



SAINT ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

306 N. Division Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104 • (734) 663-0518 • www.standrewsaa.org

Sunday, December 27, 2020 *First Sunday after Christmas*

Dear friends:

I hope in whatever way you found to celebrate Christmas this year it contained joy and peace for you in a meaningful and perhaps new way that you might treasure in years to come. While our waiting for Christmas may be over, we still wait for so much – the New Year, a new Administration, maybe a new job or a new baby or grandchild, a new start, and of course, a new chance to reenter a way of life we have missed so desperately for much of this year. Where all of this will lead remains to be seen. So, more waiting is in store.

Since waiting seems to be the lot of human life, how we wait is extremely important because it shapes much of who we are. Waiting can either be a burden or an opportunity to use the gift of time in a constructive way. To provide some insight into this, I leave you with a final reflection from Henri Nouwen.

“Our waiting is always shaped by alertness to the Word. It is waiting in the knowledge that someone wants to address us. The question is, Are we home? Are we at our address, ready to respond to the doorbell? We need to wait together, to keep each other at home spiritually, so that when the Word comes it can become flesh in us. That is why the book of God is always in the midst of those who gather. We read the Word so that the Word can become flesh and have a whole new life in us.”

Henri Nouwen: “A Spirituality of Waiting: Being Alert to God’s Presence in Our Lives,” Weavings, January/February 1987.

Even though we cannot gather right now in the way we would like, the Word always unites us in a community of faith and caring that sustains us through all things. As we continue to wait for a return to the interactions we value, may our waiting not be burden but an occasion for the Word to speak anew in us.

God bless, *Fr. Alan*

Sunday, December 27

- ▶ [WATCH THE SERVICE](#) at 10:00 am
- ▶ [COFFEE HOUR](#) on Zoom at 10:45 am

Navigating this Service

Use our [Morning Prayer text](#) or follow the Book of Common Prayer, pg. 75.



Calendar

Sunday, December 27

Family Service

9:15 am on YouTube

Morning Prayer

10:00 am on YouTube

Virtual Coffee Hour

10:45 am on Zoom

Sunday, January 3

Family Service

9:15 am on YouTube

Morning Prayer

10:00 am on YouTube

Virtual Coffee Hour

10:45 am on Zoom

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Upcoming Events

Family Service to tell the Christmas Story

Watch on YouTube at 9:15 am

The Christmas Story will be told this year as part of a special virtual presentation of the Family Service! While Virtual Church School is on winter break you can join Fr. Alan and the Rev. Sally as they tell the Christmas Story beginning with the prophet Isaiah's message of the coming of the Messiah, through Christ's birth and the Epiphany.

This brief (~20 minutes) virtual service will be available December 27, and January 3 on YouTube starting at 9:15 am and can be watched at any time for your convenience.

The Family Service will be held in place of Virtual Church School on the above dates only. Virtual lessons resume on Sunday, January 10 for Church School and Wednesday, January 6 for Youth Groups.

Annual Parish Reports

Due by: Friday, January 15, 2021

If you are a group or committee chair and you would like to have a report included in the Annual Report, please send it to communications@standrewsaa.org by Friday, January 15, 2021.

The Annual Report will be available on the parish website on Wednesday, January 27, 2021.



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Prelude: *Once in Royal David's City* arr. Sondra K. Tucker (b. 1957)
Oliver Barron, Trumpet

Opening Hymn: *All Glory be to God on High* Hymnal, no. 421



1 All glo - ry be to God on high, and peace on earth from
2 O Lamb of God, Lord Je - sus Christ, whom God the Fa - ther
3 You on - ly are the Ho - ly One, who came for our sal -



hea - ven, and God's good will un - fail - ing - ly be
gave us, who for the world was sac - ri - ficed up -
va - tion, and on - ly you are God's true Son, who



to all peo - ple giv - en. We bless, we wor - ship you, we raise for
on the cross to save us; and, as you sit at God's right hand and
was be - fore cre - a - tion. You on - ly, Christ, as Lord we own and,



your great glo - ry thanks and praise, O God, Al - might - y Fa - ther.
we for judgment there must stand, have mer - cy, Lord, up - on us.
with the Spi - rit, you a - lone share in the Fa - ther's glo - ry.

Opening Sentences Book of Common Prayer, pg. 78

Preces Hymnal, no. S-33
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80

Invitatory Book of Common Prayer, pg. 80

Jubilate Hymnal, no. S-11
Book of Common Prayer, pg. 82

Psalms 147:13-21

- 13 Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; *
praise your God, O Zion;
- 14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; *
he has blessed your children within you.
- 15 He has established peace on your borders; *
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.
- 16 He sends out his command to the earth, *
and his word runs very swiftly.

- 17 He gives snow like wool; *
 he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.
- 18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; *
 who can stand against his cold?
- 19 He sends forth his word and melts them; *
 he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.
- 20 He declares his word to Jacob, *
 his statutes and his judgments to Israel.
- 21 He has not done so to any other nation; *
 to them he has not revealed his judgments.
 Hallelujah!

Old Testament: Isaiah 61:10-62:3

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.

Canticle: *The Third Song of Isaiah*

Hymnal, no. S-223
 Book of Common Prayer, pg. 87

The Gospel: John 1:1-18

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.

Sermon

Fr. Alan Gibson

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

With the singing of the angels over the Bethlehem plain ringing in his ears, St. John begins his telling of the gospel with a song. And as only music can do, these 18 verses contain more mystery and grandeur in their beautiful brevity than shelves of theological tomes ever could. Sadly, for us, the original tune that graced these words has been lost. What we have is the hymn, the text, that tells of how God, with all the power of the universe at the divine fingertips, chose to enter the world as one of its creatures. Of the countless ways to get our attention, God became known to us by becoming one of us.

Even though he makes no mention of the baby Jesus, or the shepherds, or the star, a manger or the angels, St. John is the one evangelist to address the meaning of the birth of Christ in terms beyond the fulfilment of prophecy. Thirty years prior to John's writings, Luke and Matthew dealt with Mary and Joseph, and all the other details we know so well. John takes on the more daunting task of explaining what this familiar story means for all creation.

It's not so amazing that the Divine was born of a human mother at a pivotal time in history, or that a choir of angels announced that birth, or that

all sorts of people, both high and low, were interested in this event. What is incredible, is that God willfully took on the likeness of imperfection in order to make us God's children. God became human, with all the frailties and weaknesses, as well as the potential and possibilities that each of us possess. God, whose Spirit encompassed the earth since before the beginning, at a particular point in time, walked on this same earth in our flesh.

In all that God created: the heavens, the seas, the mountains and forests, to the tiniest flower or the sweetest bird song – all perfect in their own beauty – God chose to become a human being, because we are the ones who most desperately need God's help. We are the ones, in all the universe, made in God's image; an image our own willfulness had damaged. God gives us the gift of God's very self, in the Son, to remake us into the beings God created: complete, whole, in the perfect image of our creator. We are children of God, only because we have been made God's own. By taking on our likeness, we have been restored to God's likeness so that we can share in the divine life. In the baby of Bethlehem, in the man who died on Calvary, in "the true light which enlightens the world," we see God. A baby was born in a stable so that eternal life could be born in us, and so that we, as God's children, could be a light to the world.

For over 2000 years, preachers and theologians have tried to explain all this, often creating heat, but very little light. One ancient lyricist found divine light in himself and in those around him; and could do nothing but sing a song that has been passed on to us to sing with our own melody. The light shines, the song resounds, the Word becomes flesh and God is made known to us – all in what we call the meaning, and the miracle, that is Christmas.

Apostles Creed

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 96

The Prayers

Collect of the Day

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.*

Voluntary: *What Child is This*

arr. Sondra K. Tucker

Oliver Barron, Trumpet

General Thanksgiving

Book of Common Prayer, pg. 101

Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Concluding Versicle

Hymnal, no. S-54

Closing Hymn: *Joy to the World*

Hymnal, no. 100

1 Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth re -
 2 Joy to the world! the Sa - vior reigns; let us our
 *3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow, nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the

ceive her King; let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, re -
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings flow far
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous - ness, and

heaven and na - ture sing, and heaven and na - ture
 peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
 as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

1 and heaven and na - ture sing, and
 2 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 3 far as the curse is found, far
 4 and won - ders of his love, and

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.

heaven and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,
 as the curse is found,
 won - ders of his love,

Postlude: *Gigue on Joy to the World*

arr. Sondra K. Tucker

Oliver Barron, Trumpet