

All Saints Church

December 24, 2024

5:00 p.m.



Christmas Eve

A Christmas Word

“The Gift of Christmas”

There are not many times in the course of a year that one can say the spirit of love and joy brings people together. But Christmas is certainly one of those opportunities. I refer to Christmas as an opportunity because some see this time of the year as a gift and others do not. Of course, Christmas confronts us head-on with the question of priorities.

The Methodist pastor, Mike Slaughter, wrote a book entitled, Christmas is not your Birthday. Slaughter says, *“Every year, we say we’re going to cut back, simplify, and have a family Christmas that focuses on the real reason for the season - Jesus. But every year, advertisements beckon, the children plead, and it seems easier just to indulge our wants and whims. Overspending, overeating, materialism, and busyness rob us of our peace and joy and rob Jesus of his rightful role as the center of our celebration.”* How true this is! All of these distractions, beginning in November and running right to the New Year, derail us from that love and joy which brings us together in the gift of the manager – the baby.

As we enter the Christmas season, let us remember simplicity in our complex world; let us live with a non-anxious spirit. Let us remember that over 2,000 years ago Jesus, the Christ, was born amongst farm animals. Jesus was the true, simple gift given to you and me, and there is no better gift than this! Therefore, we should not let ourselves get caught up in the hurried busyness of the season. This busyness seeks to take the true gift away from us. Rather, we are to remember that God came into this world through the simple and true person of Jesus.

We are called to simplify and recognize that this innocent new life freed us from the chains of death and despair, and it is only in and through Him that we find our true rest. Jesus came to show us the pathway to freedom, and He is the gift that truly keeps on giving in this holy Christmastide! Or, as a renowned North Carolina Jewelry store proclaims boldly each Christmas in the midst of diamonds, gold, and silver: *“Have You Received The Greatest Gift Of All - Jesus? What a precious gift! Every heart needs Jesus!”*

Merry Christmas, my friends!

Jamie Pahl
Rector

WELCOME!

The nursery on the lower level is open from 4:30 p.m. - 6:45 p.m.

*The congregation is requested to observe a time of silence for prayer before the service.
Please silence all cell phones.*

CHRISTMAS EVE MUSICIANS

*Peter Crisafulli, Minister of Music & Organist
Catherine Huntress-Reeve, Associate Conductor*

The All Saints Choir

The All Saints Nativity Brass

*Permission to podcast / stream the music in this service
obtained from ONE LICENSE, License # M-400881.*

Christmas Match

Support All Saints with a special gift, using the envelope provided, the website, or this QR code. Gifts will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$50,000, through the generosity of a group of donors. No gift is too small! (Regular pledged giving does not apply to the match.) Thank you for your own generosity!



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The Rev. Dr. James L. Pahl, Jr., Rector

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

DECEMBER 24, 2024

FIVE O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING

PRELUDE

The All Saints Nativity Brass

OPENING HYMN

Hymnal 83, vv. 1-3

O come, all ye faithful

LITURGY OF THE WORD

All stand

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

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

The Celebrant says:

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: 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.**

SONG OF PRAISE

Hymnal 96, vv. 1 & 3

Angels we have heard on high

COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS EVE

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

All sit

Reader A reading from the Prophet Isaiah.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined. ³ You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴ For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

SEQUENCE HYMN

All stand

Good Christian friends, rejoice

Hymnal 107

HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

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

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. ⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" ¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known



to us.”¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Gospeler The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

As the candle is lighted, the leader will explain its significance.

Leader The center candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to save us from sin. His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! As John the Baptist announced: *“Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* Christ himself is before all things, and in Christ all things hold together.

Lord, you are the light of our world.

People O come, O come, Emmanuel.

Leader Alleluia. To us a child is born: Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

People O come, O come, Emmanuel.

Leader May the light of your love always shine in our hearts.

All Amen.

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

The Rev. Dr. James L. Pahl, Jr.

NICENE CREED

All stand

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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Form III
All kneel as able

Reader Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

People That we all may be one.

Reader Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

People That your Name may be glorified by all people.

Reader Bless, O Lord, our Local and Global Outreach partners;

People That they may be empowered to love the rejected and the outcasts as Jesus did.

Reader We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons; and All Saints' clergy, ministry leaders, and staff;

People That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

Reader We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

People That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Reader Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

People That our works may find favor in your sight.

Reader Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble. Especially those whose names are on our hearts and minds, those who have been made known to us and are named in love and hope in our Parish Prayer List, and those who are known only to you;

People That they may be delivered from their distress.

Reader Give to the departed eternal rest.

People Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Reader We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

People May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Reader Let us pray for our own needs and those of others. *(The People may add their own petitions silently)*



CONCLUDING COLLECT

Celebrant:

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. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

All stand

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

WELCOME

OFFERTORY

Sussex Carol

Sung by members of the All Saints Choir

Traditional English Carol, Arr. June Nixon

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PRESENTATION HYMN

What child is this?

Hymnal 115, v. 3

*Now bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER B *(all standing)*

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

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

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Celebrant: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, 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 perfect Man 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 the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS ET BENEDICTUS

Hymnal S-130

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.*

The Celebrant continues until...

Kneel as you are able

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;**

The Celebrant continues until...

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

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 BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

Celebrant and People: 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.

HOLY COMMUNION

All baptized Christians who are able to receive communion in their home church are welcome to receive at All Saints. Baptized children receive Communion at the discretion of their parent or other accompanying adult. Please follow the instructions of the ushers. If you do not wish to receive Communion at this time, please cross your arms on your chest to receive a blessing. If you have limited mobility, please contact an usher to receive Communion in your seat. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

COMMUNION MUSIC

The Father's Love

Sung by members of the All Saints Choir

William Roger Price

Based on "Of the Father's love begotten" and "Lo, How A Rose"

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PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Celebrant: Let us pray.

All kneel as able

Celebrant and People: Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

CANDLELIGHT HYMN

Silent Night

Hymnal 111

(Please extinguish your candles.)

THE BLESSING

All kneel as able

Celebrant:

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

All stand

Joy to the world

Hymn 100

THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

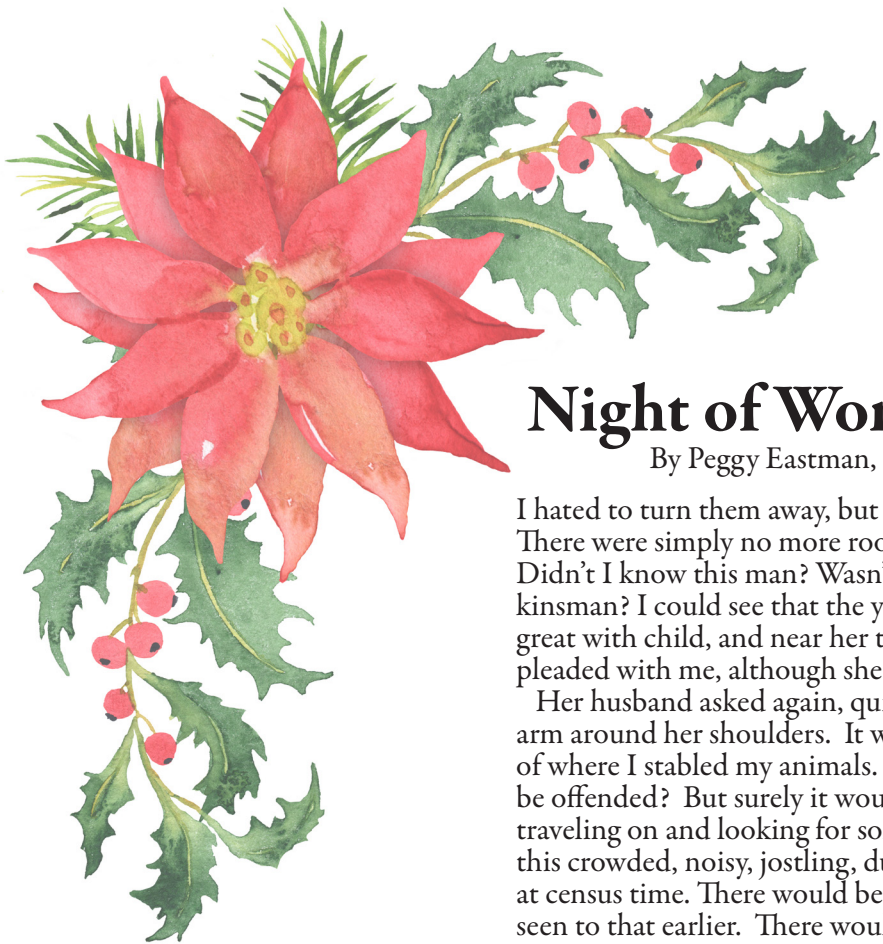
The All Saints Nativity Brass

Christmas Joy

Tilman Susato

Please take your candle home with you.





Night of Wondrous Birth

By Peggy Eastman, Poet-in-Residence

I hated to turn them away, but what could I do?
There were simply no more rooms for anyone.
Didn't I know this man? Wasn't he a very distant
kinsman? I could see that the young woman was
great with child, and near her time. Her eyes
pleaded with me, although she spoke no words.

Her husband asked again, quietly, politely, his
arm around her shoulders. It was then I thought
of where I stabled my animals. Would the two
be offended? But surely it would be better than
traveling on and looking for somewhere else in
this crowded, noisy, jostling, dusty town, Bethlehem
at census time. There would be clean straw; I had
seen to that earlier. There would be fresh water
for their donkey. Could they be comfortable there?
The breath of my gentle animals would warm them.

I watched as the two walked slowly toward my stabled
animals, my heart aching for her. I could not stop
thinking of her young, lovely face. I should have done
more for her. It was much later that I heard a chorus
of high, pure voices coming from the stable area.
I am plain-speaking, and understand not poetic
flights of words that take wing. Dreaming I surely
thought I was, but the melodious voices persisted.

Weary as I was, I arose and looked toward the stable.
Shining on it from above was a brilliant light, and shepherds
were kneeling in front of it. I thought I saw white-robed
beings hovering in the air, but it must have been only
an illusion of moving clouds. I didn't dare draw near; I
closed my eyes and let the ethereal music soothe me. Who
could make such sounds? Something wondrous had happened
in my stable, that was clear. What? I should have
done better for her, for them. But maybe, just maybe, I
had done something good by offering them what
shelter I could. It was a mystery. Would I ever, ever
know what had happened that night in my humble,
straw-strewn stable?

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