



**The Holy Eucharist**

**CHRISTMAS LESSONS  
AND CAROLS  
10:30 AM**

**DECEMBER 31, 2023**

## A Christmas Service of Lessons and Carols

**Prelude**

**The Joy of Christmas**

**Lani Smith**

**Processional Hymn**

**Love Came Down at Christmas**

**Hymn 84**

*Then, all standing, this bidding prayer is said.*

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

*The Celebrant continues*

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

**First Lesson: Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-25**

Missie Kirkland

*God creates man and woman to live in obedience to him in the Garden of Eden.*

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up-- for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground-- then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

"This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,  
for out of Man this one was taken."

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

Here ends the reading.

**Canticle 9****The First Song of Isaiah****Hymnal S-213****Second Lesson: Genesis 3:1-23**

Lynnae Boudreau

*Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you." And to the man he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living. And the Lord God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them. Then the Lord God said, "See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"—therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.

Here ends the reading.

**Choir**

**Adam Lay Ybounden**

**John Ireland**

**Third Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11**

Susan Marr

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

Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her

that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,  
and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.

Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!"

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.

The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.

Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,

O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"  
See, the Lord GOD comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Here ends the reading.

### Hymn 67

### Comfort, comfort ye my people

#### Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10

Haley Dyer

*The prophet proclaims that God will come and save us.*

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,  
and rejoice with joy and singing.  
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.  
They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.  
Strengthen the weak hands,  
and make firm the feeble knees.  
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
"Be strong, do not fear!  
Here is your God.  
He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.  
He will come and save you."  
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.  
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,  
and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool,  
and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,  
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
A highway shall be there,  
and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
the unclean shall not travel on it,  
but it shall be for God's people;  
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
No lion shall be there,  
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
they shall not be found there,  
but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,  
and come to Zion with singing;  
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Here ends the reading.

## Hymn 75

## There's a voice in the wilderness crying

### Fifth Lesson: Luke 1:5-25

Lisa McElfresh

*An angel announces to Zechariah that his wife Elizabeth will bear a son.*

In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was a descendant of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.

Once when he was serving as priest before God and his section was on duty, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and offer incense. Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified; and fear overwhelmed him. But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." The angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur." Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah, and wondered at his delay in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. When his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, "This is what the Lord has done for me when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."

Here ends the reading.

## Choir

## The Song of Zechariah

### Sixth Lesson: Luke 1:26 - 58

JC Eriksen

*The angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he

will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;  
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
His mercy is for those who fear him  
from generation to generation.  
He has shown strength with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.  
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,  
and lifted up the lowly;  
he has filled the hungry with good things,  
and sent the rich away empty.  
He has helped his servant Israel,  
in remembrance of his mercy,  
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,  
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

Here ends the reading.

## Hymn 265

## The angel Gabriel from heaven came

### Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:1-20

Michelle Crawford

*Jesus is born at Bethlehem and is worshiped by angels and shepherds.*

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





# The Holy Communion

<b>Choral Anthem</b>	<b>Love Came Down at Christmas</b>	<b>Malcolm Archer</b>
<b>Presentation Hymn</b>	<b>Angels from the realms of glory</b> <i>(vv. 1, 4)</i>	<b>Hymn 93</b>
<b>Eucharistic Prayer B</b>		<b>BCP 367</b>
<b>The Sanctus</b>		<b>Hymn S-130</b>
<b>The Lord's Prayer and The Breaking of the Bread</b>		<b>BCP 364</b>
<b>Fraction Anthem</b>		<b>Hymn S-152</b>
<b>Distribution of Communion</b>		
<i>All persons are invited to receive Holy Communion. Those not receiving may come to the communion rail to receive a blessing; please cross your arms over your chest. If you wish to receive a gluten-free wafer, please say "gluten-free" to the priest.</i>		
<b>Communion Hymn</b>	<b>It came upon a midnight clear</b>	<b>Hymn 89</b>
<b>Post Communion Prayer</b>		
<b>The Blessing</b>		
<b>Processional Hymn</b>	<b>Angels We Have Heard on High</b>	<b>Hymn 96</b>
<b>The Dismissal</b>		
<i>Priest: May he who by his Incarnation, gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.</i>		
<b>Postlude</b>	<b>Go tell it on the mountain</b>	<b>Hymn 99</b>



## Worship Schedule

### Centering Prayer

11:30 AM, Assisi Chapel (resumes January 3rd)

### Wednesday Eucharist

12:15 PM, Assisi Chapel (resumes January 3rd)

### Feast of the Epiphany

10:30 AM, January 7th, 2024

## Announcements

**The church office will be closed** on Monday, January 1st.

**Pledges for 2024** are still being received. Please place them in the offering plate or return them to the church office as soon as possible.

**Gifts or 2023 pledge payments** that you wish to record in the 2023 tax year must be placed in the Sunday offering plates today to be counted in the 2023 IRS tax year.

**Thursday Book Study** will resume on January 11th with Christian Wiman's Zero at the Bone: Fifty Entries Against Despair. The group meets on Zoom from 4:00-5:00 PM.

**The Sleep in Heavenly Peace** bed build is scheduled for Saturday, March 9th. More information to come.

*Join us on Saturday, January 6th,  
for dinner and a bonfire.  
5:00 PM Dinner  
5:30 PM Burning of the Greens*

*We will celebrate the Feast of the  
Epiphany on Sunday, January 7th.*



# *Christmas Tributes*

*Contributions to our Christmas Tributes go to support the gardens that help provide the flowers for the altar, and to purchase flowers for feast days.*

## **In Honor of**

Our Children and Grandchildren from Butch & Alice Duryea  
Joshua Nelson from Elizabeth Nelson

## **In Memory of**

Our Parents - Bruce & Elizabeth and Webb & Viola from Herb & Betty-Bruce Hoover  
Our Mothers - Becky & Mickey from Bill & Pat Murray  
Our Parents - Al, Lorton, Arie, and Willemijn from Liz & Kees Schellingerhoudt  
Robert F. Cook and Rommey Smith from Fran & Sandy Smith  
My Dad - Willis Swanson from Kitty Taylor



### **Those Who Serve**

December 31, 2023

Verger - Lynnae Boudreau

Crucifer - Lamar Barber

Eucharistic Minister - Lynnae Boudreau

Ushers - Lynne Joynes & Jerome Laux

Greeter - Jo Ellen Clow

Altar Guild - Diana Symins

Flower Guild - Entire Guild

VPOD - Lynne Joynes

Videographer - Haley Dyer

Fellowship - Liz Schellingerhoudt

### **Lectors**

Missie Kirkland

Lynnae Boudreau

Susan Marr

Haley Dyer

Lisa McElfresh

JC Eriksen

Michelle Crawford

Steve Wilson

### **2023 Vestry**

Lynnae Boudreau, Senior Warden

Lisa McElfresh, Junior Warden

Lamar Barber, Treasurer

Jo Ellen Clow, Clerk

Sandy Calloway

Amy Cox

Katherine Duello

Lynne Joynes

Pat Murray

Herb Pilcher

Michael Smith-Foot

### **Clergy and Staff**

Bishop of Diocese of Atlanta

The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright

Rector—The Rev. Liz Schellingerhoudt, OA

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Admin@StClaresEpiscopal.org

Treasurer—Lamar Barber

treasurer@stclaresepiscopal.org

Organist-Choirmaster—Karen Calloway

edwins@windstream.net

Sunday Sexton—Billy Clayton

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