

*The Eve of the Nativity*  
*Thursday, December 24, 2020*



*Christ Episcopal Church*  
*33 East First Street*  
*Corning, New York*

## Welcome

The Rev. Troy Preston  
The Rev. Joshua Barrett

## Prelude Music

The Christ Church Handbell Ringers

## THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH AND THE CHRIST CANDLE



Kristen Mason & John Sosa

Tonight, we light all the candles of the Advent wreath. Each candle has a meaning. The first candle is HOPE, the second candle is PEACE, the third candle is JOY, and the fourth candle is LOVE. The center candle is the Christ candle.

*The candles are lit.*

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.  
(Isaiah 9:6)

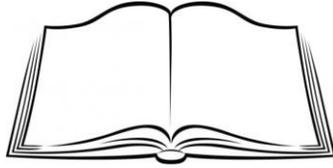
O God of hope, peace, joy, and love. As Mary and Joseph welcomed you into the world, now help us welcome you into our lives. Give us courage to hope; strength to seek peace. Fill our spirits with joy; and our hearts with love. Through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all. **Amen.**

*Compiled and written by the Rev. Matthew Kozlowski*

## THE ENTRANCE

Please stand in body or in spirit.

## **THE LITURGY OF THE WORD**



Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

***And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.***

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord.  
***Amen.***

***Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.***

The Lord be with you.

***And also with you.***

Let us pray.

## **THE COLLECT OF THE DAY**

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 LESSONS**

### **The First Lesson**

**Isaiah 62:6-12**

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, I have posted sentinels; all day and all night they shall never be silent. You who remind the Lord, take no rest, and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and makes it renowned throughout the earth. The Lord has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: I will not again give your grain to be food for your enemies, and foreigners shall not drink the wine for which you have labored; but those who garner it shall eat it and praise the Lord, and those who gather it shall drink it in my holy courts. Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; build up, build up the highway, clear it of stones, lift up an ensign over the peoples. The Lord has proclaimed to the end of the earth: Say to daughter Zion, "See, your salvation comes; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him." They shall be called, "The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord"; and you shall be called, "Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken."

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

***Thanks be to God.***

### **The Response**

**Psalm 97**

The Lord is King; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad.

***Clouds and darkness are round about him, righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne.***

A fire goes before him and burns up his enemies on every side.

***His lightnings light up the world; the earth sees it and is afraid.***

The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.

***The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the peoples see his glory.***

Confounded be all who worship carved images and delight in false gods! Bow down before him, all you gods.

***Zion hears and is glad, and the cities of Judah rejoice, because of your judgments, O Lord.***

For you are the Lord, most high over all the earth; you are exalted far above all gods.

***The Lord loves those who hate evil; he preserves the lives of his saints and delivers them from the hand of the wicked.***

Light has sprung up for the righteous, and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.

***Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, and give thanks to his holy Name.***

## The Second Lesson

Titus 3:4-7

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Hear what the Spirit is saying.

***Thanks be to God.***

Vocal Solo: *Ave Maria*

Schubert

Jessica Hood, soprano

## The Holy Gospel

Luke 2:(1-7) 8-20

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according Luke.

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

**A Homily**

**The Rev. Troy Preston**

Please stand in body or in spirit.

### **AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named. We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love. We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high. We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

### **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

As we join the angels and celebrate with joy the birth of the Son of God, let us offer prayers to God who gives new birth to sons and daughters in every place.

For those who lead and serve Christ's church and those who serve in quiet ways especially Michael, our Presiding Bishop; Prince, our Bishop; Troy, our Rector; and Josh our Associate Priest.

We pray for peace and justice in our world. We pray for a world modeled on the example of the Christ Child born this night.

For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, for those in prison, and for the dying and the dead.

Remembering our most glorious and blessed Holy Family, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.

Source of light and gladness; accept the prayers we offer on this joyful feast. May we grow in Jesus Christ who unites our lives to yours and who is Lord for all eternity, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### **THE CONFESSION**

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

***Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.***

### **THE ABSOLUTION**

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. ***Amen.***

### **THE PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
***And also with you.***

### **THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE**



#### **Offertory Sentence**

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; bring offerings and come into his courts.

#### **Music during the Offertory**

Vocal Solo: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

Gustav Holst

Marion Ivy, soprano

### **THE 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 God thanks and praise.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because you gave Jesus Christ, your only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, was made perfect Man of the flesh of the Virgin Mary his mother; so that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become your children.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever say this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days, you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

***We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory;***

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to

your Son in his sacrifice that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

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

***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.***

### **THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD**

The Celebrant breaks the bread. A period of silence is kept.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
***Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!***

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

### **SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

### **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

***Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.***

## **A CHRISTMAS 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 God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. ***Amen.***

## **THE DISMISSAL**

Organ Postlude: ***Joy to the World!***

ANTIOCH

## **PARTICIPANTS IN THE CELEBRATION**

### **CLERGY**

The Rev. Troy Preston, Rector  
The Rev. Joshua Barrett, Associate

### **LECTORS**

Advent Wreath – Kristen Mason, John Sosa  
The First Lesson/The Response – Bill Scheidweiler  
The Second Lesson – Anne Galvin  
The Prayers of the People – Barbara Cook

### **MUSICIANS**

Organist – Delight Scouten  
Vocal Soloist – Jessica Hood  
Vocal Soloist – Marion Ivy  
Handbells – Christ Church Handbell Ringers

*We wish in all simplicity: that this Christmas awakens  
peace and brotherhood in us, with the sole idea that all  
problems can be fixed. Merry Christmas!*