

Bethesda Episcopal Church

Christmas Eve 2023

4.00pm Sung Eucharist

Please switch off your cell phone before the Liturgy begins.

Music before the Service

An Advent Christmas Suite

Alfred V. Fedak (b. 1953)

- I. Mendelssohn
- II. Stille Nacht
- III. Un Flambeau
- IV. Von Himmel Hoch
- V. God Rest You Merry

Derek Stannard, Organ

All stand as the ministers enter.

Carol

**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;
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

**See, how the shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither, Bend our joyful footsteps;
O come, let us adore him, ...**

**Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, glory in the highest:
O come, let us adore him, ...**

Remain standing.

Celebrant: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
All: **Amen.**
Celebrant: The Lord be with you.
All: **And with thy spirit.**

Remain standing. The Celebrant says the Opening Prayer.

Let us pray. Almighty God, who has 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 Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All sit.

The Reading

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 Lector concludes The Word of the Lord.
The People respond **Thanks be to God.**

All stand.

Carol

**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.**

**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.**

Remain standing for the Gospel reading.

The Holy Gospel

Luke 2.1-14

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St Luke
All **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

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!"

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

The Sermon

Fr Wallace

After the sermon, all kneel.

The Prayers of The People

In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

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 sick, 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 says a concluding prayer.

Let us pray. O God, who makest us glad by the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our Judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Remain kneeling. The Celebrant invites the people to make their confession, saying,

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

**Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,**

by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
**We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

The Celebrant says,

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

All stand. Please remain in your place during the exchange of the Peace.

The Peace

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

*During the Carol, a collection is received to support the ministry of Bethesda Church.
Thank you for your generosity.*

All stand.

At The Offertory:

**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?**

Chorus:
This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

**Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. *Chorus***

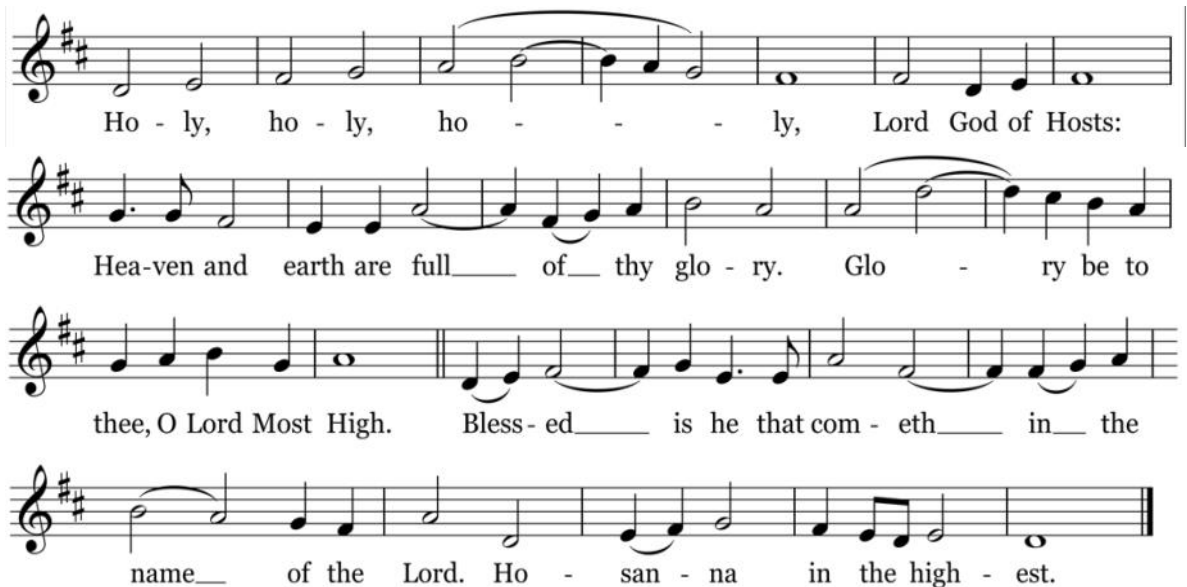
**So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him. *Chorus***

All remain standing.

The Eucharistic Prayer

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.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God; 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. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - - - ly, Lord God of Hosts:
Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to
thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

All kneel.

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for 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 to thee, he broke 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 this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, 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, we thy people do celebrate and make, 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; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory. And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Remain kneeling.

The Fraction

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

Communion is received at the chancel step. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

After Communion, all kneel.

The Prayer after Communion *Said by the Celebrant*

O God, who didst wonderfully create, and yet more wonderfully restore, the dignity of human nature: Grant that we may share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Remain kneeling during the following Carol.

Carol

**Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**Silent night, holy night!
Son of God love's pure light.
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth**

Remain kneeling for the Blessing.

The Blessing and Dismissal

Alleluia. Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia.

All stand.

Carol

**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.**

**Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
Let us our songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.**



Please place this form in the collection plate if you would like us to get in touch with you:

Name (s):

Phone:

Email address:

Home address:

Preferred contact method:

Contact Reason(s):

- Visitor or new resident
- Would like more information about the church and/or worship
- Interested in opportunities to serve
- Would like to speak with or have a visit from the priest
- Would like information about pledge envelopes or regular giving to Bethesda
- Other _____

Fr Charles Wallace, Priest-in-Charge

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