

The First Sunday of Christmas

December 26, 2021

Gathering Hymn: "Bring a torch, Jeannette, Isabella"

Prepared by Father Thomas McAlpine

Opening Acclamation

Officiant 'Do I not fill heaven and earth?' says the Lord.

All **Now the Word is made flesh and laid in a narrow manger.**

Officiant From eternity to eternity you are God,

All **and now we see you as a newborn child.**

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

All **And also with you.**

Celebrant Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled 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 First Reading: Isaiah 61:10 - 62:3

Reader A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,

my whole being shall exult in my God;

for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,

he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,

and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the earth brings forth its shoots,

and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,

so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise

to spring up before all the nations.

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,

and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,

until her vindication shines out like the dawn,

and her salvation like a burning torch.

The nations shall see your vindication,

and all the kings your glory;

and you shall be called by a new name

that the mouth of the Lord will give.

You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,

and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Reader The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 147:13-32

Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; *

praise your God, O Zion;

For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *

he has blessed your children within you.

He has established peace on your borders; *

he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

He sends out his command to the earth, *

and his word runs very swiftly.

He gives snow like wool; *

he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *

who can stand against his cold?

He sends forth his word and melts them; *

he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

He declares his word to Jacob, *

his statutes and his judgments to Israel.

He has not done so to any other nation; *

to them he has not revealed his judgments.

Hallelujah!

The Gospel Reading: John 1:1-18

Reader A reading from the Gospel according to John.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses;

grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Reader The word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Homily

The Rev. John Rasmus

The Prayers

Officiant We now enter a time of prayer. You may wish to bow your head, open your hands, or prepare your body for prayer in some other way.

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Now, let us pray as God's beloved children, using the prayer Jesus taught us.

Traditional language:

**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.**

Gender-neutral (New Zealand, adapted):

**Loving God, may your name be held holy, your
reign spread among us, and your will be done
well.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
From all the binds and burdens us,
free us and help us free others.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too sharp to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, save us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is
love, now and forever. Amen.**

Contemporary language:

**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.**

Spanish version:

**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 tuyo es la gloria,
Ahora y por siempre. Amén.**

The Prayers of the People

The people respond with the text in bold.

Officiant In peace let us pray to the Lord.
There was no room for your Son in the inn.
Protect with your love those who have no home, and all who live in poverty.
Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Officiant Your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness.
Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world,
especially those whom we name now, out loud or in our hearts:
The people may name those who are suffering.

Officiant Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Officiant Angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.'
Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in our nation and the world.
Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Officiant Strangers welcomed the Holy Family. Bless our homes and all those with whom
we share our lives, and help us show kindness whenever we can.
Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Officiant Heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven.
Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your
coming kingdom, especially those whom we miss tonight:
The people may name their beloved dead.

Officiant Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Officiant Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.
Open our hearts that God may be born in us today.
Holy God,

People **hear our prayer.**

Celebrant At this time I invite people to share any particular prayer requests, needs,
concerns, blessings, or thanksgivings with the assembly, out loud or in the chat.

There is a pause while people are invited to share their prayer requests.

Celebrant Loving God, in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped the newborn
King. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph and the
saints through the One who is your Word made flesh, our Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the Prince of Peace. The peace of the Lord be always with you!

All **And also with you!**

Announcements

- TODAY, 10:30 - 11:30, people may stop by the church (masked) to receive Communion from reserved sacrament, and have Father John pray with them, if they wish.
- ZOOM Vespers tonight at 6:30; NO StoryChurch.
- During Rev. Miranda's family time, if you need the care of a priest, you can reach out to Father John Rasmus at (608) 345-4110, or Father Tom McAlpine at (608) 208-3793.

The Blessing

Celebrant May the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the perseverance of the wise ones, the willingness of Joseph and Mary, and the peace of the Christ-child be yours this Christmas; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

Officiant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord!

People **Thanks be to God!**

Sending Hymn: "Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"

Prepared by Rachel and Jenny Behrens