treasurer)

Denise Terry (Clerk)

Madeleine Anderson

Max Ballardo

Claire Scully

This Week's Prayer Intentions

Pray for those in any need or trouble, especially: the people of Russia and the people of Ukraine; the people of Gaza and the people of Israel; all who are afflicted by war and natural disaster

Pray for those who have died.

In the Episcopal Church in Connecticut Cycle of Prayer, pray for: St. Luke/St. Paul, Bridgeport; St. John's, Bridgeport; St. Mark's, Bridgeport; For the children of the world, the Bishops' Fund for Children, and all ECCT ministries for children at risk

In the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, pray for: The Episcopal Church in the Philippines

In the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, pray for: Japan, North Korea, South Korea

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