

Welcome to Christmas Eve at St. John's Church
in Gloucester Massachusetts.



LESSONS AND CAROLS 2020

A virtual event

Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this diocese.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus we are for ever one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

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, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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

Anthem

Stay With Us

Egil Hovland (1894-1969)

Stay with us, Lord Jesus, it soon is evening, and night is falling.

Jesus Christ, the world's true light!

Shine so the darkness cannot overcome it!

Let you light pierce the darkness and fill your church with its glory.

1. Isaiah 9:2-87 read by Doug Parsons

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. 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. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

The Lord sent a word against Jacob, and it fell on Israel; and all the people knew it — Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria — but in pride and arrogance of heart they said: “The bricks have fallen, but we will build with dressed stones; the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place.” So the LORD raised adversaries against them, and stirred up their enemies, the Arameans on the east and the Philistines on the west, and they devoured Israel with open mouth. For all this his anger has not turned away; his hand is stretched out still. The people did not turn to him who struck them, or seek the LORD of hosts. So the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm branch and reed in one day — elders and dignitaries are the head, and prophets who teach lies are the tail; for those who led this people led them astray, and those who were led by them were left in confusion. That is why the Lord did not have pity on their young people, or compassion on their orphans and widows; for everyone was godless and an evildoer, and every mouth spoke folly. For all this his anger has not turned away, his hand is stretched out still. For wickedness burned like a fire, consuming briars and thorns; it kindled the thickets of the forest, and they swirled upward in a column of smoke. Through the wrath of the LORD of hosts the land was burned, and the people became like fuel for the fire; no one spared another. They gorged on the right, but still were hungry, and they devoured on the left, but were not satisfied; they devoured the flesh

The love that we have always known,
Our constant joy and endless light,
Now to the loveless world be shown,
Now break upon its deathly night.
Into one song compress the love,
That rules our universe above:
Sing love, sing God is love.

Words by Jaroslav Vajda (1919-2008)

Hymn 112

1. 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 ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
4. 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.

Christina Rossetti (1830-1894)

3. Micah 5:2-4 read by Martha Whitney

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

Hymn 79

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4. Where children pure and happy
pray to the blessed Child,
where misery cries out to thee,
Son of the mother mild;
where charity stand watching
and faith holds wide the door,
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks,
and Christmas comes once more.

5. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

4. Luke 1:26-38 read by Jim Labelle

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.

The Virgin's Slumber Song

Max Reger

Sung by Megan Errgong-Weider, soprano

Amid the roses Mary sits and rocks her Jesus-Child
While amid the treetops sighs the breeze so warm and mild
And soft and sweetly sings a bird upon the bough
Ah, Baby, dear one
Slumber now.

Happy is Thy laughter; holy is Thy silent rest
Lay Thy head in slumber fondly on Thy mother's breast
Ah, Baby, dear one
Slumber now.

Hymn 81

1 Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
as seers of old have sung.
It came, a blossom bright,
amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

2 Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
the Rose I have in mind,
with Mary we behold it,
the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright,
she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

5. Luke 2:1-7 read by Sebastian Murray-Brown

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.

Hymn — 111

Stille Nacht

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!

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, loves pure light
Radiant beams 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) Melody: Franz Gruber(1787-1863)

6. Luke 2:8-16 read by Iona Murray-Brown

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.

Poverty

words & music: Caradog Roberts (1878–1935)
trans. from Welsh by K.E. Roberts (1874–1932)

All poor folk and humble,
All lame folk who stumble,
Come haste ye, nor feel ye afraid:
For Jesus, our treasure,
With love past all measure,
In lowly poor manger was laid.

Though wise men who found him
Laid rich gifts around him,
Yet oxen they gave him their hay:
And Jesus in beauty
Accepted their duty;
Contented in manger he lay.

Then haste we to show him
The praises we owe him:
Our service he ne'er can despise:
Whose love still is able
To show us that stable
Where softly in manger he lies.

Hymn 96

Gloria

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

2 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, gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo, gloria in excelsis Deo.

4 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, gloria in excelsis Deo.

7. Matthew 2:1-12 Read by Pete Goodwin

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the

Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Jesus, Gift of God

Carson Cooman

Jesus, gift of God, here are gifts for you: angels bring their song, heavens bring their star; magi, gold and spice, shepherds, joy and awe. Jesus, alleluia!

Jesus, gift of God, here are gifts for you: earth gives you its cave, animals their crib, Mary gives her strength Joseph gives his card. Jesus, alleluia!

Jesus, gift of God, here are gifts for you: we will bring our hearts, bring the weight they bear; lay their burdens down, left your easy yoke. Jesus, alleluia!

Sung by choristers Jordan Palk and Julia Palk

John 1:1-14 read by Nelson Pike

reading from the Lady Chapel at Liverpool Cathedral

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.

“What Sweeter Music”

Michael Fink

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Heart, ear and eye and every thing.
Awake the while the active finger
Runs division with the singer.
What sweeter music can we bring

Hymn 83

1 O come, all ye faithful,
joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem;
come, and behold him, born the King of angels;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

2 God from God,
Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten Son of the Father;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

3 Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation;
sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
glory to God, glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore 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;
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

THE COLLECT AND BLESSING

The Lord be with you.

And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn 87

1. 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 hosts proclaim
Christ is born in Bethlehem!

2. 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 us to dwell;
Jesus, our Immanuel!

Hark! the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!

3. 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!

Hark! the herald angels sing, glory to the newborn King!

Voluntaries

“Bring a torch!”
“God Rest Ye Merry!”

Christopher Uehlein
Wilbur Held



It gladdens our musical hearts to have a chance to sing “together” and we hope that you are making a joyful noise at home with us during this service!

Profound thanks to all who have labored to make this chance to “be together” possible.

Readers: Doug Parsons, Melanie Murray-Brown, Martha Whitney (from NH), Sebastian Murray-Brown, Iona Murray-Brown, Pete Goodwin (from Florida) and Nelson Pike (winner of the long distance award: Liverpool UK <https://nelsoninliverpool.com/>)

Steve Lacy, Guitar

Guest singers: Ursulla DeYoung, Sonia DeYoung, (both St. John’s Youth Choir alums, James Scoville, Megan Errgong-

Weider.

Cape Ann Choir School Choristers: Jordan & Julia Palk

Regular quarantine singers: Carol (even her name says Christmas) McKenzie, Alex Garcia-Mata, Sarah Larson, Anne Bourne, Katharine Newhouse, Gwen Kopka, Maggie Marshall, DeeDee Bedford, David Oliver, Rick Britton, Chuck Everett

The amount of work singing remotely is extraordinary! As is the number of e-mails and texts it takes to get each of these musical offerings. The other amazing thing is the ability to collaborate with musicians I haven’t met in person, and sometimes at a bit of a distance.

And to Bret and our behind the scenes staff for their support and encouragement.

A huge shout out to Jim LaBelle who actually produced the video, Thank you.

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Saint John’s Episcopal Church—StJohnsGloucester.org

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Parish Office Hours: Monday – Thursday: 8am-noon during which the Church is open for prayer and meditation.

Alan McIntosh Gates, Bishop of Massachusetts & Gayle E. Harris, Bishop Suffragan

The Rev. Bret Bowie Hays, Rector

Mark Edward Nelson, Music Director

Elizabeth de Veer, Parish Administrator

Marge Bishop, Church Assistant

Staff e-mail: first name+@stjohnsgloucester.org

Binky, Parish Mascot

Wardens: Karen Kasper & Ellen Sibley

Clerk: Joan Gorga

Treasurer: Sue Lupo Ass’t. Treasurer: Geoff Pope

VESTRY

2021 – Tom Chmura, Dori Mottola, Bill Melvin

2022 – Patricia Anders, DeeDee Bedford, Errol Smikle

2023 – Katharine Newhouse, Jane Ward, Carol Ann Zapustas