

# CHRISTMAS EVE FESTIVAL EUCHARIST

ST. PAUL'S ON THE GREEN | DECEMBER 24, 2025 - 6:00 PM

---



## CHORAL PRELUDE

### Herefordshire Carol

*Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958)*  
*Words: Traditional English Carol*

This is the truth sent from above,  
the truth of God, the God of love;  
therefore don't turn me from the door  
but hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will relate,  
that God at first did man create;  
the next thing which to you I tell -  
woman was made with him to dwell.

Then after that 'twas God's own choice  
to place them both in paradise,  
there to remain from evil free  
except they ate of such a tree.

But they did eat, which was a sin,  
and thus their ruin did begin -  
ruined themselves, both you and me,  
and all of our posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes  
till God the Lord did interpose;  
and so a promise soon did run:  
that he'd redeem us by his Son.

## Gaudete!

Anonymous  
Piae Cantiones, 1582

*Gaudete, Gaudete  
Christus est natus ex Maria virgine  
Gaudete*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Christ is born of the Virgin Mary.  
Rejoice!*

*Tempus adest gratiae, hoc quod optabamus;  
carmina laetitiae devote reddamus.*

*The time of grace has come, for which we have  
prayed; songs of gladness with devotion we offer.*

*Deus homo factus est, natura mirante;  
mundus renovatus est a Christo regnante.*

*God is made human in this wonderful birth;  
the world is renewed through the rule of Christ.*

*Ezechiellis porta clausa pertransitur;  
unde lux est orta, salus invenitur.*

*The closed gate of Ezechiel has been passed  
through; from where the light rises, Salvation is  
discovered.*

*Ergo nostra contio psallat iam in lustro;  
Benedicat Domino; salus regi nostro.*

*Therefore, let our congregation now sing psalms  
in sacrifice; let us bless the Lord, King of our  
Salvation.*

## **In the Stillness**

*Sally Beamish (b. 1956)*

In the stillness of a church  
Where candles glow,  
In the softness of a fall  
Of fresh white snow,  
In the brightness of the stars  
That shine this night,  
In the calmness of a pool  
Of healing light,  
In the clearness of a choir  
That softly sings,

In the oneness of a hush  
Of angels' wings,  
In the mildness of a night  
By stable bare,  
In the quietness of a lull  
Near cradle fair,  
There's a patience as we wait  
For a new morn,  
And the presence of a child  
Soon to be born.

## **A Spotless Rose**

*Herbert Howells (1892 – 1983)*

A spotless Rose is blowing  
Sprung from a tender root,  
Of ancient seers' foreshowing,  
Of Jesse promised fruit;  
Its fairest bud unfolds to light  
Amid the cold, cold winter  
And in the dark midnight.

The Rose which I am singing,  
Whereof Isaiah said,  
Is from its sweet root springing  
In Mary, purest Maid;  
For through our God's great love and might  
The blessed babe she bare us  
In a cold, cold winter's night.

## Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day

*John Gardner (1917 – 2011)*

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day;  
I would my true love did so chance  
To see the legend of my play,  
To call my true love to my dance;

*Chorus:* Sing, O, my love,  
O my love, my love, my love,  
This have I done for my true love

Then was I born of a virgin pure,  
Of her I took fleshly substance  
Thus was I knit to man's nature  
To call my true love to my dance. *Chorus:*

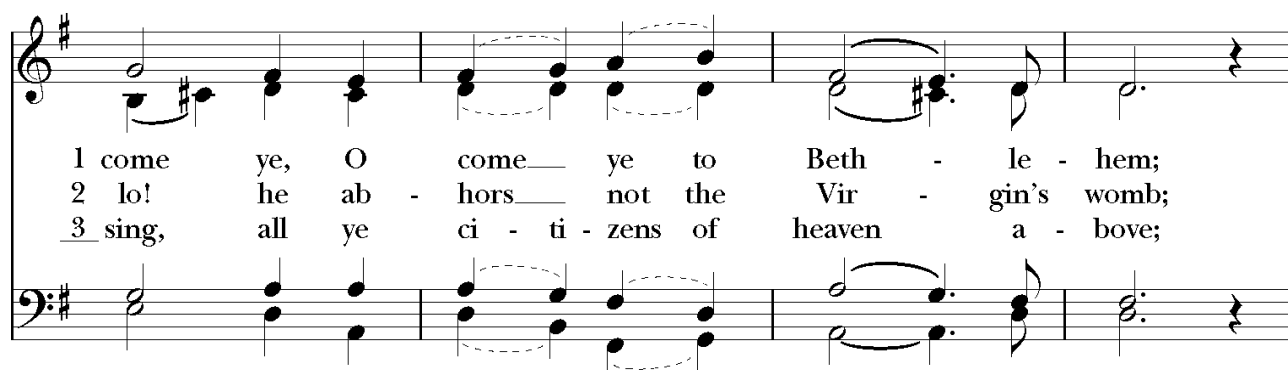
In a manger laid, and wrapped I was  
So very poor, this was my chance  
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass  
To call my true love to my dance. *Chorus:*

Then afterwards baptized I was;  
The Holy Ghost on me did glance,  
My Father's voice heard from above,  
To call my true love to my dance. *Chorus:*

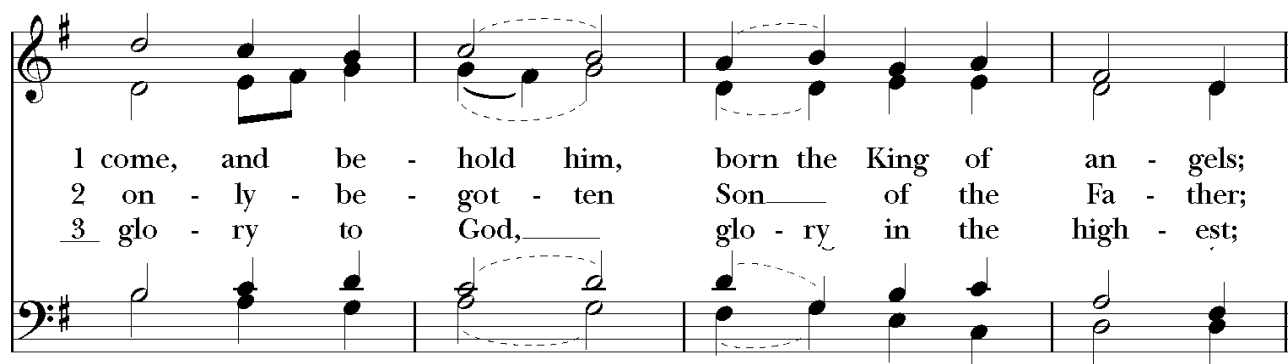
*Please stand as the bell sounds.*



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O  
 2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,  
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,




1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
 2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;  
 3 sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven a - bove;



1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;  
 2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;  
 3 glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est;

*Refrain*



O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -



dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

6 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
born this happy morning;  
Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
Word of the Father,  
now in flesh appearing;

*Refrain*

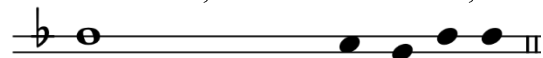
Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786); tr. Fredrick Oakley (1802-1880) and others

Music: *Adeste fideles*, present form of melody att. John Francis Wade (1711-1786); harm. The English Hymnal, 1906

## OPENING ACCLAMATION

*The Celebrant intones*

Blessed be God, born to us in Christ, the Light of the world.



Glory to God fore-ver and ev-er.

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,  
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.  
 come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

*Refrain*

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -

- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813–1882), alt.  
 Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887–1958)



## COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord 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. Join our voices with the heavenly host, that we may sing your glory on high. Give us a place among the shepherds, that we may find the one for whom we have waited, Jesus Christ, your word made flesh, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

## THE LESSON     *seated*

*Isaiah 9:2,6-7*

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the People.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM     *sung by the Choir*

*Psalms 96:1-4, 7-10*

Sing to God a new song; \*  
sing to God all the whole earth.

Sing and bless God's holy Name; \*  
proclaim the good news of salvation from day to day.

Declare God's glory among the nations, \*  
God's wonders among all peoples.

For God is great and greatly to be praised, \*  
more to be feared than all gods.

Ascribe to God, you families of the peoples, \*  
ascribe to God honor and power.

Ascribe due honor to God's holy Name; \*  
bring offerings and come into God's courts.

Worship the Most High in the beauty of holiness; \*  
let the whole earth tremble before God.

Tell it out among the nations that God reigns! \*  
God has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved  
and will judge the peoples with equity.

Setting: Antioch arr. Joshua Ehlebracht

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to the People.

**Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL HYMN     *The People stand and turn toward the Deacon as the Gospel comes among the People.*

*Unison or harmony*

1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Ma - ry; and gath - ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!

1 A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
 2 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.  
 3 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.

1 yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
 2 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
 3 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,

1 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 2 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.  
 3 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.

Words: Phillips Brooks (1835–1893)  
 Music: *Forest Green*, English melody; adapt. and harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)

THE GOSPEL *All face the Gospel reader, who intones*

*Luke 2:1-20*

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

Glory to you, O Christ.

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 you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Daniel Simons  
*Rector*

*A period of silent reflection follows the sermon.*

## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God of silent wonder: you have pierced the quiet of this night by the utterance of your Word made flesh.

**May your word of compassion and reconciliation resound in us and through us.**

On this holy night angels proclaim the peace of your unconquered Sun of righteousness.

**Strengthen all who work for peace and justice.**

On this holy night shepherds and outcasts hear your good news.

**Give us grace to spread your gospel of joy and liberation.**

On this holy night you come to us in a child cradled in a borrowed bed of straw.

**Open our hearts to the needs of the homeless and the hungry.**

On this holy night your living Word leaps down, shedding light on all who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death.

**Give strength and peace to all who suffer in body, mind and spirit.**

On this holy night we rejoice at the coming of this season of feasting and refreshment.

**Guard those who travel, enrich our rejoicing, and strengthen the bonds between us.**

On this holy night heaven and earth embrace, and in your true child you give us power to be your children. Hold in your love all who have departed this life and gone before us in faith.

**May we, like them, remain faithful to the mystery of the Word made flesh and live in your eternal light.**

*The Celebrant concludes*

Almighty God, you wonderfully created, and yet more wonderfully restored the dignity of human nature. In your mercy, bring us to share the divine life of the one who came to share our humanity, Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*Please share a sign of peace with those around you.*

---

### Supporting the Ministry of St. Paul's

St. Paul's is fully supported by the contributions of its members and friends. Visit the address below or click on the QR code to learn more about the opportunities to give. Please consider making a meaningful year-end gift or make an ongoing sustaining gift to ensure the enduring and vibrant ministry of this place. Thank you for your participation and support!



*[stpaulsnorwalk.org/support](http://stpaulsnorwalk.org/support)*

---

### MUSIC AT THE OFFERTORY *sung by the Choir*

#### **In the Bleak Midwinter**

*Arr. Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)  
Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934)*

In the bleak midwinter  
Frosty wind made moan  
Earth stood hard as iron  
Water like a stone  
Snow had fallen  
Snow on snow, snow on snow  
In the bleak midwinter, long, long ago

What can I give Him  
Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb  
If I were a wise man, I would do my part;  
Yet what I can, I give Him;  
Give my heart

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him  
Nor earth sustain  
Heaven and earth shall flee away  
When He comes to reign  
In the bleak mid-winter  
A stable-place sufficed  
Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ

*Introduction*



1 On this day earth shall ring  
 2 His the doom, ours the mirth;  
 3 God's bright star, o'er his head,  
 4 On this day an - gels sing;



with the song child - ren sing to the Lord, Christ our King,  
 when he came down to earth Beth - le - hem saw his birth;  
 Wise Men three to him led; kneel they low by his bed,  
 with their song earth shall ring, prais - ing Christ, hea - ven's King,



born on earth to save us; him the Fa - ther gave us.  
 ox and ass be - side him from the cold would hide him.  
 lay their gifts be - fore him, praise him and a - dore him.  
 born on earth to save us; peace and love he gave us.

*Refrain*



Id - e - o - o - o, Id - e - o - o - o,



Id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

*"Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!" is Latin for "Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"*

Words: *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; tr. Jane M. Joseph (1894-1929)

Music: *Personent hodie*, melody from *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; harm. Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The musical score is written on four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff is for the Celebrant and the second for the People. The third staff is for the Celebrant and the fourth for the People. The lyrics are written below the notes.

*Celebrant*      *People*  
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

*Celebrant*      *People*  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

*Celebrant*  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People*  
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

O Eternal Wisdom, we praise you and give you thanks. You did not cling to power but poured yourself out in love. You embraced the frailty of our flesh, the breath of mortal life, the smallness of a child.

On this most holy night you came to dwell among us, not robed in splendor, but wrapped in swaddling clothes; not welcomed by palaces, but laid in a borrowed place, poor and needy, a refugee before you had a name.

In this child you spoke good news to the poor, freedom to the captive, light for those who walk in darkness, and hope where hope had been lost.

And so we lift our voices, with all the stars of heaven, with the angels of this night, and with all who have trusted your promise and loved you through the ages, evermore praising your holy name:

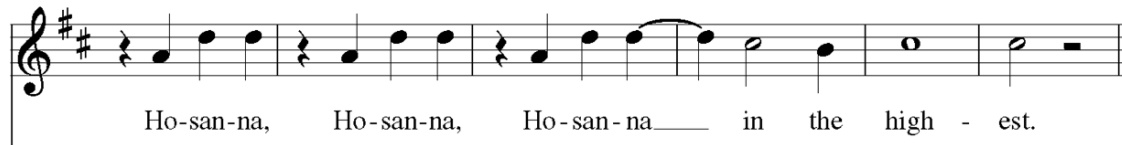
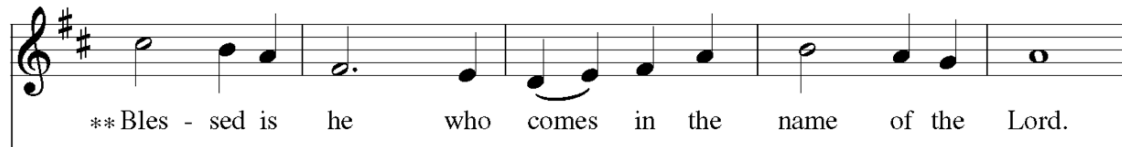
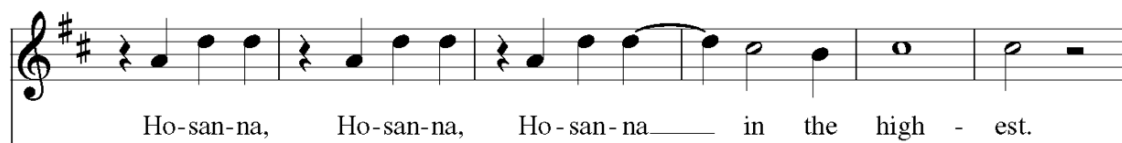
## SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS

*The congregation and choir sing together:*



*The choir sings alone: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,*

*The congregation and choir sing together:*



Arnatt (b. 1930)

Setting: Ronald

Blessed is our brother Jesus, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. On the night he was handed over to death, he gathered his friends at table. He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, given for you."

After supper he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, whenever you drink it, for the remembrance of me."

Be among us now, O Christ, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.



Setting: Jackson Hill (b. 1941)



Come now, Holy Spirit. Overshadow us as you overshadowed Mary. Bless these gifts of bread and wine, and make us one body in Christ.

As Mary's Yes opened the door to heaven, may Christ be born again in us, in our grief and in our gladness, for the life of the world.

All this we ask in the risen life of the One who joins heaven and earth, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are yours, now and for ever.

Music: McNeil Robinson II (1943-2015)



## THE LORD'S PRAYER

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray:

Our Fa - ther in hea - ven, hall-owed be your Name, your king - dom come,

The first system of musical notation for 'The Lord's Prayer'. It consists of a grand staff with a treble and bass clef, both in B-flat major. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: 'Our Fa - ther in hea - ven, hall-owed be your Name, your king - dom come,'.

your will be done, on earth as in hea - ven. Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.

The second system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are: 'your will be done, on earth as in hea - ven. Give us to - day our dai - ly bread.'.

And for - give us our sins as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.

The third system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'And for - give us our sins as we for - give those who sin a - gainst us.'.

Save us from the time of trial, and de - liv - er us from e - vil.

The fourth system of musical notation. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'Save us from the time of trial, and de - liv - er us from e - vil.'.

For the king - dom, the po - wer, and the glo - ry are yours, now and for ev - er. A - men.

The fifth system of musical notation, which concludes the piece. It continues the melody and accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'For the king - dom, the po - wer, and the glo - ry are yours, now and for ev - er. A - men.'.

Setting: Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908); adapted.

## THE COMMUNION

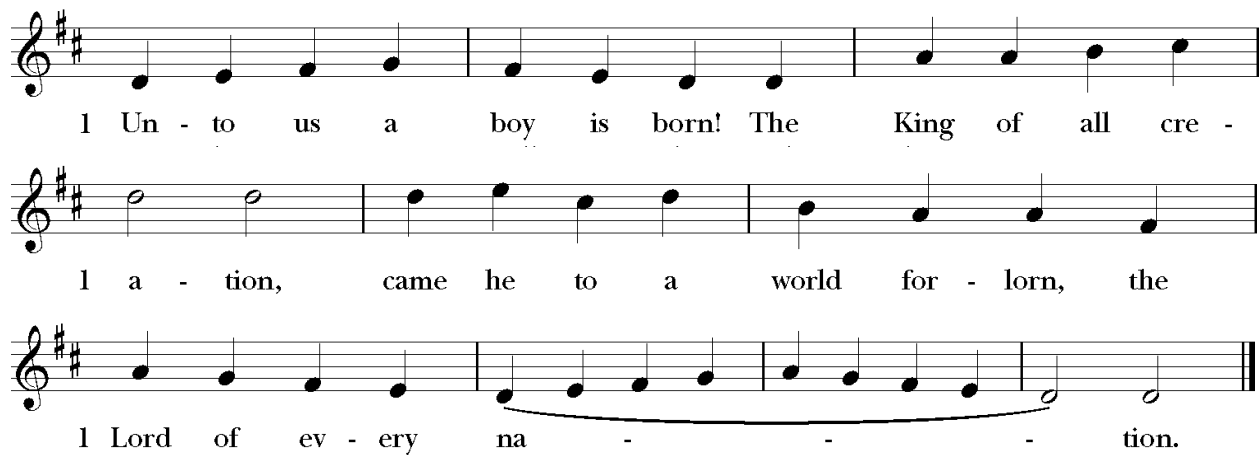
*The Celebrant breaks the bread and invites the People to Communion, saying*

Alleluia! The Word becomes bread for the world.

**Broken that we may be whole. Alleluia!**

*Everyone is welcome to receive the bread and wine of Communion. Please follow the direction of the ushers. Gluten-free bread is available upon request; grape juice is available in the blue-dot cups at the side altars. (For the health of all, we are no longer dipping the bread into the chalice wine by hand.)*

*All sing together as the distribution of Communion begins.*



Music: *Puer nobis nascitur*, melody from *Piae Cantiones*, 1582; harm. Geoffrey Turton Shaw (1879–1943)

## MUSIC AT COMMUNION *sung by the Choir*

### Nativity Carol

*John Rutter (b. 1945)*

Born in a stable so bare  
Born so long ago  
Born 'neath light of star  
He who loved us so. *Chorus*

Wise men from distant far land  
Shepherds from starry hills  
Worship this babe so rare  
Hearts with his warmth he fills. *Chorus*

*Chorus:*  
Far away, silent he lay  
Born today, your homage pay  
For Christ is born for aye  
Born on Christmas Day

Love in that stable was born  
Into our hearts to flow  
Innocent dreaming babe  
Make me thy love to know. *Chorus*

Cradled by mother so fair  
Tender her lullaby  
Over her son so dear  
Angel hosts fill the sky. *Chorus*

*All sing the first verse together*

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.  
Sleep in heavenly peace.

*– you are welcome to continue singing with the choir on the following verses.*

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

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

THE PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*standing*

Let us pray together.

Loving God,  
you have fed us with the spiritual food  
of Christ's Body and Blood.  
As we stand before the manger  
and worship your Son,  
fill us with the angels' song,  
that we may bear your love and goodness to the world;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE BLESSING

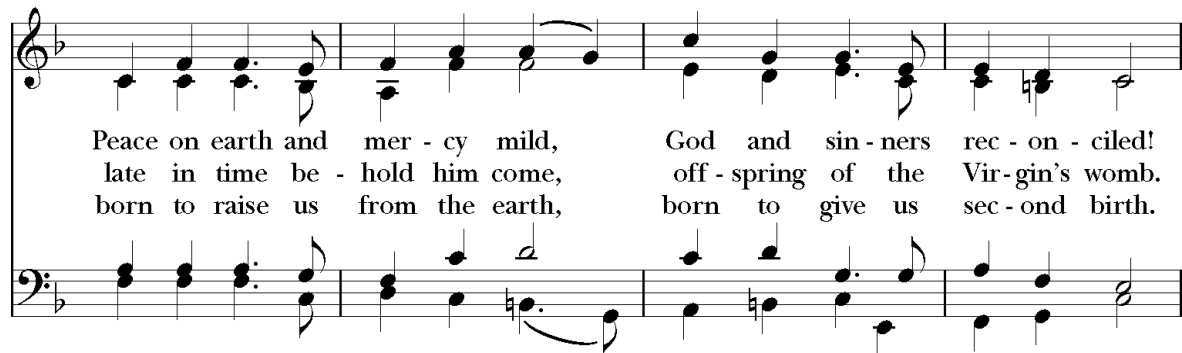
May the joy of the angels,  
the wonder of the shepherds,  
and the peace of Christ  
keep your hearts this Christmas.

And the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be upon you and remain with you  
now and forever.

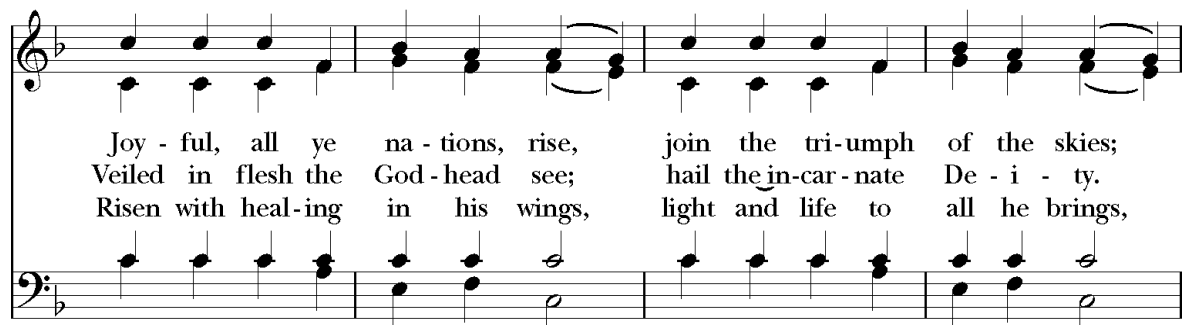
**Amen.**



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!

*Refrain*



Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new-born King!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707–1788), alt.

Music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831–1915)

## THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace to proclaim the good news of great joy.

**Thanks be to God.**

## ORGAN VOLUNTARY

*Christmas 'Variations on Adeste Fideles' - Gaston Dethier (1875-1958)*

---

# CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25

**11:00am**      Holy Eucharist with Organ

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

**9 & 11:00am**      Holy Eucharist with Organ

## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 31

**6:00pm**      New Years Eve Service with Burning Bowl

---

ST PAUL'S ON THE GREEN – 60 EAST AVE., NORWALK, CT 06851

Contact us at: 203-847-2806 [info@stpaulsnorwalk.org](mailto:info@stpaulsnorwalk.org)

The Rev. Daniel Simons *Rector*

The Rev. Paul Carling *Priest Associate*

Savannah Curro *Seminarian*

Joshua Ehlebracht *Director of Music*

Marsha Dunn *Parish Administrator*

*All music in this leaflet is printed with permission from OneLicense.net, License #A-709109*  
*Psalms: © Order of Saint Helena, used by permission*