

# Bethesda Episcopal Church

## **The First Sunday After Christmas**

**26 December 2021**

*Welcome to Bethesda Church. Thank you for joining us for worship today. Masks are required while inside the church. For everyone's safety, please see the back of this bulletin for the guidelines to attend church.*

### **The Opening Acclamation**

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given.  
*People* O Come, let us adore him. Alleluia.

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **Gloria in Excelsis**

Glory be to God on high,  
and on earth peace, good will towards men.

We praise thee, we bless thee,  
we worship thee,  
we glorify thee,  
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,  
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.  
O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.  
Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
have mercy upon us.

For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
with the Holy Ghost,  
art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### **The Collect of The Day**

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.  
*People* And with thy spirit.  
*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Almighty God, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word: Grant that the same light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, on God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

*The people are seated*

**The Lesson**

Acts 6:8–7:2a,51c-60

Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. Then they secretly instigated some men to say, ‘We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.’ They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. They set up false witnesses who said, ‘This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.’ And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel. Then the high priest asked him, ‘Are these things so?’ And Stephen replied: ‘Brothers and fathers, listen to me, you are for ever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.’ When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he died.

*The Lector concludes*

The Word of the Lord.

*The People respond*

Thanks be to God

*The people stand.*

**The Holy Gospel**

John 1:1-18

*Celebrant  
People*

The Holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to John  
Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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.

*Celebrant*        The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People*            Praise be to thee, O Christ.

**The Nicene Creed**            *Said by all, standing.*

I believe in one God,  
    the Father Almighty,  
    maker of heaven and earth,  
    and of all things visible and invisible;  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
    the only-begotten Son of God,  
    begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
    God of God, Light of Light,  
    very God of very God;  
    begotten, not made;  
    being of one substance with the Father;  
    by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation  
    came down from heaven,  
and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,  
    and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried:  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,  
and ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth on the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory,  
to judge both the quick and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life,  
    who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;  
    who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified;  
    who spake by the Prophets.

And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church;  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins;  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**The Prayers of The People**      *Please kneel.*

Let us give glory to God on high, who from his fullness has received grace upon grace.

For the holy Church of God throughout the world, that with one heart we may rejoice in the Word made flesh. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For good will in the hearts of all; and on earth, peace. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For the poor, the outcast and the homeless; for the helpless, the lonely and the unloved. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

For all who have gone before us, whose hope was in the Word made flesh. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

With the blessed Virgin Mary, and all the host of heaven, let our voices rise to praise God's glory. Lord, hear us: **Lord, graciously hear us.**

*The Celebrant concludes with a prayer.*

*The Celebrant introduces the Confession*

*The people say*

Almighty God,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
maker of all things, judge of all men:  
We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins  
and wickedness,  
which we from time to time most grievously have committed,  
by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty,  
provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us.  
We do earnestly repent,  
and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings;  
the remembrance of them is grievous unto us,  
the burden of them is intolerable.  
Have mercy upon us,  
have mercy upon us, most merciful Father;  
for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake,  
forgive us all that is past;  
and grant that we may ever hereafter  
serve and please thee in newness of life,

to the honor and glory of thy Name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **The Absolution**

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**The Peace** *Please stand.*

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People* And with thy spirit.

**The Great Thanksgiving** *Please stand.*

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.  
*People* And with thy spirit.  
*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.  
*People* We lift them up unto the Lord.  
*Celebrant* Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.  
*People* It is meet and right so to do.

### **Proper Preface Of the Incarnation**

Because thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become thy children.

**Sanctus and Benedictus Qui Venit** *said by all*

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:  
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.  
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.  
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

**The Eucharistic Prayer** *Please kneel.*

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy

Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again. For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins,  
to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept  
this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits,  
but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;  
By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost,  
all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world  
without end. *AMEN.*

*And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,*

*People and Celebrant*

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.

### **The Breaking of The Bread**

*Celebrant* Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
*People* Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

### **Prayer of Humble Access** *Said by all*

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own  
righteous -ness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to  
gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is  
always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son  
Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us.  
Amen.

### **Agnus Dei** *Said by all*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

### **The Post Communion Prayer** *Said by all, kneeling if you are able.*

Almighty and ever-living God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in  
these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy

Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

### **The Blessing and Dismissal**

*Celebrant*        Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People*            Thanks be to God.

### **Notices**

In our Intercessions for the Church and Parish this week, we pray for
Anglican Communion        The Anglican Church in Central America
Albany Diocese                The Reverend Darius Mojallali
Our Parish                        For the homeless in our city

We remember with thanksgiving those who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week. We also pray for those who have died recently and those whose year's mind falls at this time.

Please note the **Church Office** is closed this week. We will reopen on 3 January 2022

There will be no **Celebration of the Eucharist** on Wednesday 29 December.

### **Guidelines for Attending Church**

According to New York State policy, everyone (regardless of vaccination status) is required to always wear a mask while inside the church.

Please do not attend church if you are currently ill or have been in contact recently with someone who is ill.

Hand sanitizer is provided at the entrance of the church.

At the exchange of the Peace, please do not leave your pew.

At the distribution of Communion, remain in your pew until an usher invites you to move to the chancel step.

Thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

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