

Bethesda Episcopal Church

10.00am A Service of Lessons and Carols

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

22 December 2024

Organ Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

Peter Pindar Stearns (1931-2016)

All stand as the Choir and Clergy enter.

The Entrance Hymn (First verse sung by the choir)

*Come, Thou Redeemer of the earth,
And manifest Thy virgin-birth:
Let every age adoring fall;
Such birth befits the God of all.*

**Begotten of no human will,
But of the Spirit, Thou art still
The Word of God in flesh arrayed,
The promised Fruit to us displayed.**

**From God the Father he proceeds,
To God the Father back he speeds;
His course he runs to death and hell,
Returning on God's throne to dwell.**

**O equal to the Father, Thou!
Gird on thy fleshly mantle now;
The weakness of our mortal state
With deathless might invigorate.**

**Thy cradle here shall glitter bright,
And darkness breathe a newer light,
Where endless faith shall shine serene,
And twilight never intervene.**

**All laud, eternal Son, to Thee
Whose advent sets thy people free,
Whom, with the Father, we adore,
And Holy Ghost, forevermore.**

Text: St Ambrose of Milan, 4th c.

Tune: Puer nobis nascitur, Hymnal #193

Remain standing.

The Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, to see the Babe lying in a manger. Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by his holy Child; and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this city. And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless; the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love. Lastly, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us, saying,

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.

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

All sit for the carols and readings.

Carol People Look East

Barry Ferguson (b. 1942)

People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast
Him who cometh from the East.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Text: Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-1965

First Reading

Genesis 3:8-15

*God announces in the Garden of Eden
that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.*

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Thanks be to God.

Carol *Adam Lay Ybounden*

Boris Ord (1897-1961)

Adam lay ybounden, bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple, an apple that he took,
As clerkës finden written in their book.
Ne had the apple taken been, the apple taken been,
Ne had never Our Lady a-been heavenly queen.
Blessed be the time that apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen: *Deo gratias!*

Text: Anonymous, 15th c.

Second Reading

Isaiah 40:1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withers, the flower fades: because the spirit of the Lord blows upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withers, the flower fades: but the word of our God shall stand for ever. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Thanks be to God.

Carol *Comfort Ye, My People*

Louis Bourgeois (1510-1559)

Comfort, comfort ye my people; speak ye peace, thus saith our God;
Comfort those who sit in darkness, mourning 'neath their sorrow's load;
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them;
Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.
For the herald's voice is crying in the desert far and near,
Bidding all men to repentance, since the kingdom now is here.
O that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise to meet Him, and the hills bow down to greet Him.
Make ye straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble, as befits His holy reign,
For the glory of the Lord now o'er the earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token that His Word is never broken.

Text: Johannes Olearius (1611-1684); Translation: Catherine Winkworth

Third Reading

Isaiah 35.1-10

The prophet proclaims that the Lord will come and save his people.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Thanks be to God.

Music *Where Once There Lay Dragons*

Kenton Coe (b. 1931)

Where once there lay dragons, tall grasses shall grow;
Where once there lay wasteland, a pathway shall go;
Where once there lay desert, there shall flow a stream;
O ransomed of Zion, with joy you shall sing.

As once you were fearful, you now are made calm;
As once you were wounded, you now have a balm;
As once you were feeble, you now are made strong;
As once you were silent, you now have a song.

Be strong and fear not, for your God will come!
For sweet songs of gladness shall sound on each tongue;
When sorrow and sadness shall all flee away.
Prepare now, O Zion, to greet this new day!

Text: Carol McClure (paraphrase of Isaiah 35)

Fourth Reading

Isaiah 11.1-9

The Prophet foretells Christ's peaceable kingdom

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Thanks be to God.

Carol Dixit Maria

Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)

Dixit Maria ad angelum: Ecce ancilla Domini, fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Mary said to the angel: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to your word.

Text: Luke 1: 38

The Congregation stands for the Fifth Reading and Collect.

The Angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

Remain standing.

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And with thy spirit.

Let us pray. Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

All sit.

The Greetings

All stand.

The Hymn at the Offertory #81

From the Hymnal 1982

All remain standing.

The Eucharistic Prayer

<i>Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	And with thy spirit.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	We lift them up unto the Lord.
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.
<i>People</i>	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 send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore praising thee and saying,

The Sanctus and Benedictus

John Merbecke (1510-1585)

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord God of hosts.

5
Hea-ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo - ry be to thee, O Lord Most High.

7
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

And now, as our Savior Christ hath 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.

The Breaking of The Bread

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

The Agnus Dei from 'Missa Dixit Maria' *Hans Leo Hassler (1564-1612)*

Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.
Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

*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.*

Communion is administered at the high altar. Please move at the direction of the ushers.

Music during The Communion

Choir: Lo, How A Rose *Melchior Vulpius (1570-1615)*

Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from Jesse's stem hath sprung.
Isaiah twas foretold it, and men of old have sung.
To show God's love aright, from sin and death to save us,
when half-spent was the night.

Communion Hymn #54 *From the Hymnal 1982*

After Communion, all kneel.

The Post Communion Prayer *Said by the Celebrant.*

Let us pray. Keep us, O Lord, while we tarry on this earth, in a serious seeking after thee, and in an affectionate walking with thee, all the days of our life: that when thou comest, we may be found, not hiding our talent, nor yet asleep with our lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for our Lord, our glorious King, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

The Blessing and Dismissal

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Celebrant
People*

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

The Closing Hymn ‘O Come, O Come, Emmanuel’

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell Thy people save,
And give them victory o'er the grave. *Rejoice...!***

**O come, Thou Dayspring, from on high,
And cheer us by Thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight. *Rejoice...!***

**O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all mankind;
bid thou our sad divisions cease,
And be thyself, our King of Peace.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Organ

Fantasia on Savior of the Nations, Come

Craig A. Penfield (b. 1948)

Today at Bethesda

Welcome to Bethesda Church. Thank you for joining us this morning. If you are new to the community and interested in becoming a member of Bethesda, introduce yourself to an usher or to Fr Wallace. Complete the form on the back page of this bulletin for more information about the parish.

The **Advent wreath** is given in memory of Bruce Solenski by Kathleen and Mark Anspach. For many years, Bruce brought beauty and grace to the altar of Bethesda through his elegant and creative floral arrangements. He continues to be fondly remembered, especially during the Advent-Christmas and Easter seasons, when he dedicated his talents to the glory of God.

Thank you to our readers this morning; and to Kathleen Slezak, Derek Stannard, and members of the choir for the beautiful music.

Year-End Gifts to Bethesda Please remember Bethesda in your Christmas and end-of-year giving plans. Our ministry and parish operations depend on your faithful support. Tax receipts are issued for gifts received on or before December 31st.

Please join us for **refreshments** following the 10am service. Thank you to Jay and Kathy Hagle for hosting today. If you are able to host in January and/or February 2025, please sign your name on the sheet in the narthex.

THIS AFTERNOON! *Christmas Jazz Concert* with Chuck Lamb and Ria Curley at 3pm. Admission by donation. Please join us!

The Parish Office will be closed from 23 December to 13 January inclusive.

The **Annual Parish Meeting** will take place on 9 February. Further details to follow.

Bethesda Book Club The BBC meets 13 February at 5.30pm to discuss the novel, *People of the Book*, by Pulitzer Prize winning author, Geraldine Brooks. To participate or for more information, contact: office@bethesdachurch.org

The **Bishop of Albany** will celebrate and preach at 8am and 10am on Sunday, 16 February.

Parish Outreach

Special Monthly Envelope for December The Casavant organ, located in the chancel of the church, has served Bethesda Church well since it replaced the historic E.M. Skinner pipe organ in 1968. Nevertheless, the last 55 years of service have shown considerable wear on the instrument, including deterioration of pipework and wind leaks; water damage, dust and debris; and a number of mechanical problems which affect the console and its functionality. After visiting Bethesda in late autumn 2023, technicians from Foley-Baker, Inc. of Tolland, CT, provided initial feedback and advice concerning ongoing care and maintenance of the organ. Given the important role music plays in Bethesda's liturgical life, the Vestry has agreed that contributions to December's appeal will be directed to organ maintenance.

LifeWorks Community Action is a non-profit established in 1965 that works to alleviate poverty by assisting local families and individuals with a wide range of services. Bethesda is currently collecting the following items on behalf of **LifeWorks**:

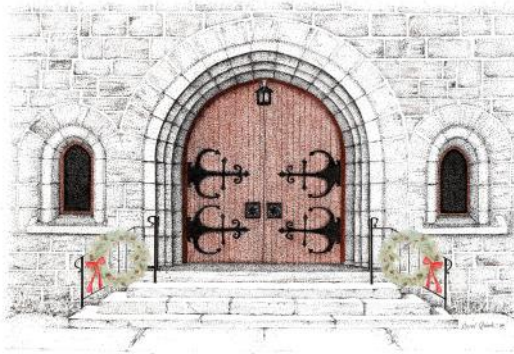
- ◆ Household cleaning supplies. Laundry detergent, dishwasher detergent
- ◆ Canned Foods including those low in salt, fat & sugar and gluten free.
- ◆ Diapers (size 4 & 5), baby wipes, and baby care products: shampoo and soap.
- ◆ Adult personal hygiene products: soap, toothpaste/brushes, shampoo, razors, shaving cream, deodorant.

Please leave donated items *in the box by the side door entrance* of the church. Thank you!



Christmas at Bethesda

- | | | |
|--|------------|---|
| Today | 3pm | Christmas Jazz with Chuck Lamb & Ria Curley |
| Christmas Eve | 4pm | Sung Eucharist |
| | 10pm | Blessing of the Crib, Procession and Sung Eucharist |
| Christmas Day | 9am | Holy Communion (said) |
| Sunday, 29 December: Sunday after Christmas | 9am | Holy Communion (said) |
| | | |
| Sunday, 5 January 2025: Feast of the Epiphany | 8am | Holy Communion |
| | 10am | Procession and Sung Eucharist |
| | | |



Bethesda Episcopal Church, Saratoga Springs

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, Rector

Office Email: office@bethesdachurch.org
Office Telephone: (518) 584-5980

Website: bethesdachurch.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bethesdaepiscopalchurch>

Bethesda Episcopal Church Office
178 Elm Street, Suite 5
Saratoga Springs NY 12866