



Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross



CHRISTMAS EVE
December 24, 2020
4:00 p.m.

Evening Prayer, Rite II

*Wherever you are on your journey of faith,
Holy Cross welcomes you, just as you are,
to share in the transforming power of God's love.*

A COME-AS-YOU-ARE CHRISTMAS

We have a tradition of a Come-As-You-Are Christmas Pageant here at Holy Cross. Every year, in the moments before our Christmas Eve worship begins, children are cast, costumed, and prepared to share the Christmas story with us. This might just be a rationalization for “winging it”—Holy Cross does love to improvise—but we really believe that, whoever you are and wherever you are, you’re welcome here. Here, everyone is a part of the Christmas story. Maybe one day we’ll rehearse and perform a “proper” pageant, whatever that is, with casting calls, rehearsals, and multiple performances, and I’m sure it’d be fantastic. Still, every year, we return to our beloved gathering of young people and bins of costumes, where there’s always a role for your younger sibling, your cousin in from out of town, or newcomers looking for a Christmas service.

Out of an abundance of caution amid the pandemic, in-person worship has been suspended, so we’re taking our tradition online. No casting calls, no rehearsals, no encores, just a little preparation and coordination. I imagine it will be a little chaotic. Zoom meetings can be. But remember: Christmas wasn’t a Broadway production or a Renaissance painting. A government order, despite its importance and utility, nonetheless upended life for ordinary people. The pregnant Mary, who was expecting her son’s arrival any day, traveled with her husband Joseph ninety cold, dangerous, uncomfortable miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem. She gave birth in a cave or perhaps a stable and placed the newborn Jesus in a feeding trough to rest. Meanwhile, celestial phenomena surprised vulnerable workers, and strangers met to give thanks and praise to God for the child in their midst. Christmas was chaos. Yet into that chaos, a child was born. And a whole new order—a new day of wonder, joy, peace, and love—was born with Him.

So we welcome the newborn Jesus the way we always have. Whoever we are, wherever we are, we gather to tell the story of our Savior’s birth. We’re online this year. We’re still family.

HELPFUL INSTRUCTIONS

- This is a worship service, so please conduct yourself appropriately, but please don't worry so much about whether or not you're doing this right. You'll receive instructions throughout the service. Have fun. Celebrate. It's Christmas!
- Please use Gallery View during our worship, turn on your camera, if you have one, and mute yourself when not speaking.
- When the "pageant" begins, please use Speaker View. Pageant participants, make sure your camera and microphone are on, but try to stay very quiet, unless you're speaking. There is a role for everyone, but if you don't want to participate, turn off your camera, and mute yourself during the pageant.
- Some roles have been chosen—we cast LUKE and GABRIEL—and only they speak those lines, but you're encouraged to participate otherwise as you like. Decide who you'll be at the very beginning. If you're Mary or Joseph, jump in with their lines, even if others do, too. Listen for instructions.
- Wait. Do you have a costume? There's still time! Go get one! Blue bath towel over your head, calmly look into the medium distance, and boom— instant Mary! Throw a sheet around your shoulders, and you're Joseph! Be any animal you like. All creation rejoices. Get creative. Improvise.
- Encourage kids to follow the story and participate as they can. Draw the Christmas story as you hear it. Act it out with Legos, your favorite figures, or blocks. You can do the same. Celebrate!
- Be sure to stick around after our worship to say hello and wish one another a merry Christmas.

Kevin Laskowski

HYMN 83

O come, all ye faithful

Adeste fideles

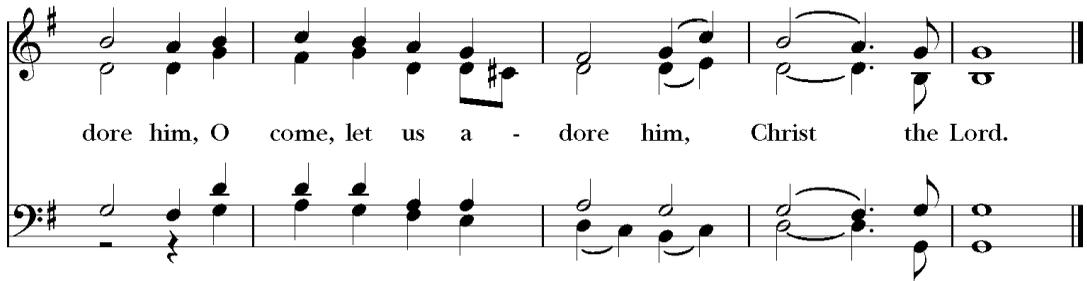
1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;
2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;

1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;

Refrain

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -



Opening Acclamation

BCP p. 78

Officiant

Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

The Confession of Sin

BCP p. 116

Officiant

Dear friends in Christ, here in the presence of Almighty God, let us kneel, or stand or sit, in silence, and with penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Officiant

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE INVITATORY

BCP p. 117

Officiant

O God, make speed to save us.

People

O Lord, make haste to help us.

Officiant and People

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

O Gracious Light

BCP p. 118

O gracious light,
pure brightness of the everliving Father in heaven,
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the vesper light,
we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,
and to be glorified through all the worlds.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

The story of Christmas according to the Gospel of Luke.

LUKE In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus:

CAESAR All the world should be registered!

LUKE 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.

JOSEPH I'm from David's house.

HYMN 78 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**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.**

LUKE Joseph 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

MARY There was no place for us in the inn.

LUKE In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

SHEPHERDS We're watching our flocks!

SHEEP Baaah!

GOATS Nyaah!

LUKE 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,

GABRIEL 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.

LUKE And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

ANGELS Glory to God!

LUKE in the highest heaven and on earth peace among those whom he favors! When the angels had left them and gone into heaven,

ANGELS Bye, shepherds!

LUKE the shepherds said to one another,

SHEPHERDS Let us go now to Bethlehem!

SHEEP Baaah!

GOATS Nyaah!

LUKE They said, "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.

HYMN 101 *Away in a manger*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a 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.**

LUKE 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.

JOSEPH I'm amazed!

LUKE Mary said:

MARY I treasure these words!

LUKE And she pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned. They were glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

HYMN 100 *Joy to the world!*

**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.**



THE APOSTLES' CREED

BCP p. 96

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS

BCP p. 97

Officiant The Lord be with you.

***People* And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

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.

For bringing us love and hope this Christmas.
We thank you, Jesus.

For the gifts of family and friends who are near and far away.
We thank you, Jesus.

For being near those who are sick or scared.
We thank you, Jesus.

For bringing light into the world.
We thank you, Jesus.

The 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.**

Intercessions

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

We pray for those in need of healing and support, especially Alma, Tyra, Keith, Mark, David, Susan, the Kennedy family, Lizz, Joan, Rose, Dan, Maureen, Loran, and our neighboring residents of Iliff Nursing Home. Are there others?

Please take a moment to pray for your own concerns.

We pray for those serving at home and abroad, especially Gavin, Katherine, Cameron, Adam, Anthony, Charles, Alfredo, Evan, Nathan, Leonard, Zachary, Leslie, and Bryce. Are there others?

Please take a moment to pray for your own concerns.

We pray for all who have died, especially Dan and Teresa, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Officiant

Almighty and eternal God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth: Mercifully accept the prayers of your people, and strengthen us to do your will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

HYMN 111

Silent night, holy night

Stille Nacht

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
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.

The Blessing

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **Amen.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

HYMN 87

Hark! The herald angels sing

Mendelssohn

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!

The Closing Prayer

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

Officiant The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.
Amen.

Remember in your prayers this week—

For those in need of healing and support: We lift up Alma Kasulitis, friend of Sherri Arnaiz; Tyra Harpster, mother of Becky Stahl; Keith Harpster, uncle of Becky Stahl; Mark Gilvey, friend of Sherri Arnaiz; David Pacheco, friend of Sherri Arnaiz; Susan Rosenberger Adams, sister of Richard Adams; the Kennedy family, friends of Kate Achelpohl; Lizz Lund, sister of Kate Achelpohl; Joan Curran, mother of Martha Kemp; Rose Naegele, mother of Mary Hinkle; Dan Smith, friend of Rex Hayes; Maureen McDonnell-Weschler; Loran Minter, friend of Cheryl Elder

Names remain on the healing list for four weeks unless you request an extension.

For those who have died: Dan Hammond, friend of Sherri Arnaiz; Teresa Kennedy, friend of Kate Achelpohl

For those in the Armed Forces and others who are serving at home and abroad: Gavin Harpster, nephew of Becky Stahl; Katherine Green, friend of Sherri Arnaiz; Cameron Addleton, friend of Richard and Sadia Adams; Adam Santley, grandson of Jennifer Santley; Anthony Foyle, nephew of Eileen Foyle; Charles Matthews, friend of Eileen Foyle; Alfredo Piedrahita, friend of Brianna Elder; Evan Brown, nephew of Lane Abernathy and Doug Gehley; Nathan Potter, friend of McKey Weschler; Leonard (McKey) Weschler; Zachary March, friend of John and Wendy Hoskins; Leslie Tsou, daughter of Carol and Ed Tsou; Bryce, nephew of Rebecca Stahl

To request prayer for yourself or someone else please contact the parish office at office@holycrossepcopal.org or 703-698-6991.

HOLY CROSS MISSION

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross is an inclusive, supportive, spiritual community that celebrates the diversity and dignity of all God's people. We strive to offer inspiring worship, serious engagement with questions of faith, commitment to serving our neighbors and the world, and opportunities for fun and fellowship. We encourage all to participate in God's purpose and plan for this church. Join us in this great adventure and share in the blessings of God so freely given!

Worship and Education At Holy Cross

SUNDAY

9:00 a.m. – Morning Prayer
10:00 a.m. – Sunday School
10:30 a.m. – Adult Formation

WEDNESDAY

10:30 a.m. Bible/Book Study

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