

**EVE OF THE NATIVITY
CHRISTMAS EVE
Service of Antecomunion
St. John's Episcopal Church
Ithaca, NY 14850
December 24, 2020 7 pm Year B
stjohnsithaca.org**

Hymns can be found at the end of the bulletin.

Prelude Carol of the Bells - arr. Mark Schweizer (1956-2019)
From heaven above to earth I come (*Vom Himmel hoch*), BWV 606- J. S. Bach (1685-1750)

Introit In the bleak midwinter Text by Christina Rossetti, Music by C. R. Thoburn. 1993

In the bleak midwinter, 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 midwinter, 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 midwinter a stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
But His mother Mary, in her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved with a kiss.

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.

Hymn: O Come, All ye Faithful (*Adeste Fidelis*)

Hymnal # 83, vs. 1-3, 6

Opening Acclamation

BCP 355

Hymn: Angels we have heard on high

Hymnal # 96, vs. 1, 2

Collect of the Day

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.*

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.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Anthem Torches, torches, run with torches!

John Joubert (1927-2019)

Torches, torches run with torches all the way to Bethlehem! Christ is born and now lies sleeping, come and sing your song to him! Ah, Ro-ro, ro-ro my baby, ah my love, ro-ro; sleep you well, my heart's own darling, while we sing you our ro-ro. Sing my friends and make you merry, joy and mirth and joy again; lo, he lives the King of heaven, now and evermore, amen!

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.

Epistle

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem *Sleep, Sweet Jesus, Sleep*

Bohemian Carol, arr. Crawford R. Thoburn, 1993.

Sleep, sweet Jesus, sleep, night falls cold and deep; through the sky the angels singing,
tidings of great joy are bringing. Night lies cold and deep: Sleep, my Saviour, sleep.
On the manger bed Jesus lay your head. In the stable rude and lowly,
shepherds find the babe most holy. On your simple bed, Jesus rest your head.
Come to Bethlehem, bring your gifts to Him, for our hope and our salvation
flow from His blest incarnation. Kings shall worship Him here in Bethlehem.
Wondrous Child divine, warm this heart of mine, that through days of joy and sorrow,
I Thy star may gladly follow. Warm this heart of mine, wondrous child divine.

[text by K. A. Hindenlang]

Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Sermon

The Rev. Megan Castellan

The Nicene Creed

BCP 358

Prayers of the People

The Word has been made flesh, the light of God's love has broken through our darkness, the Daystar from on high now shines in our hearts. Filled with the joy of Jesus' birth, let us pray together in the power of his Spirit, responding, "Lord, hear our prayer."

+ That the Prince of Peace may guide the leaders of the nations, and all men and women everywhere, into the ways of freedom and truth; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael, Presiding Bishop of our Church, and DeDe, our Bishop, that they may guide us in our journey to Bethlehem, uniting the whole Church as we live into our spiritual kinship with one another; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For those for whom the darkness has suffocated hope: the lonely, the fearful, the hungry, and those who bear a private grief; that they may see the dawn of God's love, and revive the eternal hope that never fades away; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For our families and friends, and for all our absent sisters and brothers; for those who are sick, and for those who have died and who now feast at the heavenly banquet of God's grace; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

+ That we may be released from the captivity of our sins, the places of interior blindness that cause us to

choose darkness over light; that we may be forgiven by the power of the Holy Spirit; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

+ That we who gather to share the Holy Eucharist, and those throughout the world who come to receive this sacrament of Holy Presence, may bear witness to Christ born in our hearts; let us pray.
Lord, hear our prayer.

In the wonder of this night, [or In the beauty of this morning,] let us continue to offer our petitions.

For the special needs and concerns of our congregation, and especially for:

Wes	Dhara	Theodore	Virginia	Clare	Alana
Jean	Julee	Paul	John	Joell	Jeanne
Susan	Lorraine	Louis	Mary	Linda	Josephine
Joan	Edith	Kay	Jimmy	James	Fred
CeCe	Libby	Joyce	Ruth	Lisa	Amy
Elizabeth	John	Sue	June	Keith	Dick
Richard	Kathleen	Skip	Mary	Shella	Karen

For those celebrating the anniversary of their birth this week: Tim Schmidle, Alice Wagner, Phoebe Hain, Gabriel Henry, Jim Johnson.

The Lord's Prayer

BCP 364

Hymn: Silent Night (Stille Nacht)

Hymnal # 111

The Final Gospel

John 1:1-14

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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

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

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

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessing

Hymn Hark! The herald angels sing (Mendelssohn)

Hymnal # 87

Choral Response *Love came down at Christmas*

Crawford R. Thoburn, 1987

Love came down at Christmas, love all lovely, love divine; love was born at Christmas, star and angels gave the sign. Worship we the Godhead, love incarnate, love divine; worship we our Jesus: but wherewith for sacred sign? Love shall be our token, love be yours and love be mine; love to God and all men, love for plea and gift and sign. [Christina Rossetti, 1885]

Postlude From heaven above to earth I come (*Vom Himmel hoch*) - harmonization by J. S. Bach

Christmas Memorial Flowers

Our Christmas poinsettias are offered in loving memory of:

The Rev. W. Aubrey Arlin, Edith N. Arlin, Audrey A. Vault, Margaret Godlove, Mary Nungesser, Ron Clayton, Ruth & Franklin Sipos, Sarah Richtmyer, Peter J. Hedrick, Stacey Hyatt.

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, —

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;

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;

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

1rr.

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?

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?

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a

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

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

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Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt. Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

Christmas

111

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
 3 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)

Irr.

87

Christmas

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 ev - er - last - ing Lord;
 3 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!
 late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb,
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

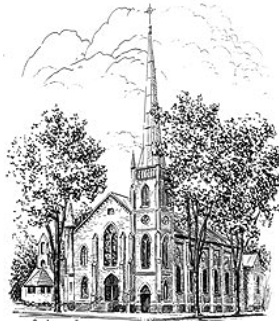
Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty,
 Risen with heal - ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,

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!
 hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness! hail, the heaven - born Prince of Peace!

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) 77. 77. D with Refrain



St. John's Church

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The Rev. Megan Castellan, Rector

Sara Van Looy, Sr. Warden

AnnMarie Hautaniemi, Parish Administrator

Karen A. Hindenlang, Director of Music/Organist

Matthew Sanaker, Jr. Warden

Chuck Merrill, Weekday Sexton

Crawford R. Thoburn, Assisting Conductor

Office Hours: M-W-F 1pm- 4pm, Tu- Thurs 10am-2pm

Although the office has limited hours* for the duration of the pandemic, e-mail, regular mail and phone messages will be monitored. If you need pastoral assistance, or just want to reach out to Mtr. Megan, please call her at 315-757-0251, or e-mail mtrmegan@stjohnsithaca.org.

CHRISTMAS SERVICES All services will be online at stjohnsithaca.org.

Christmas Eve

5 pm

7 pm with music

Christmas Day

10:30 am live stream

First & Second Sundays After Christmas

10:30 am live stream

IMAGES needed — digital photos of local scenes, seasonal artwork, historic sites, natural beauty — to accompany the instrumental music in our worship! If you have graphics that our Director of Music could use, please forward them to the church office; thank you!

If you would like to contribute to our ministries, you may [make a secure donation here](#). Thank you!

Sign up for our weekly newsletter [The Fledgling](#) by contacting the church office.

Please Join Us

Join us for Morning Prayer weekdays at 9:30 on [FaceBook](#) & [YouTube](#).

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