

ST. STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Feast of the Holy Name

January 1, 2025, 10:00 am Worship Service



The Adoration of the Shepherds

WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!

It is a joy to have you worship with us today. We believe everyone who worships with us is sent to us by God. So, welcome.

As we gather for worship, we want to remind everyone of a few important items:

- Please turn off or silence your electronic devices.
- We strongly encourage you to enter the sanctuary in silence as you prepare for worship.
- Before worship begins, we encourage you to speak to God. During worship, be ready for God to speak to you.
- After worship, we invite you to fellowship with one another, especially those God has brought to us — our visitors.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

As you come in and settle into your seat, I invite you to think about the following:

- ❖ Wherever we go, we have a reason for going there. What is your reason for being here today?
- ❖ God is merciful and kind to us each and every day. What thanksgiving do you bring to God today?
- ❖ Because each day brings many challenges, what concern(s) do you bring to God?
- ❖ As your Rector, I have come with thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy and to worship Him; because today I am reminded that another year has ended and a new year has begun. It is my hope that you have come to do the same. I encourage you to join me as we call upon our God and worship Him.

Canon Wilmot—a son of God

✝ This symbol represents the point at which we sign ourselves with the sign of the cross during worship.

Opening Hymn *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name* Hymnal 450

All hail the power of Jesus' Name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all!
bring forth the royal diadem,
and crown him Lord of all!

Crown him, ye martyrs of our God,
who from his altar call:
praise him whose way of pain ye trod,
and crown him Lord of all!
praise him whose way of pain ye trod,
and crown him Lord of all!

Hail him, the Heir of David's line,
whom David Lord did call,
the God incarnate, Man divine,
and crown him Lord of all!
the God incarnate, Man divine,
and crown him Lord of all!

Ye heirs of Israel's chosen race,
ye ransomed of the fall,
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him Lord of all!
hail him who saves you by his grace,
and crown him Lord of all!

Sinners, whose love can ne'er forget
the wormwood and the gall,
go, spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all!
go, spread your trophies at his feet,
and crown him Lord of all!



The Word of God

Opening Acclamation

The People standing, the Celebrant says:

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

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

The Celebrant and People continue

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

S280

Glory to God: Gloria in excelsis

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father;
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. *Amen.*

The Collect for The Feast of the Holy Name

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

Eternal Father, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting.

People *Amen.*

Please be seated.

The Lessons

May we hear the Word of God through these words.

A Reading from the Book of Numbers 6:22–27

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. So they shall put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.

The Word of the Lord

People *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 8

(to be read responsively by the Lay Reader and the Congregation)

L O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!

**C Out of the mouths of infants and children *
your majesty is praised above the heavens.**

L You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, *
to quell the enemy and the avenger.

**C When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, *
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,**

- L What is man that you should be mindful of him? *
the son of man that you should seek him out?
- C **You have made him but little lower than the angels; *
you adorn him with glory and honor;**
- L You give him mastery over the works of your hands; *
you put all things under his feet:
- C **All sheep and oxen, *
even the wild beasts of the field,**
- L The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
- C **O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!**

Celebrant and People

**Glory to the † Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

May we hear the Word of God through these words.

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians 2:5–11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death — even death on a cross. Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord

People Thanks be to God.

There is a name I love to hear,
 I love to sing its worth;
 It sounds like music in mine ear,
 The sweetest name on earth.

*O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
 O how I love Jesus, because He first loved me!*

It tells me of a Savior's love,
 Who died to set me free;
 It tells me of His precious blood,
 The sinner's perfect plea.

Refrain

When the Gospel is being announced, a cross is made,

✝ (on the forehead) in my mind to understand it,

✝ (on the lips) on my lips to proclaim it, and

✝ (over the heart) in my heart to live it.

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *Luke 2:15–21*

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

The Gospel of the Lord

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Sermon Hymn

It tells me what my Father hath
In store for ev'ry day,
And though I tread a darksome path,
Yields sunshine all the way.

*O how I love Jesus, O how I love Jesus,
O how I love Jesus, because He first loved me!*

❖ Sermon *Wilmot T. Merchant, II* ❖

Please use this time to silently reflect on what the Lord has spoken to you.



Please stand.

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and 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

(We bow for the two lines in bold.)

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.

Please sit or kneel for the Prayers of the People.

The Prayers of the People

The Prayer Leader and People pray responsively.

Prayer Leader The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Prayer Leader Let us pray and give thanks.

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for the Archbishop of Canterbury, Sean our Presiding Bishop, Ruth our Bishop, Wilmot our Priest, Kim our Deacon, and for all bishops and other ministers.

Pray for the Church.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

I ask your prayers for God's peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. Pray for justice and peace.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison. Pray for those in any need or trouble.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

I ask your prayers for all who seek God, or a deeper knowledge of him.

Pray that they may find and be found by him.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

I ask your prayers for the departed, especially those in whose memory the poinsettias have been given for Christmas.

Pray for those who have died.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

I ask your prayers for our parish family, that each of us will say yes to what God the Holy Spirit is calling us to do.

Pray for discernment and wisdom.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People ***Hear our prayer***

Let us give thanks for the many blessings God has bestowed upon us and our loved ones near and far. Pray that thanksgiving will be a part of each breath we breathe.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

People Hear our prayer

Praise God for those in every generation in whom Christ has been honored. Pray that we may have grace to glorify Christ in our own day.

Lord, in your mercy

Silence

People Hear our prayer

Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence is kept.

Celebrant and People

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

The Celebrant Stands and Says

Almighty God have mercy † on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.

People Amen

The Peace *Please stand.*

Jesus said, *Peace I leave with you; my Peace I give to you.* John 14:27

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People ***And also with you.***

***At the conclusion of the peace
the Celebrant says:***

Celebrant God is Good!

People ***All the Time.***



Please be seated for announcements.

The Holy Communion

Offertory

O Holy Child of Bethlehem

D. Wagner

Please stand.

Doxology:

Old Hundredth

**From all that dwell below the skies
let the Creator's praise arise!**

**Let the Redeemer's Name be sung
through every land, by every tongue!**

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
praise Him, all creatures here below;**

**Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen**

The Great Thanksgiving and Sanctus Eucharistic Prayer A

People remain 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.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. 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:

Celebrant and People

S130

Bow during the underlined text

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.

Please sit, kneel or remain standing.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord 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 he 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us ✠ also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. 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, let us sing in thanksgiving the prayer our Savior Christ taught us,

Celebrant and People

**Our Father, which 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever. Amen.**



The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant and People ~ to be sung

**Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia
Christ our Pass-o-ver is sac-ri-ficed for us;
There-fore let us keep the feast.
Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia Al-le-lu-ia**

The Celebrant says the following Invitation

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.

*This is the Lord's table, not of the church, but of the Lord.
It is made ready for those who love Him
and for those who want to love Him more.
So come, you who have much faith and you who have little;
You who have been here often and you who have not been here long;
You who have tried to follow and you who have failed;
Come, because it is the Lord who invites you.
It is His will that those who want Him should meet Him here.*

The congregation is asked to join in singing the communion hymns.

Alleluia

Hymnal 178

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.*

Jesus is Lord of all the earth. He is the King of creation.

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.*

Spread the good news o'er all the earth: Jesus has died and has risen.

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.*

We have been crucified with Christ. Now we shall live for ever.

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.*

Come, let us praise the living God,
joyfully sing to our Savior.

*Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord.
Alleluia, alleluia! Give Praise to his Name.*

How Bright Appears the Morning Star

Hymnal 496

How bright appears the Morning Star,
with mercy beaming from afar;
the host of heaven rejoices;

O righteous Branch, O Jesse's Rod!
Thou Son of Man and Son of God!

We, too, will lift our voices:
Jesus, Jesus!

Holy, holy, yet most lowly,
draw thou near us;
great Emmanuel, come and hear us.

Though circled by the hosts on high,
he deigned to cast a pitying eye
upon his helpless creature;
the whole creation's Head and Lord,
by highest seraphim adored,
assumed our very nature;

Jesus, grant us,
through thy merit, to inherit
thy salvation;
hear, O hear our supplication.

Rejoice, ye heavens; thou earth, reply;
with praise, ye sinners, fill the sky,
for this his Incarnation.

Incarnate God, put forth thy power,
ride on, ride on, great Conqueror,
till all know thy salvation.

Amen, amen!

Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise be given
evermore, by earth and heaven.

After Communion, the Celebrant says: Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Priest gives the 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.

People 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.

People Amen.

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. And the blessing of God Almighty, † the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and your loved ones far and near and remain with all of you for ever.

People Amen.

Please sit for a brief announcement.

Benediction—*to be sung*

**God be with you till we meet again;
By His counsels guide, uphold you,
With His sheep securely fold you,
God be with you till we meet again.**



Closing Hymn ***How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds*** Hymnal 644

How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
in a believer's ear!

It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds,
and drives away our fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,
and calms the troubled breast;
'tis manna to the hungry soul,
and to the weary, rest.

Dear Name, the rock on which I build,
my shield and hiding-place,
my never-failing treasury, filled
with boundless stores of grace!

O Jesus! Shepherd, Guardian, Friend,
O Prophet, Priest, and King,
my Lord, my Life, my Way, my End,
accept the praise I bring.

Weak is the effort of my heart,
and cold my warmest thought;
but when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

Priest We are called to be one with God and each other in Christ.

People ***By living the Gospel with love and compassion.***

Priest Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go in peace to love and serve God and one another.

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

THE WORSHIP HAS ENDED. LET THE SERVICE BEGIN.

“... what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (Micah 6:8)

God is good! All the time!



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PARTICIPANTS IN THE CELEBRATION AT ST. STEPHEN’S

Ministers: The Congregants of St. Stephen’s, Family, Friends and Visitors

Celebrant: The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant II, Rector

Deacon: The Rev. Kim Hoop

Dir of Music: Roberta Rowland-Raybold, c.a.g.o.

Vergers: Cathy Fellows and Robert Dunn

MINISTERS, LAYLEADERS AND STAFF

The Most Rev. Sean W. Rowe, Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church

The Right Rev. Ruth Woodliff-Stanley, Bishop, The Diocese of SC

The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant, II, Rector

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