

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

December 24, 2023, 9:00pm



St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Yarmouth, ME

Prelude "Good Christian Friends Rejoice!" by W. Hurd

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.**

The Lessons

First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7

Elizabeth Ring

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, #110

The snow lay on the ground

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

See Amid the Winter's Snow

Text by Edward Caswall; Tune by Sir John Goss

1. See, amid the winter's snow,
born for us on earth below,
see the Lamb of God appears,
promised from eternal years!

Refrain:

Hail, thou ever blessed morn!
Hail, redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem."

2. Lo, within a manger lies
He who built the starry skies;
He who, throned in height sublime,
sits amid the cherubim! ...*Refrain*

3. Say, ye holy shepherds, say,
what your joyful news today;
Wherefore have ye left your sheep
on the lonely mountain steep? ...*Refrain*

4. "As we watched at dead of night,
Lo! we saw a wondrous light;
angels singing 'Peace on earth'
told us of the Savior's birth." ...*Refrain*

5. Sacred Infant, all divine,
what a tender love was Thine,
thus to come from highest bliss
down to such a world as this! ...*Refrain*

Affirmation of Faith

Celebrant
People

Let us affirm our faith together.

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

Arthur Woolverton

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 the Lord.

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

Offertory Anthem (Choir) Infant Holy, Infant Lowly *Tune by W Zlobie Lezy; Text by Piotrowi Skardze*

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
Infant holy, Infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the Babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the Babe is Lord of all.*

*Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a Gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the Babe was born for you.*

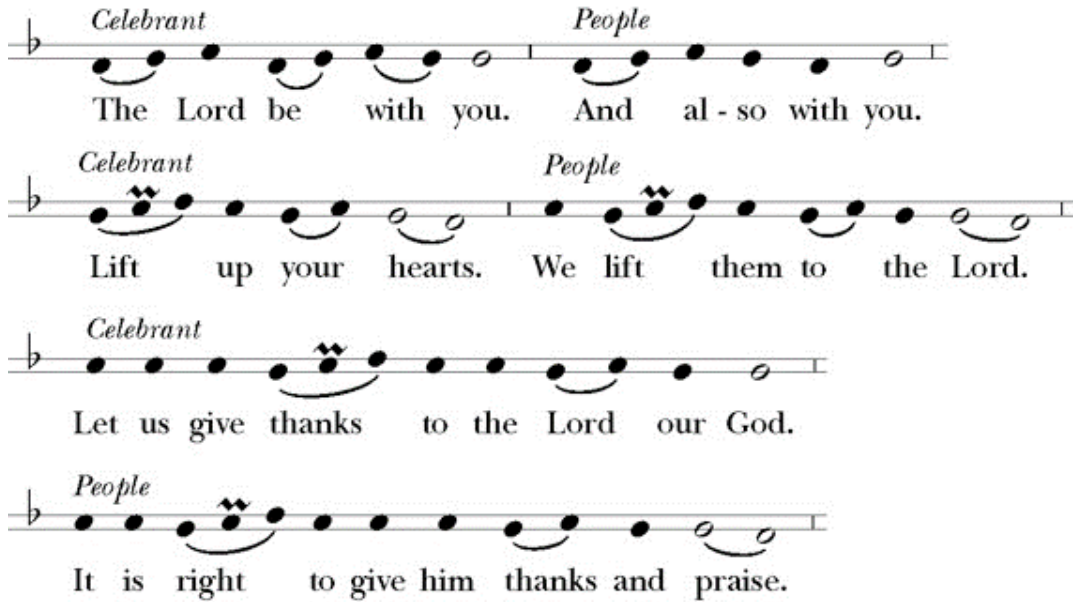
The offering is brought forward

Offertory Prayer

Celebrant
People

Let us pray,
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, *sung*



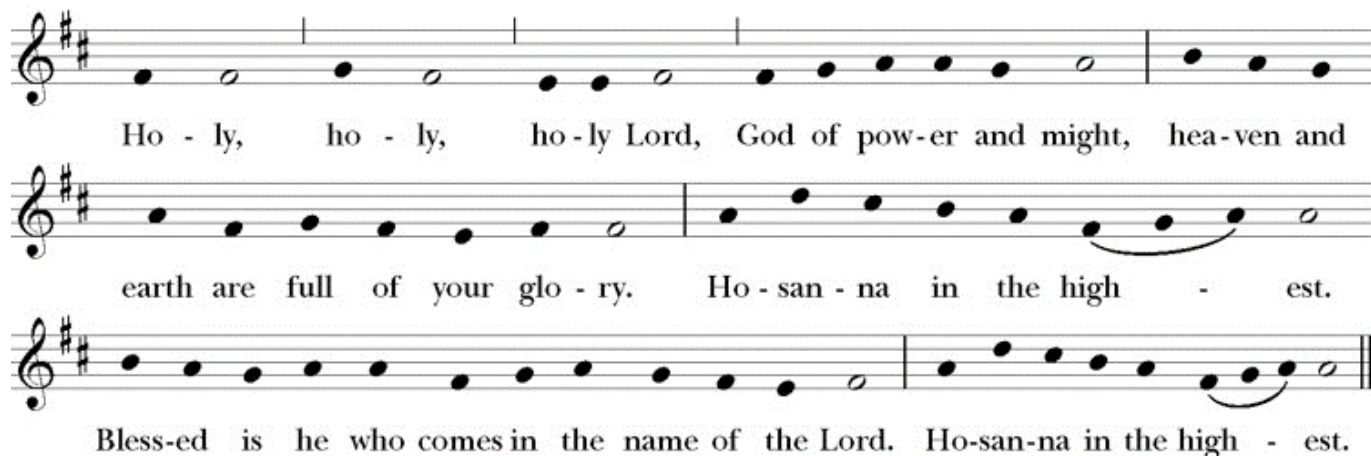
The musical notation consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first staff is for the Celebrant and the People. The lyrics are: 'The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.' The second staff is for the Celebrant and the People. The lyrics are: 'Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.' The third staff is for the Celebrant. The lyrics are: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.' The fourth staff is for the People. The lyrics are: 'It is right to give him 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 sing the hymn of unending praise:

Sanctus, S124



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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 is yours, almighty Father, forever and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant

People

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 Fraction

Celebrant

People

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

The Invitation

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.

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

The Hymnal 1982

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

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

People The God of all grace bless you now and forever.
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

"Noël cette Journée" by J-F Dandrieu

SERVING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Celebrant	The Rev. Amanda Gerken-Nelson
Deacon	The Rev. Deacon Corey Walmer
Music	Christina Edelen
Musicians	The St. Bart's Choir
Chalice Bearers	Mary Curlew, Arthur Woolverton
Lector	Elizabeth Ring
Ushers	Jay & Basil Souder
Altar Guild	Jan Burson & Jamie Michaud
Flower Arranger	Imelda Schaefer
A/V	Arthur Woolverton
Bread Baker	Nancy Gunzelmann
Snow Removal	Tom Hyndman

WORSHIP RESOURCES

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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.