

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 24, 2023, 4:30 pm



St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Yarmouth, ME

Prelude "Noël" by J-F Dandrieu

Call to Worship

Deacon Joy to the world!
People **The Lord has come!**

all rise and join in singing

Opening Carol, #83 O come, all ye faithful (vs. 1,2,3,6) *The Hymnal 1982*

Opening Words

Celebrant Blessed be the one holy and living God.
People **Glory to God for ever and ever.**

Opening Acclamation

Celebrant Shout for joy the whole earth,
and everything within rejoice!
People **For hope has come into the world!**

Deacon The mountains sing, the seas resound
to the praise of your name.

People **Salvation is here on earth!**

Celebrant The angels' song rings in the air,
a child has been born!

People **Hallelujah! The Savior of the world is here!**

Gloria, #96 Angels we have heard on high (vs. 1 & 4) *The Hymnal 1982*

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant God be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

Children's Message

The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

The Lessons

First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Nancy Gunzelmann

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.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Carol, #99

Go tell it on the mountain

The Hymnal 1982

Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

The Rev. Deacon Corey Walmer

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, according to Luke

People **Glory to you, O God.**

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.

Deacon The Gospel of our Lord.
People **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Homily

The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson

Carol, #101

Away in a manger

The Hymnal 1982

Affirmation of Faith

Celebrant Let us affirm our faith together.
People **We believe in God,**

**the creator and giver of life,
who brought all creation to birth,
who loves us like a parent,
protecting, nurturing,
and cherishing us.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ:
God born among us as a fragile baby,
embodying both love and the need for love,
and calling us to rest in God
as trustingly as a tiny child.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
breathed into us at our birth,
always drawing us on to be born again,
encouraging, exhorting, comforting,
nourishing our growth
and inspiring our living.**

We believe in the reconciliation
of the world to God, through Christ.
Hunted at birth
and humiliated at death,
Christ entered our fearful brokenness
so that we might enter his glorious wholeness
and share the life of his resurrection.

And we believe that each new child
is a glimpse of the face of God,
a sign of the life to come,
and a call to live in peace
and celebrate living together.

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to God's people on earth.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

Mary Curlew

Leader

Gracious God, on this holy night, your beloved Son came to be one of us. As we lift our hearts in praise, may we also lift up the needs of the world he came to save as we pray: Christ, our Savior, be born in our hearts today.

A brief moment of silence for reflection.

People

Emmanuel, God with us; You have entrusted the Church with good news of great joy for all people: Inspire our witness that we may spread the love of Jesus to all humanity. Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; let your power and compassion guide those who exercise authority on earth, that they may be servants of peace, bringing comfort and security to all who are vulnerable. Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; embrace with your eternal protection all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit: refugees and the displaced, those threatened by violence, and families with no place to call their home. Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; fill this community with hospitality and generosity, that we may care for one another and celebrate the joy of your presence in our humanity. Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; we entrust to your divine grace all for whom we pray, especially those we name before you now both aloud and silently (*pause as intercessions are offered*). Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; we give thanks for shepherds and all the vigilant who work while others sleep. Hear our grateful thanksgiving for all the gifts and blessings in our lives, especially those things we name before you now aloud and silently (*pause as intercessions are offered*). Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Emmanuel, God with us; we entrust into your eternal arms those who have died, especially those we name before you aloud and silently (*pause as intercessions are offered*). Christ, our Savior,
be born in our hearts today.

Concluding Collect

Celebrant Emmanuel, God with us; the joyful message of the angels fills us with gladness as we celebrate the coming of the Christ child to live among us in vulnerable humility. May our lives reflect the joy of your gracious presence as we seek to continue the work of Christ's incarnation all our days on this earth. Christ, our Savior, be born in our hearts today.

People **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of Christ be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The congregation is invited to share a sign of peace with those around them.

The Holy Communion

Offertory Sentence

Celebrant "O Lord our God, you are worthy to receive glory and honor and power; because you have created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being." – Revelation 4:11

Let us with gladness present the offerings and oblations of our life and labor to our God.

At this time, the bread and wine are brought forward. The ushers will collect the offerings of our community gathered.

Offertory Carol, #109

The first Nowell

The Hymnal 1982

The offering is brought forward

Offertory Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray,

People **Blessed are you, God of all creation;
through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
Blessed be God for ever. Amen.**

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant God be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to our God.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to Christ our Sovereign.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your Word has become flesh among us.

Though the world did not know him,

he bears the imprint of your very being.

Though his own people turned him away,

in him we have seen your glory, full of grace and truth.

Therefore, with the whole realm of nature around us,

With earth, sea, and sky,

With the angels and archangels,

With all the saints before us and beside us,

we join the hymn of unending praise:

Sanctus, spoken

People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,

God of power and might,

heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God.

Hosanna in the highest!

Eucharistic Prayer

Celebrant

Holy God, creator and giver of all life,

from the beginning of time your Spirit breathed over the cosmos.

You scattered stars in the heavens and raised up the mountains

You poured out great rivers and blessed the earth with life.

You made humankind in your image, and loved us in our weakness,

promising to stay with us wherever we go.

In the winter of our longing, you came to the prophet Mary offering your Spirit to
make creation whole. You gave her a child, Jesus, your beloved son to turn the
broken world upside down.

Jesus stayed with us, healing the sick and feeding the hungry unbinding prisoners
and raising the dead. He ate with strangers, showed mercy to sinners, and taught
us to follow him in love without fear.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave
thanks; broke it and gave it to his disciples saying: Take and eat; this is my body,
given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

Therefore, Eternal One, of all the things that are yours we offer you these, which are yours especially. We offer them gladly, as he told us, remembering his death and resurrection, his birth in Bethlehem, and rest in the manger.

Now pour out your Spirit on this bread and wine to make them the body and blood of Christ for your waiting people. Come among us and abide with us that we may be the body of Christ for the world you love.

Shine upon us tonight as you shone upon your servant Mary, as you shine upon your people in the most troubling times and places that, lit by your love, we may raise our voices with saints and angels in a living song of praise.

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are yours, almighty God, forever and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

*Celebrant
People*

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen**

The Fraction

*Celebrant
People*

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread.

The Invitation

*Celebrant
People*

Come! For all is now ready. The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God!

Holy Communion

Everyone is welcome to receive communion at St. Bart's! The ushers will invite you to come forward down the center aisle where there are two bread stations – one for each side of the sanctuary. Each station has both bread and gluten-free bread: presenting your hands facing upward indicates you'd like bread with gluten, hands facing down will indicate you'd like gluten free bread. Once you receive the bread, you may proceed to the Chalice station on your side. You are invited to sip from the chalice. If you prefer not to sip from the cup, you may place your hands across your chest to receive a blessing. If you prefer to receive neither the bread nor the wine, but would like to come forward for a blessing, please come forward as described above and simply cross your arms at your chest and the Priest or Deacon will offer a blessing. Hand sanitizer is available in the aisle. Please use the side aisles to return to your seat once you have received.

Music at Communion

112 In the bleak midwinter
89 It came upon the midnight clear

The Hymnal 1982

Post Communion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray. God of abundance,
People **with this bread of life and cup of salvation
you have united us with Christ,
making us one with all your people.
Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,
that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
and continue forever in the risen life of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Ushers will assist in lighting candles.

Post Communion Carol, #111 Silent Night

The Hymnal 1982

The Blessing

Celebrant The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus.

The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit

The God of all grace bless you now and forever.

People **Amen.**

Closing Carol, #107

Good Christian Friends rejoice!

The Hymnal 1982

The Dismissal

Deacon Arise, shine, for our Savior has come! Alleluia, alleluia!
People **Thanks be to God! Alleluia, alleluia!**

Postlude

"Good Christian Friends Rejoice!" by W. Hurd

Need Hearing Assistance?

We have earpieces that receive audio from the sound system. You can find them in charging stations in the entryway. Simply slip the earpiece over your ear, turn it on with the volume switch, and adjust volume. Please return to the charging stations when you are done.

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Celebrant	The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson
Deacon	The Rev. Deacon Corey Walmer
Music	Christina Edelen
Chalice Bearers	Anne Jacobs, Mary Curlew
Lector	Nancy Gunzelmann
Ushers	Nancy Gunzelmann, Ann Donaghy, Alfredo Abizini, Rachel Groves
Altar Guild	Linda & John Perkins
Flower Arranger	Flowers-Imelda Schaefer
A/V	Dan Hudkins
Bread Baker	Nancy Gunzelmann
Snow Removal	Tom Hyndman

WORSHIP RESOURCES

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Affirmation of Faith: Written by Nathan Nettleton, LaughingBird.net, 1999, incorporating some lines from "Midwife of our lives" by Kathy Galloway published in Kathy Galloway (ed.) *The Pattern of Our Days*, Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1996, p.138.

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Offertory Prayer: *A New Zealand Prayer Book*

Proper Preface: ©2000 Nathan Nettleton LaughingBird.net

Eucharistic Prayer: St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, San Francisco, CA

Post Communion Prayer & Blessing: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* ©2006 Augsburg Fortress

ST BART'S VISION STATEMENT

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Yarmouth, Maine is a place to explore and deepen one's faith through worship, music, education, and open dialogue to help each of us and our community faithfully navigate today's ever-changing world. We are an open, inclusive, creative, and welcoming community. Building on the vision of those who established St. Bart's 50 years ago, we continue to strengthen and grow our community by grounding our ministries in the love of Jesus Christ, telling our story joyfully, and caring for the needs of our congregation and the greater Yarmouth and surrounding communities. St. Bart's is a great landing place for those seeking a welcoming and inclusive faith experience.

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Yarmouth Maine



Priest-in-Charge:	The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson
Priest-in-Charge Email:	amanda@stbartsyarmouth.org
Music Director:	Dr. Christina Edelen
Deacon:	The Rev. Deacon Corey Walmer
Intern:	Mary Curlew
Sr. Warden:	Michele Johns
Jr. Warden:	Laurie Hyndman
Pastoral Care:	Imelda Schaefer, Barbara Barhydt
Pastoral Care Email:	pastoralcare@stbartsyarmouth.org
Parish Administrator:	Teri Coviello
Office Email:	admin@stbartsyarmouth.org
Office Hours:	Tue-Thur, 9-3
Telephone:	207.846.9244
Website:	www.stbartsyarmouth.org