

Church of the Epiphany
Christmas Festival of Lessons and Music
(The First Sunday after Christmas Day)

26 December 2021 10AM in the sanctuary & via Zoom

Join Worship on computer/smartdevice here: <https://zoom.us/j/99005230944>

Call-in to Zoom Worship: 1-646-876-9923, Enter Meeting ID 99005230944#

Hello & good day! We are glad indeed that you are here!
This is a place where we nurture souls with prayerful worship.
If we can help you in any way, let us know. Please stay in touch!

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Opening hymn #102 *Once in Royal David's City*

- 1 Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed:
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ, her little child.
- 2 He came down to earth from heaven, who is God and Lord of all,
and his shelter was a stable, and his cradle was a stall;
with the poor, the scorned, the lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
- 3 We, like Mary, rest confounded that a stable should display,
heaven's Word, the world's creator, cradled there on Christmas Day,
yet this child, our Lord and brother, brought us love for one another.
- 4 For he is our lifelong pattern; daily, when on earth he grew,
he was tempted, scorned, rejected, tears and smiles like us he knew.
Thus he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness
- 5 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love;
for that child who seemed so helpless is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.
- 6 Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing round,
we shall see him; but in heaven, where his saints his throne surround;
Christ, revealed to faithful eye, set at God's right hand on high.

Bidding Prayer: The Rev. John Davis, Deacon

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now, to gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

Leader and People

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.

Presider

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. *Amen.*

Lesson 1: Genesis 3: 1-15

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of

the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Hymn #54 *Savior of the Nations, Come!*

- 1 Savior of the nations, come! Virgin's Son, make here your home.
Marvel now, both heaven and earth, that the Lord chose such a birth.
- 2 Wondrous birth! Oh, wondrous child of the Virgin undefiled!
Mighty God and Mary's son, eager now his race to run!
- 3 Thus on earth the Word appears, gracing his created spheres;
hence to death and hell descends, then the heavenly throne ascends.
- 4 Come, O Father's saving Son, who o'er sin the victory won.
Boundless shall your kingdom be; grant that we its glories see.

Lesson 2: Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Hymn #65 Prepare the Way, O Zion

- 1 Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.
- 2 He brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.

His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding,
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

- 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace.
His tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow before him, their voices will adore him.
Oh, blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

Lesson 3: Isaiah 11:1-9

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Hymn #81 *Lo, How A Rose e're Blooming*

- 1 Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung.
It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.
- 2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
with Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.
- 3 O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;
true man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us,
and share our every load.

Lesson 4: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor

David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Hymn #265 *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*

1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary, most highly favored lady," Gloria!
2. "For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honor thee,
thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold, most highly favored lady," Gloria!
3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name." Most highly favored lady, Gloria!
4. Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will every say—"Most highly favored lady," Gloria!

Lesson 5: Luke 2:1-7

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.

Hymn #78 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

1. O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
2. For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.
3. How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.
4. Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,

where misery cries out to thee, Son of the mother mild;
where charity stand watching and faith holds wide the door,
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.

5. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

Lesson 6: Luke 2:8-14

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!"

Hymn #96 *Angels, We Have Heard on High*

- 1 Angels, we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Refrain: Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

- 2 Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear? [Refrain]
- 3 Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King. [Refrain]
- 4 See him in a manger laid whom the angels praise above;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love. [Refrain]

Lesson 7: Luke 2:15-20

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.

Hymn #101 *Away in A Manger*

1. Away in a manger, no crib for his bed, the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay; the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

2. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes, but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me forever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

Lesson 8: Luke 2:21-35

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Hymn #435 *At the Name of Jesus (vs. 1,2,6)*

- 1 At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow,
every tongue confess him King of glory now;
'tis the Father's pleasure we should call him Lord,
who from the beginning was the mighty Word.
- 2 Humbled for a season, to receive a Name
from the lips of sinners, unto whom he came,
faithfully he bore it spotless to the last,
brought it back victorious, when from death he passed;
- 6 Christians, this Lord Jesus shall return again,
with his Father's glory, o'er the earth to reign;
for all wreaths of empire meet upon his brow,
and our hearts confess him King of Glory now.

Lesson 9: John 1:1-18

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. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Hymn #115 *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?

Refrain: 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. (Refrain)
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings let loving hearts enthrone him. (Refrain)

Collect of the Day

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

Announcements

Seasonal prayer for Christmas

Almighty and everliving God, you have given us a new revelation of you loving providence in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ to be born of the Virgin Mary: Grant that as he shared our morality, so we may share his eternity in the glory of your kingdom. *Amen.*

Closing hymn #83 *O Come, ALL Ye Faithful*

- 1 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;

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

- 2 God from God, Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten Son of the Father; [Refrain]

- 3 Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest; [Refrain]
- 4 See how the shepherds, summoned to his cradle,
leaving their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;
we too will thither bend our joyful footsteps; [Refrain]
- 5 Child, for us sinners poor and in the manger,
we would embrace thee, with love and awe;
who would not love thee, loving us so dearly? [Refrain]
- 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]

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to all who participated in this special service at Epiphany: we appreciate you so!
May everyone be blessed with peace, health, happiness and hope as we enter the New Year.

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Officiant: Mo. Lou Divis

Assistant: Deacon John Davis

Organist: Mary-Jo Cliff

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Broadcast Media: Rick Little

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