# grace episcopal church



The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

~ Christmas Day

A.D. 2023



### Grace Episcopal Church

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WE are a diverse community united by our commitment to Jesus Christ and our desire to live the Christian life. Our prayers and the Sacraments help us find Christ in church and in the world. Seeing Christ in each other and in the faces of strangers, we are inspired to reach out in love and service.

The Rev. Rowena J. Kemp, Rector

Cell phone: 203-209-4178 Church office: 860-233-0825

Email: RevRowena@gracehartford.org

The Rev. Canon Robert G. Carroon, Associate Priest
The Rev. Canon Annika Warren, Associate Priest
The Rev. Joseph L. Pace, Associate Priest
Mr. Kyle Swann, Choirmaster and Organist

#### The Vestry

Douglas Bowman, Senior Warden; Thomas Phillips, Junior Warden Katharine Rovetti, Parish Clerk

Mark Lacedonia, *Treasurer*; Barbara Galbreath, *Assistant Treasurer* Adrianne Brown, Josephine Dominguez, Pamela Glasner, Claudia Gwardyak, Nadia Holmes, Sandra Morgan

TELCOME to all who are joining with us virtually as we celebrate *THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST* ~ *CHRISTMAS DAY*. We hope you feel at home with us and that you find the love, peace, inspiration, and strength to meet the challenges of your daily life.

We hope that you will take part in our worship by making the Peoples' responses as indicated and joining in the hymn-singing.

If you would like more information about Grace Church, or the Episcopal Church, please communicate with our Rector, The Rev. Rowena Kemp, or make an appointment with her to discuss any questions you have.

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## The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ ~ Christmas Day

December 25, 2023 Low Mass with hymns, I0:00 A.M.

Entrance Rite and Liturgy of the Word

Johann Sebastian Bach (d. 1750) Voluntary: *In ducli jubilo* 

Opening Acclamation

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

And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

Introit (choir) Mode VII

[Antiphon] Puer natus est nobis, et filius datus est nobis: cujus imperium super humerum ejus: et vocabitur nomen ejus, magni consilii Angelus. [Psalm] Cantate Domino canticum novum: quia mirabilia fecit. Gloria Patri et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto. Sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in sæcula sæculorum. Amen./Repeat antiphon./

[Antiphon] Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his Name shall be called, Angel of mighty Counsel. [Psalm] O sing unto the Lord a new song: for he hath done marvellous things. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen |Repeat antiphon.]

Collect for Purity

LMIGHTY GOD, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom  ${f A}$ no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Summary of the Law

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

Kyrie eleison (congregation's part in italics)

KYRIE eleison, *Kyrie eleison*, Kyrie eleison. *Christe eleison*, Christe eleison, *Christe eleison*.

Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison, Kyrie eleison.

Gloria in excelsis (said by all)

TLORY be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise Ithee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the onlybegotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory ♥ of God the Father. Amen.

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you. People: And with thy spirit.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin: grant that we, being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit. Through the same our Lord, Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. *Amen* 

The Old Testament Lesson: Isaiah 52: 7-10 [NRSV]

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah.

HOW 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." Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices, together they sing for joy; for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. Break forth together into singing, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. The 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.

Alleluia (congregation's part in italics) Dies sanctificatus

ALLELUIA. Alleluia. A hallowed day hath dawned upon the earth; come, ye nations, and worship the Lord: for on this day a great light hath descended upon the earth. Alleluia.

The Holy Gospel: St. John I:I-I4 [RSV]

Celebrant: The Beginning of the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John. People's response: 

Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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 were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came for testimony, to bear witness to the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light. The true light that enlightens every man was coming into

the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. 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 nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (Here genuflect) And the Word became flesh (Here rise) and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

The Gospel of the Lord.



People's Response: Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The Nicene Creed (said by all)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church; I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins; ★ and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People Prayer Book p. 328

Celebrant: Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

ALMIGHTY and everliving God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all Bishops and other ministers, [especially \_\_\_\_\_], that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present, and those joining us virtually; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land, that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor [\_\_\_\_\_], and all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, [especially \_\_\_\_\_], beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of the Blessed Virgin Mary, blessed Martin, and all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. *Amen.* 

#### Confession of Sin and Absolution

Celebrant: Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: draw near with faith, and make your humble confession to Almighty God, devoutly kneeling.

People: Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men: We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past; and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Celebrant: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, \*pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come unto me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *Matthew II: 28* God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *John 3: 16* 

#### The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People:* And with thy spirit.

The Ministers and People greet one another in the Name of the Lord.



## ###

#### The Holy Communion

#### Offertory Sentence

Celebrant: Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and make good thy vows unto the Most High. Psalm 50: 14

Offertory (choir) Mode IV

 $\Gamma$ UI sunt Caeli, et tua est terra: orbem terrarium, et plenitudinem ejus tu fundasti: justitia et judicium praeparatio sedis tuae.

[The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine; thou hast laid the foundations of the round world, and all that therein is: righteousness and equity are the habitation of thy seat.]



Presentation of the alms and oblations

Celebrant: All things come of thee, O Lord,

*People:* And of thine own have we given thee.

Orate

Celebrant: Pray that this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving may be acceptable to God the

Father Almighty.

People: May the Lord receive this sacrifice at thy hands, to the praise and glory of his

holy Name, both to our benefit and that of all his holy Church.

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer I

Sursum corda

Celebrant: The Lord be with you. People: And with thy spirit. Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

*People:* We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

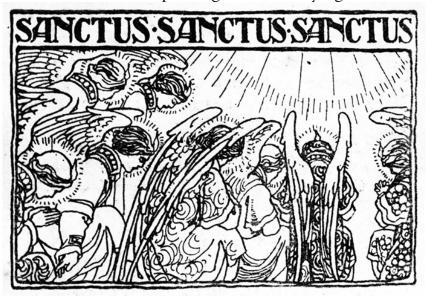
*People:* It is meet and right so to do.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant says,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

BECAUSE thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born for us; who, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, was made very Man of the substance of the Virgin Mary his mother; that we might be delivered from the bondage of sin, and receive power to become thy children.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,



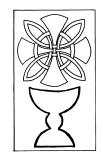
Sanctus and Benedictus (said by all)

HOLY, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and earth are full of thy glory.

Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

■ Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.



The Canon of the Mass *Celebrant:* Let us pray.

ALL glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." \*

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me." \*\*

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, \* be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

**B**Y whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. *Amen.* 

#### The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant: And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

People: 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.

#### Fraction Anthem

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.



#### Agnus Dei

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People: Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

People: Have mercy upon us.

Celebrant: O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,

*People:* Grant us thy peace.

Prayer of Humble Access (said by all)

Celebrant: Let us pray.

WE do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

#### The Invitation to Communion

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

People: Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the

word only, and my soul shall be healed.

Communion (choir)

Mode I

VIDERUNT omnes fines terrae salutare Dei nostril.
[All the ends of the world: have seen the salvation of our God.]

Prayer of Spiritual Communion (said by those worshipping virtually)

IN UNION, O Dear Lord, with the faithful at every Altar of Thy Church, where Thy blessed Body and Blood are being offered to the Father, I desire to offer Thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to Thee my soul and body, with the earnest wish that I may ever be united to Thee. And since I cannot now receive Thee sacramentally, I beseech Thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to Thee, and embrace Thee with all the affections of my soul. O let nothing ever separate me from Thee. Let me live and die in Thy love. Amen.





Prayer of Thanksgiving after Communion

Celebrant: Let us pray.

People: Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these Holy Mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical Body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Christmas Blessing

MAY Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. *Amen.* 

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. *Amen.* 

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. *Amen.* 

And the blessing of God Almighty, \* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. *Amen.* 

Dismissal

Celebrant: Let us go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord.

The People respond: Thanks be to God.

The Last Gospel St. Matthew 2:I-I2

Celebrant: The Lord be with you. People: And with thy spirit.

Celebrant: The Continuation of the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

*People:* Glory be to thee, O Lord.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, Nobehold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel." Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

People's response: Thanks be to God.





#### Christmas flowers and decorations are given in loving memory of



James Shafer

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Ida, Vernald, Godfrey, Oswald & Claudius Francis Emily, Patrice & Roger Taylor, Jr. & Sr.

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Wayne Pokorny, Priest



The Wardens, Vestry and staff join the Rev. Rowena and all the clergy in wishing you a Blessed Christmas!



# The Holy Innocents



Evensong by Haven December 28<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 P.M. at Grace Episcopal Church



Wednesday, December 27 SAINT JOHN APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST

9:15 a.m.: Low Mass (also on Facebook Live), followed by breakfast at Effie's

Thursday, December 28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS

**10:00 a.m.**: "A Place of Grace" food pantry distribution

**6:00 p.m.:** Evensong by Haven

Sunday, December 31 The First Sunday after Christmas Day

**8:00 a.m.**: Low Mass

10:30 a.m.: Sung Mass (also on Facebook Live)



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