



Welcome to Saint Stephen's in the Christmas Season, the shortest season of the Christian year. There are only twelve days of Christmas, as we know from the song, which means that in some years, depending on the day of the week on which Christmas falls, there's only one Sunday in the season. At most there are two. So we sing as many carols as we can as we celebrate the incarnation of Christ as a tiny child in an out-of-the-way place.

**Christmas Eve
Family Service**

**December 24
2022**

Welcome to Worship at St. Stephen's!

You will notice that this bulletin indicates moments in the service where sitting, standing, or kneeling is customary. These are only customs, and if you find that you are uncomfortable in any of these postures, please pay attention to your body and change your prayer posture as needed.

If you are interested in becoming more involved with St. Stephen's, please fill out one of the welcome cards at the usher's table. It's our priest's practice to invite newcomers to coffee or lunch, so after you fill out a card you can expect to be contacted soon.

The Arps Garage on College Road (kitty-corner from the south side of the church) is free for parishioners to park in. Simply pick up a parking sticker from the welcome table.

Saint Stephen's is a B.R.E.A.D. church, joining with 40 diverse congregations to act powerfully on local issues of justice and fairness such as gun violence, affordable housing and strategies for maintaining discipline in public schools.. Learn more at www.breadcolumbus.org.

Saint Stephen's is a founding member of Neighborhood Services, Inc. (NSI) , a community food pantry serving the campus area. You can learn more about NSI at www.neighborhoodservicesinc.org.

Worship Leaders this Morning

Preacher & Celebrant: The Rev. Karl Stevens

Organist: Dennis Davenport

Director of Children's Formation: Darien McCoy

Children's Music Leader: Jamie Massa

The Pageant was written by Darien McCoy and Jamie Massa with great assistance from the children.

Cover Painting: The Realms of Glory, KPB Stevens, mixed media on paper, 2021.

Throughout the service, the people's responses are in italics.

Prelude

The people stand for the Processional Hymn.

Processional Hymn #96, Angels We Have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear?
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

See him in a manger laid
whom the angels praise above;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
while we raise our hearts in love.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Angels we have heard on high, #96 from The Hymnal 1982 – Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt. Music: Gloria, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958).

Lucernaria for Christmas

The Advent Wreath and Christmas Candle are lit by the children.

The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.
The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.

And dwelt among us:
Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the One, Holy, and Undivided Trinity.
The Word was made flesh, alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of God, alleluia:
God has shone upon us, alleluia.

Song of Praise (Angels We Have Heard on High, Reprise)

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Collect for the Day

God be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

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.

The people sit.

A Reading from Isaiah

The people who have been walking in the dark for so long have finally seen a great light. You have pumped them up and expanded their joy. They are as happy as people who have harvested a fabulous crop and won't go hungry this year, as happy as people are opening birthday presents, or dividing up found money. They no longer feel like they're pulling someone else's wagon. It's time to throw the boots of the soldiers and their bloody clothes in the fire.

A baby boy has been born for us. He will be someone whom we respect and look up to. And his name is Mighty God, Prince of Peace, His influence will keep growing until there is no end of peace for the family of King David and all who followed him. This baby boy will develop a nation held together with justice and goodness now and always.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96

I've got a brand new song to sing to God.

Everyone, join me in singing it.

I'll sing my new song to God and tell everyone God's news

Is the best news ever.

I'll tell people I meet about God's goodness and the wonderful things God does.

There really isn't anyone or anything like God.

Which is one reason I love God.

I've got a brand new song to sing to God Everyone, join me in singing it.

Other people might think money or family or their jobs are more important,
but it's God who made
everything they have and everything there is.
So give your attention to God because God deserves it.
Worship God when you see how beautiful the clouds are,
or a rainbow in the sky, or a perfect little snowflake

Tell everyone you know about God's goodness
and the power that God uses to help people.
Even the sky and the stars praise God.
The sea roars and the fields and even the trees shout for joy when
They see God coming.
God is good, and God wants us to be the good the world can see.

A Reading from Paul's Letter to Titus

For the grace of God has appeared, saving all of us from ourselves, training us to want
goodness, and to live lives that are self-controlled, decent, and kind, while we wait for the
hope and glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus gave himself for us so that
we might be passionate for integrity and justice.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
Thanks be to God.

The people stand and sing.

Gospel Hymn #99 Go Tell It On the Mountain

Refrain

*Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and everywhere;
go tell it on the mountain,
that Jesus Christ is born!*

While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.

Refrain

Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

Words: African-American spiritual 19th cent.; adapt. John W. Work (1901-1967) Music: Go Tell It on the Mountain, Afro-American spiritual, 19th cent.; arr. Horace Clarence Boyer (b. 1935)

The Christmas Pageant

The congregation is invited to sing along with the children when they burst into song!

In order to count how many people there were so that he could tax them, the emperor told everyone to go to their hometowns to be counted. So Joseph went with Mary, his fiancée, who was expecting a baby at any time, from Nazareth to Bethlehem. His family was descended from King David, and King David had lived in Bethlehem. While they were there, Mary delivered a baby boy, wrapped him up tight, and laid him in a feed trough in the barn where they were staying because the inns were all full.

Meanwhile, in the fields, shepherds were watching their sheep during the night. Suddenly, an angel stood right in front of them, and God's glory was shining all around and they were scared to death. The angel told them not to be afraid because there was only good news.

"This news is so good," the angel said, "that everyone will be happy. Today in the city of David, the Savior whom everyone's been waiting for was born. I want you to find him. Here's how you'll know he's the right baby: He'll be lying in a feed trough all wrapped up in strips of cloth." When the angel said that, the skies burst into song, and angels filled up the entire sky, praising God and singing

Welcome Jesus, Welcome Jesus!

We're so glad you came to earth.

Welcome Jesus, Welcome Jesus!

We're so happy to witness your birth!

Weeks of traveling, weeks of hardship,

Weeks of wandering toward the star.

Many places, many people,

They have come from so very far!

When the angels had gone back to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem and find this baby boy they were talking about." So they ran and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby lying in the feed trough, just as the angel had told them. They told Mary and Joseph what the angel had said, about who this child was and would become.

Everyone was amazed at their story. But Mary kept this entire story in her heart. The shepherds praised God for all that had happened that night and went back to their sheep who had been wondering where their shepherds had gone.

Love, Love, Love, Love
Jesus came to show God loves us
That's why Jesus came to Earth
Love, Love, Love

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.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found.

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

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt. Music: Antioch, George Frideric Handel (1685-1759); adapt. and arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872).

The Prayers of the People

O God, on this holy night, we celebrate your birth among us as a human child. We celebrate alongside Mary and Joseph, who through their everyday work of parenting became part of your story of salvation.

On the first Christmas, there was no room in the inn. Protect with your love those in our community who have no home tonight, who are living under bridges, in abandoned buildings, or in shelters. We pray especially for families experiencing homelessness with babies, who bear the fragility of new life in hard and anxious times.

The Messiah came with the sign of a star shining in the night. Bring light to those who are suffering from sickness, who endure pain in mind or body, especially those people who

are spending Christmas in the hospitals in our community.

Jesus was born in a stable, surrounded by animals, he came as a Saviour for all creation. Bring healing and peace to our relationship with the earth. Renew our sense of the holy, and give us the wisdom to treat the world with respect and care.

The angels came with a message of good news in a troubled time. We need your good news in the troubled parts of our lives, with family ties that are strained or broken. We need your good news in our war-filled world. We pray especially for the people of Ukraine and Russia, And other countries where people are hurt and divided.

The shepherds were commissioned to spread tidings of great joy, a joy that can reach even those sitting in the shadow of death. At this holiday time, we remember those we love who have died. We know that in your grace they too are part of this choir of praise.

We join our voices with them and with the hosts of heaven, in praising you now and forever. We sang, we sing, we will sing Alleluia! Christ the Saviour is born. Amen.

Celebrant: Most merciful and loving God, you have made this day holy by the incarnation of your Son Jesus Christ, and by the child-bearing of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Grant that we your people may enter with joy into the celebration of this day, and may also rejoice for ever as your adopted children; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please stand for the peace.

The Peace

The peace of God be with you.

And also with you.

Doxology

As the offering plates are brought forward, we sing...

Praise God from whom all blessing flow,

Praise God all creatures here below,

Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts,

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

The Holy Eucharist

Please stand.

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The celebrant will improvise the Eucharistic Prayer. The Eucharistic Prayer consists of:

- The Preface, which expresses our feelings about the season that we're in.
- The Sanctus, where we join our voices with angels and archangels.
- The Institution Narrative, in which we tell the story of the Last Supper.
- The Memorial Acclamation, when we acknowledge that we've heard the story and made it part of our lives.
- The Epiclesis, when we ask the Holy Spirit to come be with us.

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The Bread is given to the communicants with these words

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life.

Please stand and remain standing until the end of the service.

Communion Hymn #79, O Little Town of Bethlehem, v. 1-2

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.

For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.

O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) Music: St. Louis, Lewis H. Redner (1831-1908)

Postcommunion Prayer

Eternal God, you have graciously accepted us as living members of our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Hymn #111, Silent Night

As we sing the hymn, candlelight will be passed from pew to pew.

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.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Words: Joseph Mohr (1792-1848); tr. John Freeman Young (1820-1885). Music: Stille Nacht, melody Franz Xaver
Gruber (1787-1863); harm. Carl H. Reinecke (1824-1910)

Blessing

May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you
with his joy and peace; and the blessing of the One, Holy, and Undivided Trinity, be among
you, and remain with you always. *Amen.*

Closing Hymn #87, Hark the Herald Angels Sing!

Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

Refrain

*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!*
Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with man to dwell;
Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Refrain

Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.

Risen with healing in his wings,
light and life to all he brings,
hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Refrain

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt. Music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915).

Dismissal

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

Postlude