



Grace Episcopal Church

First Sunday after Christmas
December 27, 2020 | 9:30am
Ministers | All of Us
Rector | Wren Blessing
Curate | Stephen Crippen
Music | Ann Strickland

Advent

I want to find my place
amongst the people of Advent
but I can't quite decide who I am.
I want to be pregnant with God
but it takes such a toll on the body.
I have given birth to things before
And labor is hard and untimely

I want to welcome angels and say yes,
to anything.
but if I saw an angel I would hold him
hostage and send a ransom note of questions
demanding answers, to God.

I want to cheer blessings from the sidelines
with a belly growing with prophecies,
and have friends and strangers take hope.
Because God has a season
for those whose seasons have passed

~ Enuma Okoro from *Light Upon Light: A Literary Guide to Prayer for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany*, ed by Sarah Arthur

Announcements

A bell rings. We listen to the longing in our hearts.

Gathering Song | The Holly and the Ivy *offered by Barbara Hume*

Traditional English

We will sing verses 1, 2, then 1 again

1. The hol-ly and the i - vy, When they are both full grown, Of
2. The hol-ly bears a blos - som, As white as lil - y flow'r, And

The first system of musical notation for the song. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 3/4 time and G major. The melody is written in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff. The first two lines of lyrics are shown, with the first line corresponding to the first two measures of the melody.

all trees that are in the wood, The hol - ly bears the crown: O, the
Mar - y bore sweet Je - sus Christ, To be our dear Sav - iour:

The second system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff. The first two lines of lyrics are shown, with the first line corresponding to the first two measures of the melody.

ris - ing of the sun, And the run - ning of the deer The

The third system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff. The first line of lyrics is shown, with the first two measures of the melody.

play - ing of the mer - ry or - gan, Sweet sing - ing in the choir.

The fourth system of musical notation, which concludes the piece. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff. The first line of lyrics is shown, with the first two measures of the melody.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Call to Worship

Officiant In the beginning

People was the Word.

Officiant The Word was with God,

People and the word was God.

Officiant In the beginning was God.

People All things came into being with God. What has come into being is life,

Officiant and that life is the light of all people.

People The light shines in the darkness,

Officiant and the darkness did not

People will not

Officiant can not

People overcome it.

We remain standing and sing together.

Opening Song | O Holy Night *offered by Hannah Kruse*

Words: Placide Cappeau, translated by John Sullivan Dwight | Music: Adolphe Charles Adam



1. O ho - ly night! the stars are bright - ly shin - ing, it is the
2. Led by the light of faith se - rene - ly beam - ing, with glow - ing
3. Tru - ly He taught us to love one an - oth - er; His law is



night of the dear Sav - ior's birth; Long lay the world in
hearts by His cra - dle we stand; So led by light of a
love and His gos - pel is peace; Chains shall He break, for the



sin and er - ror pin - ing, till He ap - peared and the soul felt its worth.
star sweet - ly gleam - ing, here came the wise men from O - ri - ent land.
slave is our broth - er, and in His name all op - pres - sion shall cease.



A thrill of hope, the wea - ry world re - joic - es, for yon - der
The King of kings lay thus in low - ly man - ger, in all our
Sweet hymns of joy in grate - ful cho - rus raise we, let all with -

O Holy Night, continued



breaks a new and glo - rious morn; Fall on your knees,
tri - als born to be our Friend; He knows our need,
-in us praise His ho - ly name; Christ is the Lord,



O, hear the an - gel voic - es! O night di -
to weak - ness is no stran - ger. Be - hold your
O, praise His name for - ev - er! His pow'r and



-vine, O night when Christ was born! O night,
King, be - fore Him low - ly bend! Be - hold
glo - ry ev - er - more pro - claim! His pow'r



O ho - ly night, O night di -
your and King, be - fore Him low - ly
and glo - ry, ev - er - more pro -



-vine!
bend!
-claim.

The Collect

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Holy One, you guide and surprise your people. Open us to your truth in unfamiliar landscapes, lead us by your Spirit, and grow within us the hope and generosity of your Word, that your light may grow within us and shine forth in our lives. **Amen.**

WE TELL THE STORY

We are seated for the reading.

The First Reading | Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

We stand and say the Psalm.

Psalm | 147: 13-21

Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion;

**For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you.**

He has established peace on your borders;
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

**He sends out his command to the earth,
and his word runs very swiftly.**

He gives snow like wool;
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

**He scatters his hail like bread crumbs;
who can stand against his cold?**

He sends forth his word and melts them;
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

**He declares his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.**

He has not done so to any other nation;
to them he has not revealed his judgments.
Hallelujah!

We are seated for the second reading.

The Second Reading | Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

After the reading, the reader will say

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

We stand together and sing

Gospel Song | Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming *offered by Molly & Matt Perri*

Words St. 1-2 German, 15th cent.; tr. Theodore Baker. St. 3, Friedrich Layritz: tr. Harriet Reynolds Krauth Spaeth.

Music: "Es ist ein Ros", melody from "Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng"

1 Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom-ing from ten - der stem hath sprung!
2 I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the Rose I have in mind,
* 3 O Flower, whose fra - grance ten - der with sweet - ness fills the air,

Of Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing as seers of old have sung.
with Ma - ry we be - hold it, the Vir - gin Mo - ther kind.
dis - pel in glo - rious splen - dor the dark - ness ev - ery - where;

It came, a blos - som bright, a - mid the
To show God's love a - right, she bore to
true man, yet ve - ry God, from sin and

cold of win - ter, when half spent was the night.
us a Sa - vior, when half spent was the night.
death now save us, and share our ev - ery load.

The Officiant introduces the Gospel by saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The Gospel | |John 1:1-18

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.

After the Gospel the Officiant will say

The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

OUR RESPONSE TO THE STORY

The Homily

Affirmation of Faith

We stand and say

**We believe in God above us,
maker and sustainer of all life,
of sun and moon,
of water and earth,
of all humanity.**

**We believe in God beside us,
Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh,
born of a woman's womb, servant of the poor,
he was tortured and nailed to a tree.
Knowing full passion and deep sorrow, he died forsaken.
He descended into the earth to the place of death.
On the third day he rose from the tomb.
He ascended into heaven to be everywhere present,
and his Kingdom will one day be known.**

**We believe in God within us,
the Holy Spirit of Pentecostal fire,
life-giving breath of the Church.
She is the Spirit of healing and forgiveness,
source of resurrection and of life everlasting. Amen**

The Prayers of the People

Cameroon traditional; arr. Marty Haugen

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a melody with a triplet of eighth notes in the first three measures of each line. The lyrics are: "He came down that we may have love, he / He came down that we may have joy, he / came down that we may have love, he / came down that we may have joy, he / came down that we may have love, Hal - le - / came down that we may have joy, / lu - jah for - ev - er - more." The piece concludes with a double bar line.

He came down that we may have love, he
He came down that we may have joy, he
came down that we may have love, he
came down that we may have joy, he
came down that we may have love, Hal - le -
came down that we may have joy,
lu - jah for - ev - er - more.

Leader “When the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’”
God, we pray for our church leaders. May they be led by your true light as they guide us along our journeys of faith.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

Leader God, guide us as we prepare for changes in all levels of government. May we all work for justice and peace within our nation.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

Leader God, you prepare rain for the earth causing its shoots to come forth. Help us to care for your Creation as much as you do.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

Leader God, guide us to see the needs of our community and beyond. Help us to fill those needs as we can. We pray especially for our ministry partners this month: Helpline House, Fishline, and La Iglesia de la Resurrección.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

Leader God, you sent your Word to live among us and to experience our suffering. We pray especially for those on our parish prayer list.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

Leader God, bring those who have died to your eternal kingdom, where suffering is no more and joy takes its place. Remind us that we will come to your heavenly kingdom in the fullness of time.

We pause for further prayer.

Leader God our Father,
People birth your light in us.

He came down that we may have peace. he
 He came down that we may have love, he
 came down that we may have peace. he
 came down that we may have love, he
 came down that we may have peace. Hal - le -
 came down that we may have love,
 lu - jah for - ev - er - more.

Officiant Let us pray.

**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.**

Offertory

While we cannot gather in person, we make our weekly offerings online here: <https://www.gracehere.org/give/>.

The Blessing

The Officiant offers a blessing.

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, fill your heart and your home with peace. And may the blessing of God, the love of Christ, and the fellowship of the Spirit rest upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Closing Song | Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words: Charles Wesley | Music: Felix Mendelssohn



1 Hark! the her-ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new-born King!
2 Christ, by high-est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;
3 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car-nate De - i - ty.
Risen with heal-ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,



with the an-gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!
Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!
hail, the Sun of Right-eous-ness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Using the Zoom chat window, please share a milestone that we can recognize together.

We will sing, "God Grant Them Many Years."

Dismissal

Officiant Alleluia! Alleluia! Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Newcomers

Are you new or visiting? Please fill out this form on our website to learn more about Grace gracehere.org/visitors-newcomers or email one of our clergy Stephen Crippen (stephen@gracehere.org) or Wren Blessing (wren@gracehere.org).

Some Christmas Stars

Blazes the star behind the hill.

Snow stars glint from the wooden sill.

A spider spins her silver still

within Your darkened stable shed:

in asterisks her webs are spread

to ornament your manger bed.

Where does a spider find the skill

to sew a star? Invisible,

obedient, she works Your will

with her swift silences of thread.

I weave star-poems in my head;

the spider, wordless, spins instead.

~ Luci Shaw from *A Widening Light: Poems of the Incarnation*
(Harold Shaw Publishers, 1994)