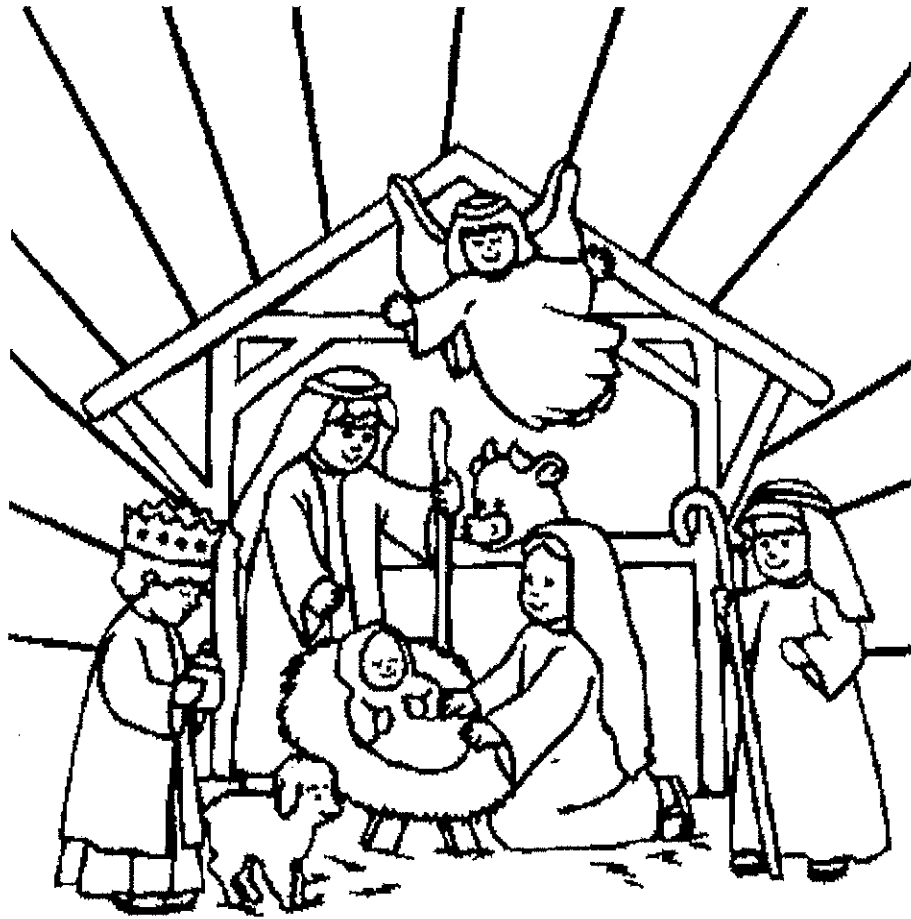


Christmas Eve Service
December 24, 2023
4:00 PM



St. Nicholas Episcopal Church
15575 Germantown Rd
Germantown, MD 20874
www.saintnicks.com

We Gather Together

Prelude

The First Nowell

Traditional English carol

Arr. Craig Curry

Away In the Manger

James R. Murray & J.E. Spilman

Arr. Fred Bock

Lighting the Advent Wreath and the Christ Candle

Song of Praise "O come, all ye faithful"

O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him,
born the King of angels;

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God,
glory in the highest;

Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Opening Sentences

Alleluia! To us a child is born.

Come let us adore him. Alleluia!

Welcome to all in the name of Christ.

God's grace, mercy and peace be with you

And also with you.

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.

We Tell God's Story

First Reading

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96

We will say it antiphonally

Adults: Sing a new song to the Lord!

Everyone on this earth sing praises to the Lord. Sing and praise his name.

Children: Sing to the Lord a new song!

Adults: Day after day announce, "The Lord has saved us!" Tell every nation on earth, "The Lord is wonderful and does marvelous things!"

Children: Sing to the Lord a new song!

Adults: Tell the heavens and the earth to be glad and celebrate! Command the ocean to roar with all of its creatures and the fields to rejoice with all of their crops.

Children: Sing to the Lord a new song!

Adults: Then every tree in the forest will sing joyful songs to the Lord. He is coming to judge all people on earth with fairness and truth.

Children: Sing to the Lord a new song!

The Gospel procession "What Child is This"

1. What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom Angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and Angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

2. Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

The Gospel

Luke 2:1-14

The Holy Gospel of...

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!"

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Christ.

The Homily

The Prayers

The Leaders and People pray responsively

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

God of the prophets, give your church courage to speak truth, and to tell of your love.

God of the prophets, hear us and help us!

God of the angels, give your church voice to sing your presence into the world. Give the world a freedom song, and help us to speak peace throughout the earth.

God of the angels, hear us and help us!

God of Mary and Elizabeth, give your church grace to be pregnant with hope and to bring forth new life for a barren world.

God of our mothers, hear us and help us!

God of Zechariah and Joseph, give your church dreams and visions, and the courage to follow them.

God of our fathers, hear us and help us!

God of the shepherds, give your church humility, and give to all who sit in darkness, alone and afraid, a light from heaven proclaiming peace.

God of the shepherds, hear us and help us!

God of the magi, give your church gifts, and the will to leave home to find you amongst the poor.

God of the magi, hear us and help us!

God of the Holy Innocents, give your church power to stand against violence and to protect the powerless.

God of the victim, hear us and help us!

God our Sovereign, you are always coming into the world. Come to us now, soon, and forever, and let us receive you as the Child of holiness and the Wind of change, through whom, this night, we pray.

AMEN.

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

We Share the Body and Blood of Christ

*All who love God
and who seek a deeper relationship with Christ
are welcome at Christ's table.*

Offering Anthem "Go Tell it on the Mountain"

The Clergy sets the table with Gifts of Bread and Wine.

Afro-American spiritual, 19th Century

Refrain: Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere,
Go tell it on the mountain, our Heav'nly Lord 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 our Savior's birth.

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

Sursum Corda

standing

Lift up your hearts

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks
to the Lord our God

**It is right to give
our thanks and praise.**

Almighty God, good Father to us all, your face is turned towards your world. In love you gave us Jesus your Son to rescue us from sin and death. Your Word goes out to call us home to the city where angels sing your praise. We join with them in heaven's song:

Sanctus

Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest, Blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Father of all, we give you thanks for every gift that comes from heaven.

To the darkness Jesus came as your light. With signs of faith and words of hope he touched untouchables with love and washed the guilty clean.

This is his story.

This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.

The crowds came out to see your Son, yet at the end they turned on him.

On the night he was betrayed he came to table with his friends to celebrate the freedom of your people.

This is his story.

This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.

Jesus blessed you, Father, for the food; he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said:
This is my body, given for you all. Do this in remembrance of me.

This is our story.

This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.

Jesus then gave thanks for the wine; he took the cup, gave it and said:
This is my blood, shed for you all for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

This is our story.

This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.

Therefore, Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate the cross on which he died to set us free. Defying death he rose again and is alive with you to plead for us and all the world.

This is our story.

This is our song: Hosanna in the highest.

Send your Spirit on us now that by these gifts we may feed on Christ with opened eyes and hearts on fire. May we and all who share this food offer ourselves to live for you and be welcomed at your feast in heaven where all creation worships you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit:

Blessing and honor and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. AMEN.

The Lord's Prayer

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

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 Fraction *The bread is broken in silence and then we sing together:*

**King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth he stood
Lord of lords in human vesture,
in the body and the blood.
He will give to all the faithful
his own self for heavenly food.**

The Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God. All who love God and seek a deeper relationship with Christ are welcome at Christ's table.

The Communion

Approach by center aisle at direction of the ushers. Take a paper cup if you wish to receive the Blood of Christ. Return by the side aisle. Used paper cups should be put in the bowl behind the Baptismal font for composting.

THE PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

Beloved Jesus, we believe that you are present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. We love you above all things, and desire to receive you into our souls. Since we cannot at this moment receive you in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, come spiritually into our hearts. We embrace you and unite ourselves entirely to you. Let us never be separated from you in this life or in the life to come. Amen.

Post Communion Prayer

Welcome, welcome, Jesus Christ our infant savior, baby who makes every birth holy. May we, who like the shepherds have witnessed in the stable a new kind of love, return to our work with joy. May we, for whom the heavens have opened to proclaim that God is with us, we who have fed on living bread and drunk the wine of heaven, go out to be instruments of your peace, day by day. AMEN.



Silent Night - Vs. 1 & 3

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

We Take Christ to the World

Blessing

May the trust of Mary be yours tonight. May the faithfulness of Joseph be yours tonight. May the peace of the Christ Child be yours tonight. May the peace above all peace be yours tonight. And the Blessing of the God, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit be with you on this blessed night and always.

AMEN.

Closing Carol - Joy to the world - Vs. 1, 2 & 3

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

The Dismissal of the Community

Let us go forth in the name of Christ, Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!



Do You Hear What I Hear?

Said the night wind to the little lamb
Do you see what I see?
(Do you see what I see?)
Way up in the sky, little lamb
Do you see what I see?
(Do you see what I see?)
A star, a star, dancing in the night
With a tail as big as a kite
With a tail as big as a kite

Said the little lamb to the shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear?
(Do you hear what I hear?)
Ringing through the sky, shepherd boy
Do you hear what I hear?
(Do you hear what I hear?)

A song, a song high above the trees
With a voice as big as the sea
With a voice as big as the sea

Said the shepherd boy to the mighty king
Do you know what I know? (Do you know what I know?)
In your palace warm, mighty king
Do you know what I know? (Do you know what I know?)

A Child, a Child shivers in the cold
Let us bring him silver and gold
Let us bring him silver and gold

Said the king to the people everywhere
Listen to what I say! (Listen to what I say!)
Pray for peace, people, everywhere
Listen to what I say! (Listen to what I say!)
The Child, the Child sleeping in the night
He will bring us goodness and light
He will bring us goodness and light

Songwriters: Noel Regney / Gloria Shayne
Do You Hear What I Hear? lyrics © Regent Music Corp., Jewel Music Publishing Co.
Inc.