

ALL SAINTS EPISCOPAL CHURCH



ANTE-COMMUNION ON CHRISTMAS DAY

December 25, 2020
11:00 am

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

People: And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

The Celebrant may say

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.

When appointed, the following hymn or some other song of praise is sung or said, all standing

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

The Collect of the Day

The Celebrant says to the people

The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

The Celebrant says the Collect.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

First Reading: Isaiah 62:6-12

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the LORD, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. The LORD has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Response: Psalm 97 Dominus regnavit *(spoken, in unison)*

- 1 The LORD is King; let the earth rejoice; * let the multitude of the isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him, *
righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.
- 3 A fire goes before him * and burns up his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightnings light up the world; * the earth sees it and is afraid.
- 5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, *
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

- 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, * and all the peoples see his glory.
7 Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods! *
 Bow down before him, all you gods.
8 Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, *
 because of your judgments, O LORD.
9 For you are the LORD, most high over all the earth; *
 you are exalted far above all gods.
10 The LORD loves those who hate evil; *
 preserves the lives of his saints
 and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.
11 Light has sprung up for the righteous, *
 and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.
12 Rejoice in the LORD, you righteous, * and give thanks to his holy Name.

The Epistle: Titus 3:4-7

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

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

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

The Holy Gospel According to Luke 2:1-20

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.

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

Homily

The Rev. Canon Stephen Casey

Prayers of the People

from Intercessions for a Christian People

Brothers and sisters, on this most holy day of our Lord's birth, that we may find peace, joy, and contentment in this holy season, let us pray for ourselves and all those in need of our prayers, saying: **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the church of Christ, that it may faithfully proclaim the good news of salvation and may care for the needs of God's people in all corners of the world, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For peace in our troubled world, that the darkness of war and injustice may be replaced by the light of peace and love, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all those in need of our prayers: the homeless, the unemployed; the hungry; those who are hospitalized, those who are imprisoned in body or soul; and all those for whom this season is not one of joy but of trial and sadness, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For the sick, that their illnesses may be turned into health and their sorrow into rejoicing, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who labor this night on behalf of others: doctors and nurses, police officers and firefighters, gas station attendants, bus and taxi drivers, and all those whose work prevents them from sharing this evening with those they love, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving we remember the lives of those who have gone before us in the faith, that we, like them, may remain faithful to the end and live forever in the light of your eternal glory, we pray to you, O Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, mercifully hear the prayers of the people you have chosen as your own. Give us zeal in our ministries and joy in our work, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Silence

O Lord our God, accept the fervent prayers of your people; in the multitude of your mercies, look with compassion upon us and all who turn to you for help; for you are gracious, O lover of souls, and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

The Peace *All stand. The Celebrant says to the people*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

The Priest says to the people

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.

A General Thanksgiving

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

The Benediction

Deacon Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are
back with the flocks, then the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost, to heal those broken in spirit, to feed the hungry,
to release the oppressed, to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among all peoples, to make a little music with the heart ...
And to radiate the Light of Christ, every day, in every way,
in all that we do and in all that we say.

Let the work of Christmas begin!

... Howard Thurman, adapted