

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD

December 24, 2023

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, Oxford



**Christmas Blessings & Welcome to Good Shepherd Episcopal Church!
We're glad you are here! All are invited to receive Communion at Christ's
Table. The Worship service/Mass is projected on the screen (A/V). Our
Book of Common Prayer (BCP) contains all prayers & services. Hymns
are in the hymnal blue book (H).**

Christmas Choir from 3:45pm to 4:00pm

Processional Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" #83 (H), (v1-3)

Celebrant: Hear us, O Shepherd of Israel.

Christmas Eve Christ Candle Prayer:

Hope, peace, joy and love. Four candles. Tonight, we light The Christ Candle. In Christ we find the hope of transformation, the peace that follows justice, the joy of self-fulfillment in the love that encompasses us all. In Christ we find light and love. May we find the courage to follow Him. We rejoice in God's steadfast presence in our lives and in God's unique presence in the life of Jesus of Nazareth—born of Mary, growing through childhood into an adult ministry, in all his life manifesting the peace, love and justice of God; his voice undimmed by the centuries, his call and his promise as clear to us as it was to his disciples so long ago.

Response: Come to us, Lord Jesus. Be born in us this night, in our hearts, our minds, our lives. May the light of your life be kindled in us and lead us to the shining truth of God with us, God for us, God in us. Amen.

Collect for Purity: Celebrant: 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.**

The Gloria (SUNG)
(omit Kyrie)

Collect for Christmas Eve: p212 (BCP) : 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.**

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Old Testament

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.

The Psalm

Psalm 96

Cantate Domino

- 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 New Testament

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.

Sequence Hymn: “*While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night*”, (verses 1-2) #94 (H)

The Gospel

Luke 2:1-14(15-20)

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.

**Sequence Hymn: "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night",
(Verse 3 after Gospel) #94 (H)**

Sermon: The Reverend Julia Dunbar

The Nicene Creed: p358 (BCP)

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, Form VI p392-393 (BCP)

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 [N. our Presiding Bishop, and N. (N.) our
Bishop(s); and for] all bishops and other
ministers;
For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Hear us, Lord;
For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

Silence

The People may add their own thanksgivings

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.

Silence

The People may add their own petitions

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;
Who put their trust in you.

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.
Have mercy upon us, most
merciful Father; in your
compassion forgive us our
sins, known and unknown,
things done
and left
undone; and so
uphold us by
your Spirit
that we may live and serve you in
newness of life, to the honor and
glory of your Name;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

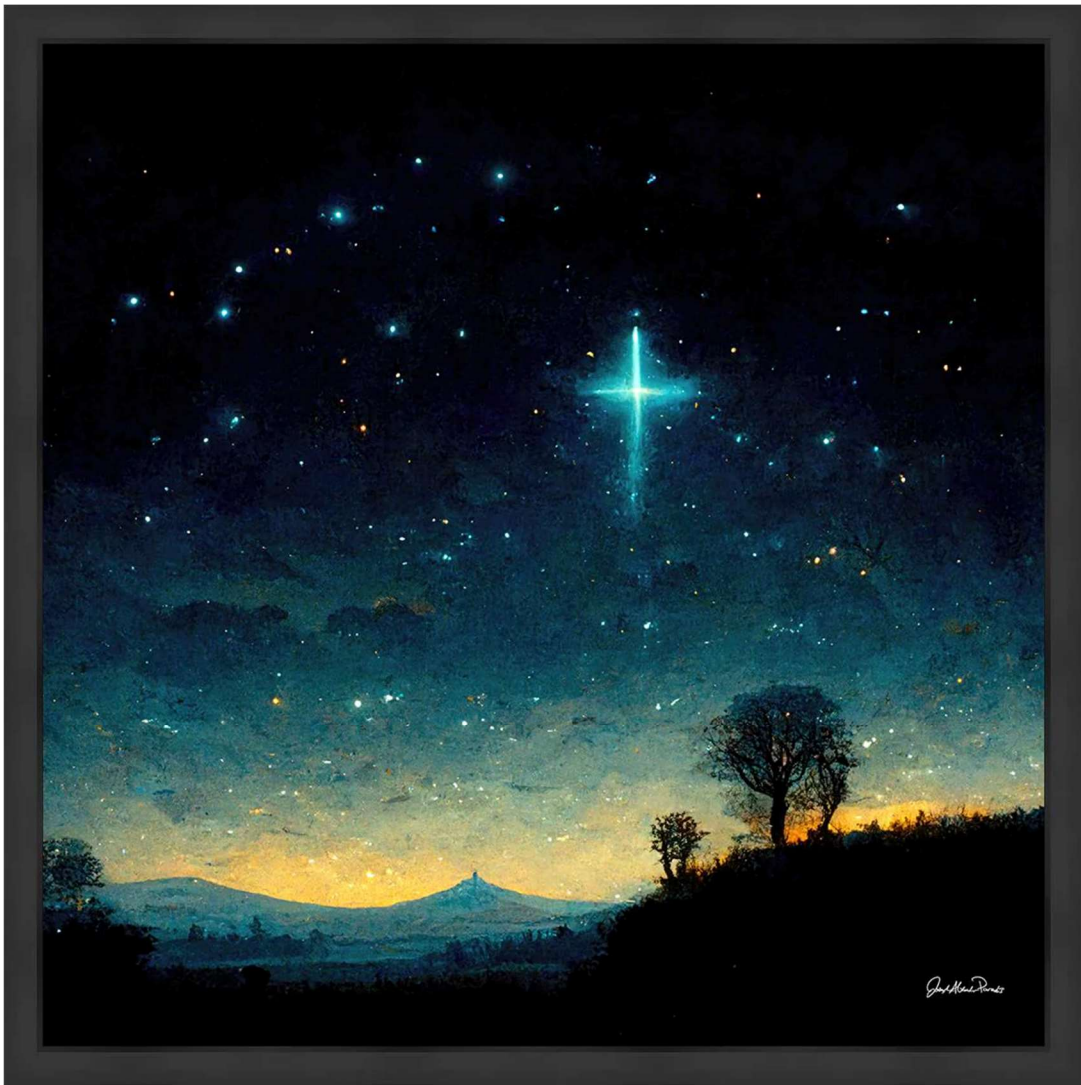
Celebrant: Blessing/Absolution

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you. **And also with you.**
Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Happy Birthday!!! December 29, Carol Uppgard



THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Sentence (Celebrant)

Offertory Hymn: #87 (H) "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" (v1-2)

Doxology: #380 (H) "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" (v3)

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer B **p367-369 (BCP)**

The people may stand, kneel or sit as needed.

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.

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

Celebrant and People

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

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

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,

Celebrant and People

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

The Celebrant continues

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 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.*

As our Savior Christ
has taught us,
we now pray,

The Lord's Prayer: page 364 (left side, spoken)

Breaking of the Bread: Celebrant: Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
People: Therefore let us keep the feast.

Fraction Anthem: S154 (H)

Distribution of Holy Communion: ALL ARE WELCOME TO RECEIVE AT
CHRIST'S TABLE

**Communion Hymn: "Jesu Bambino"Choir
(lights are slightly dimmed)
"Silent Night", #111 (H) (verses 1-3)**

Post Communion Prayer: page 365 (BCP)

Recessional Hymn: "Joy to the World", #100 (H), (v1,2,4)

DISMISSAL

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS



You have generously made donations for Christmas flowers given in memory of/thanksgiving for someone special. What a beautiful Christmas remembrance!
Thank you!!!

(The names are listed on the handout you received with your bulletin.)



Participating in Today's Service:

Russell Rheault, Maria Gurriere, Kathy Ossene (A/V Team), Blanche Gregoire (Greeter), Russell Rheault (Eucharistic Minister), John McLaughlin (Crucifer), VOLUNTEERS (Acolytes), Betty Blodgett (Lector), VESTRY & VOLUNTEERS (Counters), Carol Uppgard, Coffee Hour Coordinator

Good Shepherd Episcopal Church

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Email: office@gracechurchoxford.org

The Reverend Julia Dunbar, Priest (priest@gracechurchoxford.org)

The Reverend Audrey Cronin, Deacon

Music Ministry: Glynne Levesque

Vestry/Lay Leaders: Mimi Royston (Sr. Warden), Russell Rheault (*Jr. Warden*), Barbara Hanc (*Clerk*), Bob Torteson (*Treasurer*), George Krueger, Sharron Gillies, John McLaughlin & Carol Uppgard

Betty Blodgett, Newsletter Editor

Dale Gonyea, Office Administrator

Linda Starr, Director, Pre-school

