

SAINT PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH



THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2023
TEN O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING

WELCOME TO SAINT PAUL'S CHURCH

Whatever brings you here, and whoever you are,
we are glad you are here.

FIRST TIME WORSHIPPING AT ST. PAUL'S?

Are you new to St. Paul's or the surrounding area? Let us know by filling out a Welcome Card located in the pew rack, and we will connect with you. We also have a Welcome Table you can visit following the service in the Gathering Space of the Parish House.

RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located in the Parish House.

NURSERY

Nursery is open from 8:50 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

COVID SAFETY

St. Paul's is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for everyone who enters our building and grounds. You can read more about our safety protocol, including for children and our response if there is a COVID exposure at St. Paul's, on our website at www.stpaulsrva.org/covidsafety.

CONTACT THE CLERGY

The St. Paul's clergy are eager to hear from you if you have questions, concerns, or a pastoral emergency. Contact can be made by phoning the church at 804.643.3589. The church office hours are Monday through Thursday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

FAMILY SPACE IN THE SANCTUARY

Young ones need to be able to see and experience worship. Our ushers will be happy to direct you to our Family Space at the front of the church where you will find picture books, paper and crayons, and small hand-held toys. We also have Worship Bags as you enter the church that contain Children's Bulletins, paper and crayons.

THE ENTRANCE RITE

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Prelude on *Divinum mysterium*

Wilbur Held (1914-2015)

HYMN

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re - ceive her King;
2. Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our songs em - ploy,
3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground;
4. He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove
let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
he comes to make his bless - ings flow
the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness,
and heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his
sing, and heaven and heaven and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Text: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt.

Music: *Antioch*, George Frideric Handel (1685-1759);
adapt. and arr. Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

All say together the Collect for Purity.

ALMIGHTY GOD, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:
A 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.

HYMN OF PRAISE

1. An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,
2. Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;
and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ, the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain
Glo - - - - - ri - a
in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -
- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt.

Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY GOD, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, Ankindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The people are seated.

LESSONS AND CAROLS

THE FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 60:1-6

ARISE, SHINE, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth and thick darkness the peoples, but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together; they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried in their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you; the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Silence is kept.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

1. Once in ro - yal Da - vid's ci - ty stood a low - ly cat - tle shed,
 2. He came down to earth from hea - ven who is God and Lord of all,
 3. For he is our child - hood's pat - tern, day by day like us he grew,
 4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing love,
 5. Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the ox - en stand - ing by,

1. where a mo - ther laid her ba - by in a man - ger for his bed:
 2. and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall;
 3. he was lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and smiles like us he knew:
 4. for that child so dear so gen - tle is our Lord in hea - ven a - bove;
 5. we shall see him; but in hea - ven, set at God's right hand on high;

1. Ma - ry was that mo - ther mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 2. with the poor and mean and low - ly lived on earth our Sa - vior ho - ly.
 3. and he feel - eth for our sad - ness, and he shar - eth in our glad - ness.
 4. and he leads his chil - dren on to the place where he is gone.
 5. when like stars his chil - dren crowned all in white shall wait a - round.

Text: Cecil Francis Alexander (1818-1895)

Music: *Irbys*, melody Henry John Gauntlett (1805-1876); harm. Arthur Henry Mann (1850-1929)

IN THOSE DAYS a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 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.

Por aquellos días Augusto César decretó que se levantara un censo en todo el Imperio romano. Así que iban todos a inscribirse, cada cual a su propio pueblo. También José, que era descendiente del rey David, subió de Nazaret, ciudad de Galilea, a Judea. Fue a Belén, la Ciudad de David, para inscribirse junto con María su esposa. Ella se encontraba encinta y, mientras estaban allí, se le cumplió el tiempo. Así que dio a luz a su hijo primogénito. Lo envolvió en pañales y lo acostó en un pesebre, porque no había lugar para ellos en la posada.

Silence is kept.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

1 A - way in a man-ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 *3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for ev - er, and love me I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 and fit us for hea - ven to live with thee there.

Text: Traditional carol

Music: *Cradle Song*, melody William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921);
 harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

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.

Silence is kept.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God’s people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

1 While shep-herds watched their flocks by night, all seat-ed on the ground,
 2 “Fear not,” said he, for might-y dread had seized their trou-bled mind;
 3 “To you, in Da-vid’s town, this day is born of Da-vid’s line
 4 “The heav-en-ly Babe you there shall find to hu-man view dis-played,
 5 Thus spake the ser-aph, and forth-with ap-peared a shin-ing throug

1 the an-gel of the Lord came down, and glo-ry shone a-round.
 2 “Glad tid-ings of great joy I bring to you and all man-kind.
 3 the Sa-vior, who is Christ the Lord; and this shall be the sign:
 4 all mean-ly wrapped in swath-ing bands, and in a man-ger laid.”
 5 of an-gels prais-ing God, who thus ad-dressed their joy-ful song:

6 “All glory be to God on high
 and on the earth be peace;
 good will henceforth from heaven to men
 begin and never cease.”

Text: Nahum Tate (1625-1715)

Music: *Winchester Old*, melody from *The Whole Booke of Psalmes*, 1592;
 harm. *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1922

IN THE TIME of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son." When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had learned from the magi. Then what had been spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they are no more." When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead."

Silence is kept.

Lector Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

1. What star is this with beams so bright,
 2. True spake the prophet from a far
 3. The guid - ing star a - bove is bright;
 4. O Je - sus, while the star of grace
 5. To God the Fa - ther, heaven - ly Light,

1. more beau - teous than the noon - day light?
 2. who told the rise of Ja - cob's star;
 3. with - in them shines a clear - er light,
 4. im - pels us on to seek thy face,
 5. to Christ, re - vealed in earth - ly night,

1. It shines to her - ald forth the King,
 2. and east - ern sa - ges with a - maze
 3. and leads them on with power be - nign
 4. let not our sloth - ful hearts re - fuse
 5. to God the Ho - ly Ghost we raise

1. and Gen - tiles to his crib to bring.
 2. up - on the won - drous to - ken gaze.
 3. to seek the Giv - er of the sign.
 4. the guid - ance of thy light to use.
 5. our e - qual and un - ceas - ing praise.

Text: Charles Coffin (1676-1749); tr. *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861, after John Chandler (1807-1876), alt.

Music: *Puer nobis*, melody from Trier MS., 15th cent.; adapt. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621); harm. *Cowley Carol Book*, 1902

THE HOMILY

The Rev'd Charles Dupree, D.Min., *Rector*

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The People stand.

Presider As we join the whole creation and celebrate with joy the Word made flesh, let us offer prayers to God who dwells among us in infinite light, saying, Holy Jesus, come live in our hearts.

Intercessor We pray for the church, that we may spread the news of great joy to everyone we serve. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor We pray for the nations and leaders of the world, that violence and wars may cease, and the peace of the angels prevail in every land. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor We pray for our damaged earth, that we may make wise and just decisions for the welfare of all living things. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor We pray for this city, that none may know the terrors of violence and the suffering of hunger and homelessness. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor We pray for all who are sick or sorrowful, especially those we name now. May the comfort of God's love surround them this day. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor We pray for all who have died, especially those we name now. May they rest in rest in peace in God's eternal light. Holy Jesus,

People **come live in our hearts.**

Intercessor Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

The People may add their own petitions and thanksgivings.

Presider Living God, source of grace and truth, accept the prayers we offer on this joyful feast. May we come to see the true light who shines throughout the world, and may we be the light that reveals your love to all your people. This we ask in the name of the one who sleeps helplessly in the manger, Jesus, the Holy Child of God.

People **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

—————THE HOLY COMMUNION—————

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Chorale Prelude on *In dulci jubilo*

Johann Michael Bach (1648-1694)

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The people stand.

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

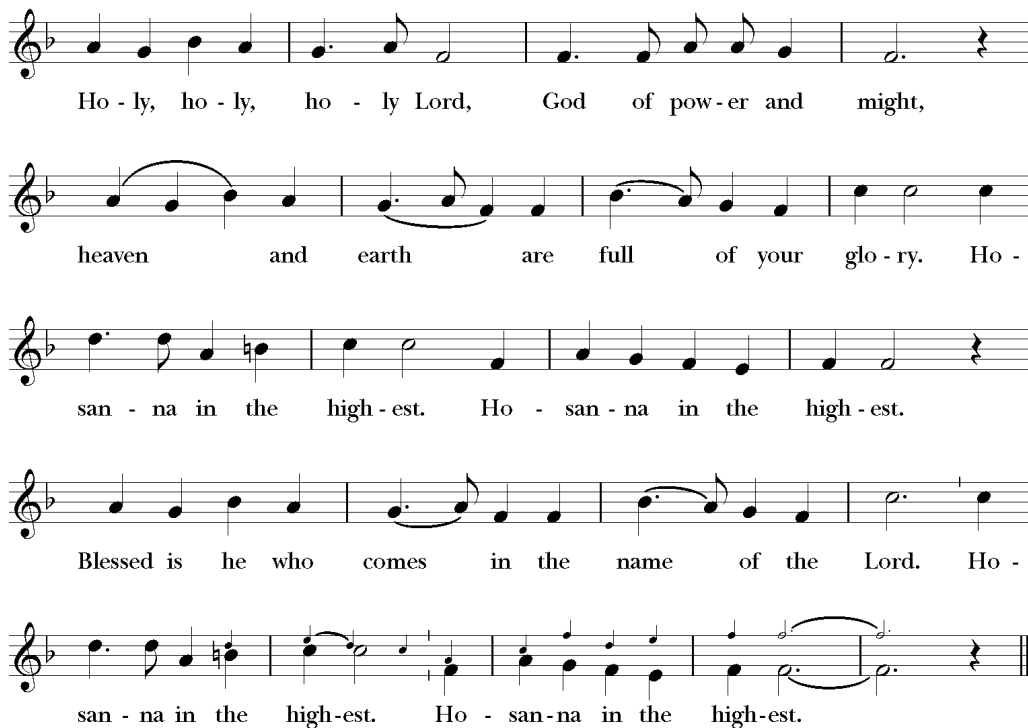
The Presider continues

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, 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 perfectly human 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 to the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS



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

Text: Mass Ordinary, Fifth century

Music: from *A Community Mass*; Richard Proulx (1937-2010)

The people stand or kneel as the Presider 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 Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. For in these last days you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In Christ, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, 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 Savior 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 Jesus 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 God,

The people say with the Presider.

**We remember Christ's death,
We proclaim Christ's resurrection,
We await Christ's coming in glory;**

The Presider continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior 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 in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through whom we are acceptable to you, 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 Paul, Mary, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Presider continues

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.

Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo,
santificado sea tu Nombre,
venga tu reino,
hágase tu voluntad,
en la tierra como en el cielo.
Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día.
Perdona nuestras ofensas,
como también nosotros perdonamos
a los que nos ofenden.
No nos dejes caer en tentación
y líbranos del mal.
Porque tuyo es el reino,
tuyo es el poder, y tuya es la gloria,
ahora y por siempre. Amén.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the bread followed by silence.

Presider Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.
People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

THE INVITATION TO THE TABLE AND HOLY COMMUNION

Everyone is invited to receive Holy Communion. An usher will signal when you can go forward. If you are unable to come forward, but desire Communion, please notify an usher and Communion will be brought to you in your pew. Receive the bread from the priest, and then either drink from the cup, or take an individual serving of wine. If, for whatever reason, you do not wish to receive, you are invited to come forward for a prayer; please indicate your desire for this by crossing your arms across your chest. If you would like healing prayer, please come to the station to the left of the pulpit where clergy will be offering prayers.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Whence is that goodly fragrance?

Dale Wood (1934-2003)

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

The people say together.

ALMIGHTY GOD, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord.
Amen.

THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

Presider May we, who have been touched by the Word made flesh,
be his body for the world.

People **Amen.**

Presider May we, who have been touched by the Word made flesh,
be his hands to bring blessing to the world.

People **Amen.**

Presider May we, who have been touched by the Word made flesh,
keep alive the hope of a restored creation.

People **Amen.**

Presider And the blessing of God Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier,
be upon you and remain with you for ever.

People **Amen.**

HYMN



1. Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3. Hail the heav'n - born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Right-eous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners re - con - ciled!"
late in time be - hold him come off - spring of a vir - gin's womb:
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings;



Joy - ful all ye na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies,
Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty!
mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,



with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - ma - nu - el.
born to raise each child of earth, born to give us se - cond birth.



Hark! the he - rald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King."

Text: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), George Whitefield (1714-1770), Martin Madan (1727-1790), and others
Music: Mendelssohn, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831-1915)

THE DISMISSAL

Presider Let us go forth in the light of Christ. Alleluia, alleluia.
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

Toccata on *In dulci jubilo*

Kevin Hildebrand (b. 1973)

Those interested in the St. Paul's History Tour are invited to gather at the baptismal font immediately following the service.

EXPANSIVE LANGUAGE AND CREATIVITY

A Few Notes about Worship at St. Paul's

St. Paul's seeks to be a welcoming, open, and inclusive community that values creativity, beauty, and mystery. We try to reflect this mission in our worship so that those from various backgrounds and perspectives will feel at home. We also hope that our worship reflects both a respect and honoring of the traditions of the Anglican church, while also seeking to give voice to how God is speaking in our current contexts. We know that the words we say in worship have a profound effect on our imagination and our experiences of God. Here's a bit of background.

Expansive Language: The Episcopal Church has developed many liturgies that use inclusive and expansive language. Expansive language is a way of incorporating multiple ways of imagining and speaking about God. It refers to the expanded use of metaphorical language for God and humans in new or unexpected and fresh ways. While we continue to value the beauty of our traditions and the importance of language, we recognize that all human language is limited. Expansive language seeks to incorporate as much of the diversity of language as possible to include all persons in the liturgical expressions.

Our Music: Every effort is made at St. Paul's to include music that speaks to the relevance and diversity of the world today. We draw from a variety of resources that include hymns ranging from the traditional, to spirituals, to those written specifically by female composers and poets. In choosing our music, we try to create a balance of music from our sacred traditions with music that reflects the diversity of the church today. In addition to Bach and Howells, we also intentionally seek out music that centers on composers who are writing music today, particularly composers of color and female artists.

A place for prayer, candle-lighting, and contemplation, St. Paul's is a holy space in which we encounter God's presence in many ways.

Our bulletin and recycling: Since we pull from as many as twenty-five sources, as well as write our own liturgical pieces (prayers, choral works, hymns, etc.), the bulletin serves as a way of capturing those elements and putting them into one place: your hands. Without a bulletin that is printed each week, we would not be able to be as creative. Plus, it would be confusing to those who are new to St. Paul's. This bulletin is an instrument of hospitality that allows us, Sunday by Sunday, to welcome and embrace all who are searching for a church home and an authentic encounter with our awakened and active Lord. In an effort to conserve paper usage, we try to print only enough bulletins as are needed for each individual service. If you'd like to help us be good stewards, you can choose to share a bulletin or download a PDF. Each week, our bulletins are responsibly recycled.

Candle-lighting: Lighting candles is an ancient practice of the church. The flame has always been considered a sign of God's presence. On the lectern side of the altar rail is a place set aside for you to light candles. Perhaps you'll light a candle in memory of a loved one, or for a particular thanksgiving or hardship in your own life. Your prayers combine with the prayers of the community as we put our trust and hope in God.

Being in the presence of Jesus: On the pulpit side of the altar rail is a small chapel set aside for quiet contemplation and prayer. An item called a "Tabernacle" is present. It reminds us of the portable tent in which the Hebrews worshiped during their time in the wilderness. This small, wooden cabinet contains the consecrated bread from holy communion, a sign of Christ's presence in our midst. A candle is lit whenever the bread is in place. Even when the church is dark, the light remains, reminding us of the church's role to be a light in the midst of darkness. Here, in Christ's presence, you may spend time in stillness and quiet prayer. On most Sundays during communion, a priest is present to offer prayers for healing for yourself or for someone else.

If you have questions about our worship experience, or to find out how you can be involved in worship, please consult our Ministry Directory or reach out to one of the clergy. To learn more about the guiding beliefs of the Episcopal Church, visit <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/what-we-believe/>

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