



**ST. THOMAS**  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

We, the baptized ministers,  
declare Christ's Mission for us:  
to grow as a Church  
in the spiritual strength  
of community, and  
to care, reach out, and  
include all people in Christ's love.

## A Blue Christmas Service



**A Hybrid Worship Service**  
**Tuesday, December 21, 2021**  
**7:30 PM**



Opening Hymn: *Signs of endings all around us*

721, The Green Hymnal

1. Signs of end-ings all a - round us— dark - ness, death, and win - ter days  
2. Can it be that from our end - ings, new be - gin - nings you cre - ate?  
3. Speak, O God, your Word a - mong us. Bar - ren lives your pres - ence fill.

shroud our lives in fear and sad - ness, numb - ing mouths that long to praise.  
Life from death, and from our rend - ings, realms of whole - ness gen - er - ate?  
Swell our hearts with songs of glad - ness, ter - rors calm fore - bod - ings still.

Come, O Christ, and dwell a - mong us! Hear our cries, come set us free.  
Take our fears, then, Lord, and turn them in - to hopes for life a - new:  
Let your prom - ised realm of jus - tice blos - som now through - out the earth;

Give us hope and faith and glad - ness. Show us what there yet can be.  
Fad - ing light and dy - ing sea - son sing their Glo - ri - as to you.  
your do - min - ion bring now near us; we a - wait the sav - ing birth.

## The Lessons

### A Reading from 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.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Canticle: A Song of Christ's Goodness by Anselm of Canterbury

*(Read responsively by half verse)*

Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you; \*

**you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.**

Often you weep over our sins and our pride, \*

**tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment.**

You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds, \*

**in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.**

Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life; \*

**by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.**

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness; \*

**through your gentleness, we find comfort in fear.**

Your warmth gives life to the dead, \*

**your touch makes sinners righteous.**

Lord Jesus, in your mercy, heal us; \*

**in your love and tenderness, remake us.**

In your compassion, bring grace and forgiveness, \*

**for the beauty of heaven, may your love prepare us.**

**Matthew 11:28-29; 28:20b**

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light...And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection**

**Natalie Perl Regan**

**Affirmation of Faith** *(standing as you are able)*

*Officiant*      Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God, the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.  
We believe in one God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

*(cf Ephesians 3, Affirmation of Faith from Common Worship of the Church of England)*

**Litany of Remembrance and Advent Candle Lighting**

**First Candle**

We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to name them, silently or aloud. We remember their names, their faces, their voices.

*Silence*

We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

**We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.**

Second Candle

We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.

*Silence*

We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

**We remember that through You all things are possible. Refresh, restore, and renew us, O God.**

Third Candle

We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens.

*Silence*

We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered.

**We remember that dawn defeats the darkness.**

Fourth Candle

We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us in the story of Christmas.

*Silence*

We remember that the loving God who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace.

**We remember the One who shares our burdens, who shows us the way to the Light, and who journeys the way with us.**

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,  
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;  
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,  
 4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;  
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:  
 cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim throug - ed the air;  
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow — on — snow,  
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf - ficed  
 but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,  
 if I were a wise — man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.  
 the Lord — God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.  
 wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.  
 yet what I can I give him — give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Music: *Cranham*, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

**Prayer for the Night**

The New Zealand Prayerbook, p. 184

Let us pray together.

**Lord,**

**it is night.**

**The night is for stillness.**

**Let us be still in the presence of God.**

**It is night after a long day.**

**What has been done has been done;**

**what has not been done has not been done;**

**let it be.**

**The night is dark.**

**Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives**

**rest in you.**

**The night is quiet.**

**Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,**

**all dear to us,**

**and all who have no peace.**

**The night heralds the dawn.**

**Let us look expectantly to a new day,**

**new joys,**

**new possibilities.**

**In your name we pray. Amen.**

**The Blessing**

May Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with his joy and peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you this night, and remain with you always. **Amen.**



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
 2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;  
 3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,  
 4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;

from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.  
 dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.  
 born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.  
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) Music: *Stuttgart*, melody from *Psalmodia Sacra, oder Andächtige und Schöne Gesänge*, 1715; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870), alt.

### The Dismissal

Go forth in the name of the promised Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

Postlude *What Child is this?*

Jennifer Haines

## ***A PRAYER FOR ST. THOMAS CHURCH***

*Almighty God, by your Spirit the whole body of your Church is governed and sanctified. Hear our prayer for St. Thomas: build in us a renewed vision of your Church; shape our life according to your will; empower us with the gifts to make us one, that together we may grow as a church in the spiritual strength of community, and reach out to include all people in Christ's love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

### **MINISTERS**

The Baptized Faithful of St. Thomas Episcopal Church  
The Most Rev. Michael Curry, *Presiding Bishop*  
The Rt. Rev. Susan Goff, *Ecclesiastical Authority, Suffragan Bishop*  
The Rt. Rev. Jennifer Brooke-Davidson, *Assistant Bishop*  
The Rt. Rev. Porter Taylor, *Assisting Bishop*

The Very Rev. Fran Gardner-Smith, *Rector* 571-549-1458 - fran.gardnersmith@stthomasmcleanva.org  
Ms. Natalie Perl Regan, *Pastoral Associate* 202-617-9633 - natalie.regan@stthomasmcleanva.org

### **THE VESTRY**

Becky Ventorini  
Toby Bush  
Hooman Mirzaei  
Will Ferris  
Kittie Ellis  
Melinda Fairchild  
Bruce Allan  
Jeff Crigler  
Mary Lee Montfort

### **SHEPHERD AREA**

Senior Warden  
Junior Warden & Stewardship

beckyventorini@gmail.com 703-288-3166  
tobygbush@hotmail.com 562-477-4956  
hoomir20@yahoo.com 703-388-8767  
vox54@aol.com 703-801-1256  
kellis1616@aol.com 480-330-0385  
meldavid7815@gmail.com 240-274-4741  
bhallan46@gmail.com 703-624-9073  
jeffc@crigler.net 703-650-8980  
maryleemontfort@gmail.com 703-862-6096

### **OTHER LEADERS**

David Alton Smith	Register	dapy.smith@gmail.com	703-488-0442
Pat Smith	Treasurer	pysmith51@gmail.com	703-338-0974
Steve Wickman	Diocesan Delegate	wickmansb@msn.com	571-393-8544

### **STAFF**

Mollie Regan	Interim Family Minister	mollie.regan@stthomasmcleanva.org	954-778-7252
Mary Cyrus	Bookkeeper	accountant@stthomasmcleanva.org	703-442-0330
Walter Koehler	Minister of Music	wallykoehler1@gmail.com	703-346-6972
Nicole Warga	Cribbery Caregiver	ncwarga00@hotmail.com	703-442-0330
Joy Warburton	Parish Administrator	joy.warburton@stthomasmcleanva.org	703-442-0330