

# ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Montgomery, Alabama



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## THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY

### FESTIVAL EUCHARIST: RITE I

8.00 p.m. • Dec 24th, 2021

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#### A Note to Guests and Newcomers to the Episcopal Church

*Welcome! We are glad you have chosen to worship at St. John's today.*

*In the Episcopal Church, all baptized Christians are invited to receive Holy Communion from the Lord's Table. If you have not been baptized and would like to learn more about this sacrament, please contact one of the clergy. Those who wish not to receive Holy Communion may come to the altar rail, fold their arms across their chests, and receive a blessing from the priest. Guests are expected and welcome! For your convenience, we offer Nursery Care for children 3 years old and younger. The nursery is located in the adjacent education building, and at the end of the hall on your left. Also, children's activity bags are available in the back of the church.*

#### **Prelude**

**Entrance Hymn 83** *O come, all ye faithful*

**ADESTE FIDELIS**

## **The Word of God**

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

*People*      **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.

*Sung by all.*

**Opening Canticle - Gloria in excelsis (Hymnal, S 204)**

*Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

**The Collect of the Day**

*Celebrant*           The Lord be with you.

*People*               **And with thy Spirit.**

*Celebrant*           Let us pray.

O God, who hast caused this holy night to shine with the illumination of the true Light: Grant us, we beseech thee, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also perfectly enjoy him in heaven; where with thee and the Holy Spirit he liveth and reigneth, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

*The people sit.*

**The Lessons**

**The Old Testament Lesson: 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.

*Reader*           The Word of the Lord.  
*People*           **Thanks be to God.**

*Remain seated. The psalm will be said responsively by whole verse.*

## **Psalm 96**

- 1 Sing to the Lord a new song; \*  
sing to the Lord, all the whole earth.
- 2 Sing to the Lord and bless his Name; \***  
**proclaim the good news of his salvation from day to day.**
- 3 Declare his glory among the nations \*  
and his wonders among all peoples.
- 4 For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised; \***  
**he is more to be feared than all gods.**
- 5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are but idols; \*  
but it is the Lord who made the heavens.
- 6 Oh, the majesty and magnificence of his presence! \***  
**Oh, the power and the splendor of his sanctuary!**
- 7 Ascribe to the Lord, you families of the peoples; \*  
ascribe to the Lord honor and power.
- 8 Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; \***  
**bring offerings and come into his courts.**
- 9 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness; \*  
let the whole earth tremble before him.
- 10 Tell it out among the nations: "The Lord is King! \***  
**he has made the world so firm that it cannot be moved;**  
**he will judge the peoples with equity."**
- 11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;  
let the sea thunder and all that is in it; \*  
let the field be joyful and all that is therein.
- 12 Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy**  
**before the Lord when he comes, \***  
**when he comes to judge the earth.**
- 13 He will judge the world with righteousness \*  
and the peoples with his truth.

## **The Epistle: Titus 2:11-14**

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

*Reader*           The Word of the Lord.

*People*           **Thanks be to God.**

*All stand.*

**Sequence Hymn 110** *The snow lay on the ground*

**VENITE ADOREMUS**

## **The Gospel Reading: Luke 2:1-20**

*Minister*           The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

*People*           **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*           **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

**The Sermon:** The Rev. Dr. Deonna D. Neal

*All stand saying together*

### **The Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:  
by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.  
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*The people kneel as they are able.*

### **The Prayers of the People**

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church and the world.

Almighty and ever living God, who in thy holy Word hast taught us to make prayers, and supplications, and to give thanks for all men: Receive these our prayers which we offer unto thy divine Majesty, beseeching thee to inspire continually the Universal Church with the spirit of

truth, unity, and concord; and grant that all those who do confess thy holy Name may agree in the truth of thy holy Word, and live in unity and godly love.

Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and other ministers [especially \_\_\_\_\_], that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth thy true and lively Word, and rightly and duly administer thy holy Sacraments.

And to all thy people give thy heavenly grace, and especially to this congregation here present; that, with meek heart and due reverence, they may hear and receive thy holy Word, truly serving thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life.

We beseech thee also so to rule the hearts of those who bear the authority of government in this and every land [especially \_\_\_\_\_], that they may be led to wise decisions and right actions for the welfare and peace of the world.

We also pray for \_\_\_\_\_. Open, O Lord, the eyes of all people to behold thy gracious hand in all thy works, that, rejoicing in thy whole creation, they may honor thee with their substance, and be faithful stewards of thy bounty.

And we most humbly beseech thee, of thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succor [\_\_\_\_\_ and] all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

And we also bless thy holy Name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear [especially \_\_\_\_\_], beseeching thee to grant them continual growth in thy love and service; and to grant us grace so to follow the good examples of the ever blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, St. John and of all thy saints, that with them we may be partakers of thy heavenly kingdom.

Grant these our prayers, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. **Amen.**

*The minister continues*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence.*

**Most merciful God,  
We confess that we have sinned against thee  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;  
We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in thy will,  
and walk in thy ways,  
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.**

*The priest stands and says*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, Lord God of  
 Hosts: Hea - ven and earth are full of thy glo - ry. Glo -  
 - ry be to thee, O Lord Most High. Bless - ed is he that com - eth  
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*The people kneel as they are able. Then the Celebrant continues*

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again. For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our

offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord; By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**



## The Lord's Prayer

*Celebrant:* And now, as our Savior Christ hath 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,**  
**forever and ever. Amen.**

## The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread and after a period of silence says*

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

*The Celebrant and People sing together*

A musical score for the 'Lamb of God' prayer, consisting of eight staves of music in a key signature of three flats (E-flat major/C minor). The lyrics are written below the staves:

O Lamb of God, that ta - kest a - way  
the sins of the world, have mer - cy  
up - on us. O Lamb of God,  
that ta - kest a - way the sins of the world, have  
mer - cy up - on us. O Lamb of  
God, that ta - kest a - way the sins of  
the world, grant us thy peace.

*The Celebrant and People say together*

**We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.**

*The Celebrant says*

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.

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*The People join in this prayer kneeling as they are able*

**Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.**

### **Christmas Blessing**

May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness. *Amen.*

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. *Amen.*

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. *Amen.*

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

**Hymn 87** *Hark! The herald angels sing*

MENDELSSOHN

### **Dismissal**

*Minister*        Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People*            **Thanks be to God.**

### **Postlude**

## Today's Servers

**Thurifer:** Chuck Moore

**Acolytes:** Susannah Miller, Bobby Eskridge, Hunter Dailey, Thomas Lawlor, Parker Mantooth

**Lector/Intercessor:** Radney Ramsey, Jimmy McLemore

**Eucharistic Ministers:** Keith Miller, Kat Dailey, Joleen George

**Greeters/Ushers:** Radney Ramsey, Will Hill Tankersley, Jr., Kathleen Bradford, Cissy Johnson, Wyatt Wells

**Altar Guild:** Chuck Moore

**Videographer:** Joleen George

**Instrumentalists:** Robby Gibson, *guitar*; Robert Scott, *flute*; Barbara Shanks, *oboe*; David Simpson, *bassoon*.

Your prayers are requested for the following parishioners: George Benner, Elizabeth Via Brown, Delia Cerpa, Mark Chappell, Martha Fitzpatrick, Karen Jarrell, Leslie Little, Christopher Marshall, Richard McCrory, Eddie McDowell, Marilyn Pickett, Carrie Shaw, Sarah Stone, Fred Tyson, Barbara Wallace.

Prayers are also requested for these friends: Gail Alsobrook, Larry Alsobrook, Ramsey Ashmore, Joe Carter, Arthur Femenella, Sr., Frank, Robin Fleming, Steve Harding, Richard Norris, Karen and Angelo Pacheco, James Paine, Lavada Person, Andy Pritchard.

*Please notify us when you are sick or hospitalized so that we might provide pastoral care.*

*The prayer list will be updated monthly, please notify us if names need to remain longer.*

### **Christmas Flower Dedications**

**Memorial:** Turner Christian Cameron, Jr., Harald Rohlig, James Freeman, Carl R. Fillmore, Rebecca W. Gamble, Alf Gamble, Elizabeth Cecile Smith, George Edward von Gal, Jr., Suzanne Bellingrath von Gal, William Bellingrath von Gal, Lucy Oliver Coleman, Algernon Sidney Coleman, Margaret Walker Grubb, William Irwin Grubb, Eugenia Grubb Schanbacher, Laura Thornton Hutchinson, H. Hamilton Hutchinson, M.D. Ruth Hutchinson Thomas, Julia Marks Dozier, Jane Dozier Harris, Charles A. Harris, Jr., Molly McGough, Joe McGough, Henry Paul Haas, Dora Smith Haas, Ira Hibbett Eskridge, Jr., Nancy Inge Eskridge, Laurel Elizabeth Zaks, Daniel Glenn Stewart, Diane Parkman Miller

**Honorarium:** Ryan Terry, Haley Terry, Houghton Smith, Anne Emery Smith, Henry & Thomas Gaede, Lucy, Mary Margaret and Lillie Huff, The Rev. Dr. Deonna Neal, St. John's Staff, William Inge Eskridge, Jr., Dora Gunter Eskridge, Robert Haas Eskridge, Anna Peeples, Will Peeples, Cate Peeples

## Christmas Schedule 2021

Saturday, December 25th

10:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I

Sunday, December 26th (no nursery care or children's chapel this day)

10:30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II (with music)

Sunday, January 2nd

10.30 am Holy Eucharist Rite II (with music)

\*\*No weekday services or activities during the week of Dec 26th. Weekday services resume Jan 3rd.

### Announcements

**Adult Formation Spring 2022: On Grief and Grieving: Finding the Meaning of Grief through the Five Stages of Loss.** From *Jan 9th through Feb 27th* Deonna will lead a class on grief and the grieving process at 9.15 am in the Parish Hall. The class will look at grief holistically, to include grief not only associated with the loss of a loved one, but also grief that goes along with the loss of a job, divorce, an empty nest, unemployment, onset of a mental illness, serious physical illness or health diagnosis, etc. Whether you have experienced these things directly or are the close friend or caregiver of someone who has, this class is for you. The August 2014 edition of the book by Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and David Kessler will be available for purchase in the bookstore.

**Annual Meeting:** The Annual parish meeting will be held on Sunday January 16th at 9am in the parish house.

**2022 Acolyte Festival:** Saturday, Jan. 22 from 10am-3:30pm at the Cathedral Church of the Advent. All acolytes are invited to attend this free event. Please contact Joleen at [joleen@stjohnsmontgomery.org](mailto:joleen@stjohnsmontgomery.org) for registration information.

**Chiming Guild:** St. John's is creating a chiming guild. The guild is open to all, regardless of age, and will be responsible for ringing the bells both before and after the 10:30am Sunday service. No experience, or musical training is necessary, and all guild members will be trained by Joel Gregory. If you are interested, please contact Anne Tippett at [anne@stjohnsmontgomery.org](mailto:anne@stjohnsmontgomery.org)

**Organ Offline:** The organ will begin its much-needed repairs beginning January 3rd, 2022, and will be offline for about six weeks.