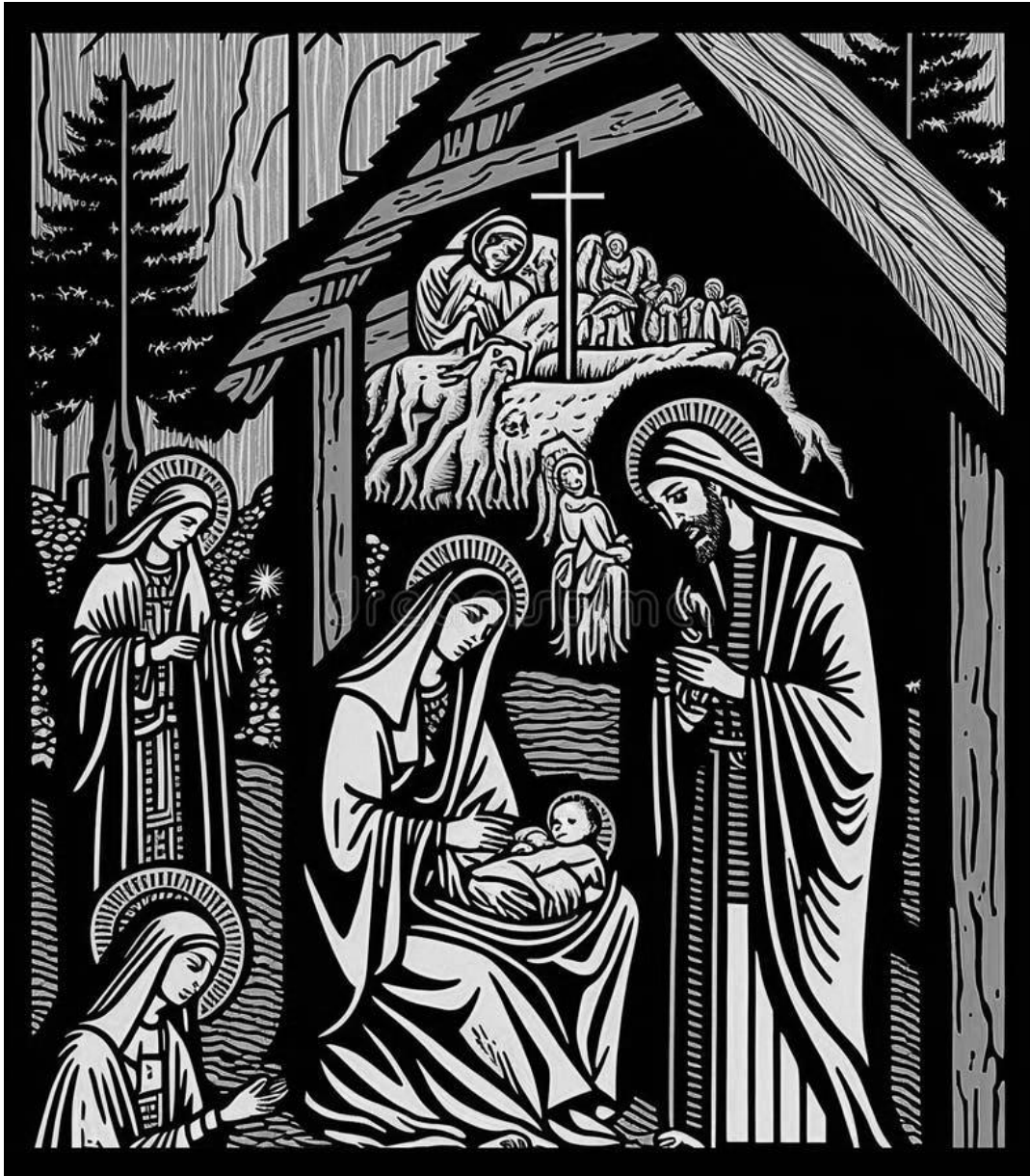


CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND MUSIC



ST. THOMAS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Entrance Hymn 102

Once in royal David's city

A Bidding Prayer *Traditional*

Beloved in Christ, in this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger. 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; and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise. But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this town.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and 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 his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are 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 . . .

**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 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.*

The Lessons

Each lesson is read by a different lector. The Lessons are read without announcement or conclusion.

Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-25 (God creates man and woman to live in obedience) *Pam Bardon*

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, but a stream would rise from the earth and water the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”

Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them,

and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of the air and to every animal of the field, but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones

and flesh of my flesh;

this one shall be called Woman,

for out of Man this one was taken.”

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

Hymn 60 vv. 1-3

Creator of the stars of night

Genesis 3:1-15 (Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden) *Dean Jackson*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say, ‘You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?’” The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” He said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.” The Lord God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,

cursed are you among all animals

and among all wild creatures;

upon your belly you shall go,

and dust you shall eat

all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and the woman

and between your offspring and hers;

he will strike your head,

and you will strike his heel.”

Hymn 100

Joy to the world

Isaiah 7:10-15 (God promises that a child shall be conceived known as “God with us”) *Donovan Bowley*

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Hymn 105

God rest you merry, gentlemen

Luke 1:26-38 (The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear a Son) *Sarah Groman*

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.

Hymn 265

The angel Gabriel from heaven came

Luke 1:39-46 (The Virgin Mary is greeted by Elizabeth and proclaims her joy) *Haunani Wallace*

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,

and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.

Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;

indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.

He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.

Hymn 81 vv. 1, 2

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming

Luke 2:1-20 (Jesus is born at Bethlehem and is worshiped by angels and shepherds) *Sue Foltz*

In those days a decree went out from Caesar 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 in the guest room.

Now in that same 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, and 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, just as it had been told them.

Hymn 96

Angels we have heard on high

Luke 2:21-36 (Jesus receives his name and is presented to Simeon in the Temple)

Kate Jackson

When the eighth day came, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord”), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.”

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word,
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, “This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too.”

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,

Hymn 112

In the bleak mid-winter

Hebrews 1:1-12 (In the fullness of time, God sent his Son whose reign is for ever and ever) *Amy Frankel*

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you”?

Or again, “I will be his Father, and he will be my Son”?

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, “Let all God’s angels worship him.”

Of the angels he says, “He makes his angels winds and his servants flames of fire.”

But of the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.”

And,

“In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands;

they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like clothing;

like a cloak you will roll them up, and like clothing they will be changed.

But you are the same, and your years will never end.”

Hymn 107

Good Christian friends rejoice

John 1:1-18 (The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory)

The Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass

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 overtake 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. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Hymn 98

Unto us a boy is born!

The Lord be with you.

And with thy Spirit.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word: Grant that the same light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lord bless us and keep us. **Amen.**

The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us. **Amen.**

The Lord lift up his countenance upon us and give us peace. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn 87

Hark! The herald angels sing

Offerings may be left in the alms basin by the baptismal font or by using the QR code.

The Rev. Kristen Burkholder, *Officiant*

Lizzie Danchi, *Pianist*

Bobby and Diane Purkey, *Ushers*

Announcements

The C.A.T. (Congregational Assessment Tool) Survey will be available online beginning January 4 through January 28. This will give us vital information as we make plans together for next steps in our parish re-vitalization. Please contact the parish office to request a paper copy.

Inquirers' Classes begin January 11 following the 9:30 Liturgy.

Annual Parish Meeting will be January 25 following the 9:30 Service of Morning Prayer. Please email reports to Kayla Clay, Parish Administrator by Wednesday, January 14.

A.A. meetings are held daily at 6:30 p.m.

Church Staff and Parish Officers

Kayla Clay, Parish Administrator

admin@stthomascamdenme.org

Office: 207-236-3680

The Rev. Paul Briggs, Interim Rector

interimrector@stthomascamdenme.org

(860) 384-9193

The Rev. Kristen Burkholder, Deacon

deacon@stthomascamdenme.org

(207) 322-7816

The Rev. Dr. Rosalee Glass, Deacon Emeritus

Tony Coyne, Sexton

Elizabeth Moran, Senior Warden

Br. Donovan Bowley, BSG, Junior Warden

Terry Mello, Treasurer

Anne Rogers-Popejoy, Vestry Clerk



St. Thomas' Episcopal Church

33 Chestnut Street P.O. Box 631 Camden, ME 04843

www.stthomascamdenme.org