Welcome to St. John's Church



Gerard van Honthorst (1592-1656) Dutch Golden Age

CHRISTMAS EVE

December 24, 2023 10:00 p.m.

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

78 Green Hill Road Washington, CT 06793

Parish Office Telephone: (860) 868-2527

Parish Office Hours: Wednesdays and Fridays, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

St. John's Email: stjohnschurch@snet.net

St. John's Website: http://stjohnswashington.com/

St. John's Facebook Page:

https://www.facebook.com/StJohnsChurchWashingtonCT

St. John's YouTube Page:

 $\underline{https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCoOwTnqlRss4BT8VwFul4qg}$

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Liturgy for the Proclamation of the Word of God and the Celebration of the Holy Communion

Choral Prelude Here Is The Little Door Herbert Howells (1892 - 1983)

Here is the little door, lift up the latch, oh lift! We need not wander more, but enter with our gift; Our gift of finest gold. Gold that was never bought or sold; Myrrh to be strewn about his bed; Incense in clouds about His head; All for the child that stirs not in His sleep, But holy slumber hold with ass and sheep. Bend low about His bed, For each He has a gift; See how His eyes awake, Lift up your hands, O lift! For gold, He gives a keen-edged sword. (Defend with it thy little Lord!) For incense, smoke of battle red, Myrrh for the honored happy dead; Gifts for His children, terrible and sweet; Touched by such tiny hands, and Oh such tiny feet.

The Call to Worship with the tolling of the church bell





Refrain

The Word of God

The people standing, the Celebrant may say

Celebrant Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People Glory to God for ever and ever.

The Celebrant says

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*.

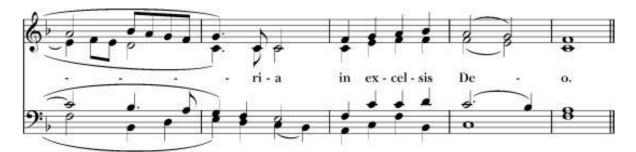
Kyrie *Missa O Magnum Mysterium* Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Translation: O Lord, have mercy upon us.

O Christ, have mercy upon us.

O Lord, have mercy upon us.





The Collect of the Day

God with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the illumination of the true Light: Grant that we, who have 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

INTRODUCTION: From the Hebrew Scriptures, we hear a hymn of thanksgiving and hope offered at the birth of a new king in Jerusalem.

A Reading from the Book of the prophet Isaiah (9:2-7)

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.

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 Word of the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 96 the congregation is invited to join the Refrain



- 1 Sing to the LORD a new song; * sing to the LORD, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the LORD and bless his Name; * proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations * and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; * he is more to be feared than all gods.
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; * but it is the LORD who made the heavens.
- 6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! * Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!
- 7 Ascribe to the LORD, you families of the peoples; * ascribe to the LORD honor and power.
- 8 Ascribe to the LORD the honor due his Name; * bring offerings and come into his courts.
- 9 Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness; * let the whole earth tremble before him.

- 10 Tell it out among the nations: "The LORD is King! * he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved; he will judge the peoples with equity."
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea thunder and all that is in it; * let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy before the LORD when he comes, * when he comes to judge the earth.
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness * and the peoples with his truth.

INTRODUCTION: In this reading, the author speaks of the two comings of Christ: first in his sacrificial ministry for all people and then in glory.

A Reading from the Epistle of St. Paul to Titus (2:11-14)

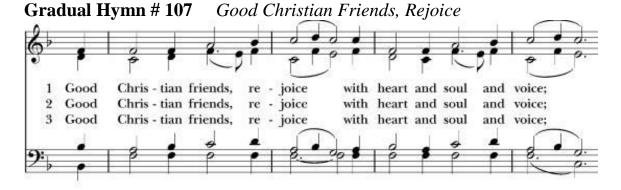
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus 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.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Anthem O Magnum Mysterium Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Translation: O great mystery, and wonderful sacrament, that animals should see the new-born Lord, lying in a manger! Blessed is the Virgin whose womb was worthy to bear Christ the Lord. Alleluia!





INTRODUCTION: The Gospel of Luke presents the story of the birth of Jesus.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. Luke (2:1-14)

People Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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!"

After the Gospel, the Reader says
The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to thee, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Hahneman

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.

he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. The light of God's love has broken through the darkness. Filled with the joy of Jesus' birth, let us pray together in the power of his Spirit, responding, "O Lord, hear our prayer."

The congregation may wish to sit or kneel for the Prayers and Confession

+ That the Prince of Peace may guide the leaders of the nations of the world, and all men and women leaders everywhere, into the ways of freedom and truth, especially António, Secretary General of the United Nations, Joe, our President, Ned our Governor, Jim, the First Selectman of the town of Washington, and the members of our Congresses and Courts; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For Hosam, the Archbishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem; Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury; Bartholomew, Patriarch of Constantinople; Francis, Bishop of Rome; Michael, our Presiding Bishop; and Jeffrey and Laura, our Bishops, Fr. Geoff, our priest, for all the members of this congregation, that they may guide us in our journey to Bethlehem, uniting the whole Church as we live into our spiritual kinship with one another; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For those for whom the darkness has suffocated hope: the lonely, the fearful, the hungry, and those who bear a private grief; that they may see the dawn of God's love, and revive the eternal hope that never fades away, remembering especially the work of the Washington Council of Congregations and the Washington Refugee Resettlement Project; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

+ For our families and friends and all in our community, and for all our absent sisters and brothers; for those who are sick or suffering, and all our beloved ones who have passed away and cannot join us at the Christmas celebration, but who now feast at the banquet of God's grace in heaven; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

+ That we may be released from the captivity of our sins, the places of interior blindness that cause us to choose darkness over light; that we may be forgiven by the power of the Holy Spirit, and love another as Christ loves us; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

+ That we who gather to share the Holy Eucharist, and with those throughout the world who come to receive this sacrament of Holy Presence, may we bear witness to the Anointed One in our lives and action; let us pray.

O Lord, hear our prayer.

In the wonder of this night, let us pause now so that we may add our own petitions or thanksgivings, either silently in our hearts or aloud in our midst.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we, who joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen*.

The Peace

The Celebrant says to the people

The peace of Christ be always with you.

People And also with you.

Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

The Holy Communion

The Celebrant may begin the Offertory with one of the sentences of Scripture. Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

Offertory Anthem In The Bleak Midwinter

In the bleak midwinter frosty winds 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.

Our God, Heav'n cannot hold him nor earth sustain;

Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:

 ${\it In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed.}$

The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim worship night and day,

A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay:

 $Enough for him, whom \ angels \ fall \ down \ before,$

The ox and ass and camel which adore.

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.

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.People And also with you.Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give our 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 sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus *Missa O Magnum Mysterium* Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Translation: 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 congregation may wish to sit or kneel for the consecration prayer.

Then the Celebrant continues

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, *Celebrant and People*

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 the Ever-Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John, our Patron, and 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*.

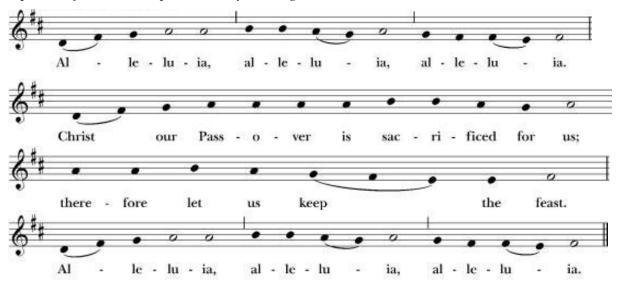
And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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 consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept. Then may be sung or said



Agnus Dei *Missa O Magnum Mysterium* Tomás Luis de Victoria (c. 1548-1611)

Translation O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

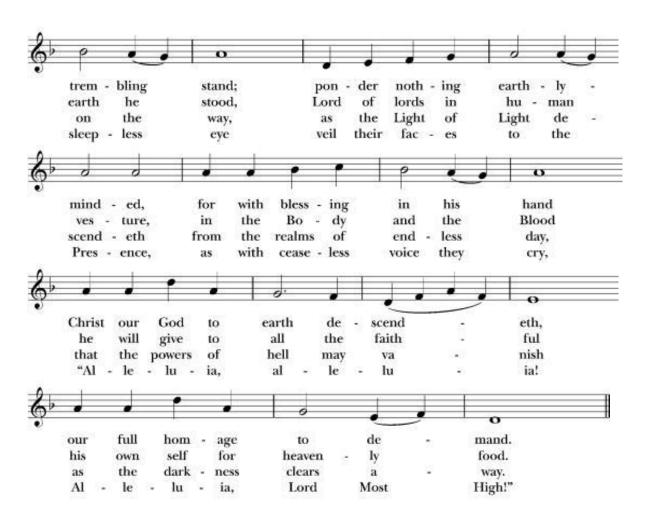
Behold the Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All baptized Christians of all ages and denominations are welcome to receive Communion in this place. This is God's house and the Lord's table, not ours

INSTRUCTIONS: Those wishing to receive Communion should come forward to the Altar rail as directed. Please speak with an Usher if you need to receive Communion in the pew. The consecrated host will be placed in the hands or upon the tongue of the recipient, as desired. If one wishes intinction, then either the chalice bearer or the communicant may take the host and dip it in the wine. Otherwise, communicants may sip from the chalice, assisting by taking hold of its base. If the communicant does not wish to receive the wine, one can simply cross their arms across their chest so to indicate.

Gluten free wafers are available. Just ask at the altar rail if you wish one.





Communion Hymn # 313 Let Thy Blood In Mercy Poured





Anthem: *O Holy Night*

Adolphe Adam (1803-1856)

O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining; It is the night of our dear Savior's birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining 'Til He appears and the soul felt its worth. A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices, For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn. Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel voices! O night divine, O night when Christ was born, O night, O night, O night divine! Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming, With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand. So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming, Here come the Wise Men from Orient land. The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger, In all our trials born to be our friend. He knows our need, he guards us from all danger. Behold your King; before the lowly bend. Behold your King; before the lowly bend.

for online worshippers, and for those who for other reasons choose not to receive, here is a Prayer for Spiritual Communion:

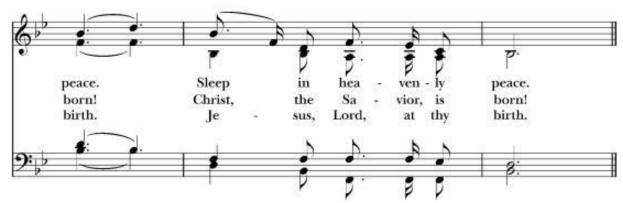
A Prayer for Spiritual Communion

In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is celebrated, we desire to offer our praise and thanksgiving. We present to you

our souls and bodies with the earnest desire that we may always be united to you. And since we are not now receiving you physically, we ask you to come into our hearts spiritually. We embrace you with all the affections of our souls, confident that nothing can ever separate us from the love God, in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

At the conclusion of Holy Communion, all are invited to light their hand candles as the electric lights are dimmed, while the congregation sings together "Silent Night."





After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Priest, gives the blessing

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be among you, and remain with you always. *Amen*.





Let us bless the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Worship Ministers Today:

The Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Hahneman: Celebrant

Tom Brand: Organist & Choirmaster

Holly Flor: Reader

Laura Daly; Chalicer, Cruficer

Laura Daly, Veejay (VJ)

Bob Futh, Natalie Dyer: Ushers

MB Witt, Altar Guild

Susan Markert, Alexander Purves, Natalie Dyer, Emily Fitshugh, Veronique

Dulack, Christmas Flower Arrangements

ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

78 Green Hill Road Washington, CT 06793

Staff

The Reverend Dr. Geoffrey Hahneman, *Priest-in-Charge*Tom Brand, *Organist & Choirmaster*Dawn Rosiello, *Parish Administrator*Joan Burgess, *Foundation Administrator*

Vestry

Mary Davis, Jay Bauer: Wardens
David Gillespie: Treasurer
Andris Kalnins: Assistant Treasurer
Laura Daly: Clerk

Class of 2023

Laura Daly, Veronique Dulack, Joseph Claro

Class of 2024

Rebecca Bent, Michael Del Nin, Susan McFeely

Class of 2025

Worth Bracken, Sara Coles, Andris Kalnins

Diocesan Delegates: Sara Coles, MB Witt Laura Daly: **Alternate**