

The Nativity of Our Lord

December 25, 2020 10:30 A.M.

Holy Communion



Oil on wood by Bartolome Esteban Murillo.
It was painted from 1650-55
and is treasured in the Museo del Prado, Madrid (Spain).

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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www.stpaulsyork.org

Guidelines for Worship during the time of COVID-19

Entering and Leaving the Church:

Face masks are required inside, Kindly sign in at the door through which you entered. This will help if we need to be in contact.

Please take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.

Offerings:

Monetary offerings may be placed in the basins provided at the entrances to the nave prior to the service or immediately following the service. You may also donate via our website at www.stpaulsyork.org

While in the Nave:

Please wear your mask. Please sit in designated pews only. You may sit together as a family. We ask that you practice social distancing from one family to the next within the pew.

Communion Procedure:

- *Ushers will direct you. The pulpit side (left) of the nave communes first followed by the font side (right).*
- *Wearing your face mask, come to the chancel step taking your place at one of the five positions marked on the chancel floor with a green cross.*
- *Your entire household may gather at a position marked by the green cross.*
- *Extend your arms and cup your hands together to receive the host.*
- *Please do not reach out to take the Host from the minister.*
- *Once the minister has moved to the next group, then remove your mask, receive the host, replace your mask and return to your pew by the closest side aisle. There is no need to hurry.*
- *We are receiving communion in one kind only (bread/host).*

Our COVID-19 task force is assisting us as we remain open at St. Paul's. Please thank Deacon Ellen Doughty, Dr. Jessica Ericson, Sheridan Palmer, Deacon Harold Sargeant, Dr. Martha Thomas, and Tim Yakim for their dedication and service.



The Altar Flowers are presented to the Glory of God with praise and thanksgiving for all that God provides by Andrew and Ellen Doughty and in memory of Josephine M. Cushner, John Cushner, M.D. & Mary R. Maxwell by JoAnne Cushner Debes & Family

*The Christmas Bulletins are sponsored by
Mim Boyer in loving memory of her husband, David Boyer.*

THE ENTIRE ST. PAUL'S STAFF WISH YOU
THE JOYS AND BLESSINGS OF THIS HOLY SEASON.
MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM:
VICTOR, TED, PATEE, KELLY, DALE, DEB, AND PASTOR STAN.

The Nativity of Our Lord

Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

LBW Setting 2

PRELUDE

How Great Our Joy!

Anne Krentz Organ

Reep Family Handbell Ringers

Stand

ENTRANCE HYMN

Rejoice, Rejoice This Happy Morn (LBW 43)

Re-joyce, re - joice this hap - py morn, a Sav - ior un - to us is
born, the Christ, the Lord of glo - ry! His low - ly birth at Beth - le -
hem the an - gels from on high pro - claim and sing re - demp - tion's sto - ry!
My soul, ex - tol God's great fa - vor; bless him ev - er
for sal - va - tion; give him praise and ad - o - ra - tion!

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have given your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and to be born this day of a pure virgin: Grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom with you and the same Spirit be honor and glory, now and for ever.

Amen

Sit

READING

Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news,

who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

⁸Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the LORD to Zion.

⁹Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

PSALMODY

Good Christian Friends Rejoice (LBW 55)

Verse 1&2—Cantor Verse 3—ALL



- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice | with heart and soul and voice; |
| 2 | Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice | with heart and soul and voice; |
| 3 | Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice | with heart and soul and voice; |



give ye heed to what we say:	Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss:	Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave;	Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and	he is in the man - ger now.
He has o - pened heav - en's door, and	we are blest for - ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to	gain the ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day!	Christ is born to - day!
Christ was born for this!	Christ was born for this!
Christ was born to save!	Christ was born to save!

Stand

VERSE

Alleluia.

To you is Born this day a Savior, Christ the Lord. Alleluia.

GOSPEL

John 1:1-14

The Holy Gospel according to St. John the first chapter

Glory to you, O Lord.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. ¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And 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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

Pastor Reep

Stand

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the vir gin
Mary, and was made man.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

Continued on next page...

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.**

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen**

THE PRAYERS

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world,
and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

God of glory, empower your church to proclaim your name with boldness and tenderness announcing your salvation to all the ends of the earth. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Protect the beauty of mountains and valleys. Save glaciers, tundra, and arctic lands from the threat of changing climates. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Build trust among nations. Strengthen relationships that reach beyond borders. Grant safety to ambassadors, relief workers, military personnel, and health care providers. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bring wholeness to all who long for your comfort and companionship. Revive aching spirits and restore tired bodies. Bring healing and wholeness to all who long for mercy (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Bless ministries of generosity in this congregation and community. Open our doors in welcome, extend our tables to guests, and send us out with provisions for those who lack food, water, shelter, clothing, or companionship. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Encourage us by the witness of the saints across the ages who have testified to your light and life (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful Father,

We offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us-ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

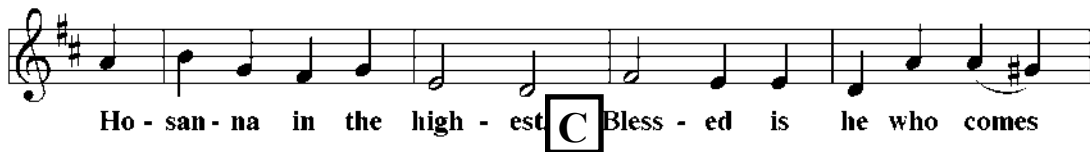
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P It is indeed right and salutary . . . *(Here the minister continues with the preface for Christmas, concluding:)* we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS *Sung by cantor.* **C** *Congregation joins at the “Blessed is he...”*



EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

You are indeed holy, O God, the fountain of all holiness; you bring light from darkness, life from death, speech from silence. We worship you for our lives and for the world you give us. We thank you for the new world to come and for the love that will rule all in all. We praise you for the grace shown to Israel, your chosen, the people of your promise: the rescue from Egypt, the gift of the promised land, the memory of the fathers, the homecoming from exile, and the prophets' words that will not be in vain. In all this we bless you for your only-begotten Son, who fulfilled and will fulfill all your promises. In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Therefore, O God, with this bread and cup we remember the incarnation of your Son: his human birth and the covenant he made with us. We remember the sacrifice of his life: his eating with outcasts and sinners, and his acceptance of death. But chiefly [on this day] we remember his rising from the tomb, his ascension to the seat of power, and his sending of the holy and life-giving Spirit. We cry out for the resurrection of our lives, when Christ will come again in beauty and power to share with us the great and promised feast.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit, that we and all who share in this bread and cup may be united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, may enter the fullness of the kingdom of heaven, and may receive our inheritance with all your saints in light.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Join our prayers with those of your servants of every time and every place, and unite them with the ceaseless petitions of our great high priest until he comes as victorious Lord of all.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever.

Amen.

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,
forever and ever. Amen.

FRACTION RITE *A brief silence is kept.*

AGNUS DEI *Sung by Cantor.*



☩ Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on us.



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world;



grant us peace, grant us peace.

Sit The pastor cleanses hands and prepares for the distribution of Holy Communion.

COMMUNION OF THE FAITHFUL

Instructions for receiving the sacrament are on the inside front cover of the bulletin.

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BLESSING

HYMN

Stanzas sung as solo ***Congregation sings refrain.***

The Refrain of the song is written on a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), Bb4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half), and Bb4 (half). The final note, Bb4, is held over a bar line and then tied to the next measure, which contains a whole note Bb4. The word "Refrain" is written above the staff on the right side.

he - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
rang out the an - gel cho-rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless-ed Christ-mas morn.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

I Saw Three Ships

Raymond Weidner

*Please be respectful of distancing and personal space as you leave.
Feel free to gather outside for conversation.
Please take your service bulletin with you and dispose of it properly.*

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Christmas Day 2020 Pastor's Sermon

“We have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.”

Last night the church wasn't full. This year more than any other in my life, families gathered in their homes to celebrate the New Born King. And while the traditions that many of us have grown accustomed to have been radically altered, the glory of God is revealed; the glory of God that the gospel writer is proclaiming in the text for this Christmas Day. We often think that God's glory is revealed only through heavenly messengers or through some mysterious means. But the gospel writer John is all about the earthiness of God being revealed in Jesus. In a baby in a manger, not so much as through the life and witness of a 30 year old man who entered into the wilderness of life.

The glory that John is proclaiming is the glory that we behold through belief in the Father's son. If we have seen this glory at all it is through a chain of tradition of believers begetting believers – believers, like the many families and individuals who offered worship and prayer last night. Some here in this place but the majority gathered in their homes; families, couples, and individuals, all of whom gathered in the Spirit of the “only Son from the Father.” And now we who believe are gathered this morning. God's glory is being revealed. You may wish or long for something else, but we are the solid, sooty, sinful creation to whom and for whom God utters a creative Word. That Word is Jesus.

Christmas is here. We have begun our celebration. The world, those who do not believe (a distinction that the 4th gospel writer makes), will soon be packing up decorations, hauling trees and greens to the curb and getting on with the ushering in of a new year the hopes and dreams of which I suspect to be a radical departure from what we have experienced and witnessed in 2020. There is no glory here. Little, perhaps even none of the glory of God is being revealed for those who miss completely the season to which John calls us. Not a season of decorations and trees and greens, but a season of life in the One who's glory is revealed.

John's gospel narrative speaks to believers; faithful people who are poor, or who suffer grievous loss, who have been sorely tried and who cling to faith. As we cling to faith, we are never alone. We cling to faith in the midst of community. The community this year is physically distanced but no less a part of the witness of believers among whom God's glory is revealed.

This is the season where cards and greetings are exchanged. Not nearly so many Christmas cards as in years past. The cultural shift to electronic social media and ecards has diminished the sharing of faith through Christmas greetings that have always in some mysterious way revealed God's glory for me. Nothing can quite capture the deep joy I receive from a sister or brother in faith who actually writes a personal note or letter which recalls: previous times shared, life lived, obstacles overcome, hope renewed, through the enduring bonds of Christ's love made known in Christian community. It is of course that connectedness, those relationships, which reveal God's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

John wants, John longs for us, to behold God's glorious love in Christ. This is the gospel writer who states "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." This is the writer who places God's son Jesus in the midst of solid, sooty, sinful people – people who are believably real and for whom a creative, redeeming Word is uttered.

Beholding glory ought to come easily for us. It doesn't mainly because we still see one another as flawed, broken, sinful beings. We don't often view one another as the redeemed of God, sinners for whom and to whom a creative Word is spoken. In a former liturgy the opening line from the Sunday morning confession began "Beloved of the Lord..." Perhaps there was something to that statement that helped to shape a deeper understanding of God's love for all and truly stated how God views us, loved.

This is Christmas for the gospel writer John. The Word became flesh. A word for the flawed, broken, sinful human beings; people like you and me. Beholding this One's glory acknowledges our need for God, the forgiveness of our sins, and the embrace of what Jesus gives, a creative life giving word so that we don't perish and so that life is lush, full, brimming with newness not just for an hour, or a day, or a season – but for eternity. Amen.

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