

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT
HOLY EUCHARIST: RITE TWO
DECEMBER 24, 2023 ■ 10:30 A.M.



Welcome to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

St. Stephen's is a community of people made more complete by the grace of a perfect God, who proclaim the Gospel by sharing the reconciling love of Christ with others through redeeming acts of hospitality, forgiveness, justice, and peace.

ORDER OF SERVICE

VOLUNTARY

Improvisation on *Veni emmanuel*

HYMN 437

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord

Birmingham

(Please stand as you are able.)

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

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

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 S100

Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im -
mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us. Ho - ly God,
Ho - ly and Might - y, Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy
up - on us. Ho - ly God, Ho - ly and Might - y,
Ho - ly Im - mor - tal One, Have mer - cy up - on us.

Setting: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950)

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

(Please stand or kneel as you are able.)

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE LESSONS *(Please be seated.)*

The First Reading: *2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16*

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, “See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent.” Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you.”

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, “Why have you not built me a house of cedar?” Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 *Misericordias Domini*

(Please stand as you are able. The psalm will be read responsively by whole verse.)

- 1 Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; *
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.
- 2 For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; *
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.**
- 3 “I have made a covenant with my chosen one; *
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

**4 ‘I will establish your line for ever, *
and preserve your throne for all generations.’”**

19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people: *
“I have set the crown upon a warrior
and have exalted one chosen out of the people.

**20 I have found David my servant; *
with my holy oil have I anointed him.**

21 My hand will hold him fast *
and my arm will make him strong.

**22 No enemy shall deceive him, *
nor any wicked man bring him down.**

23 I will crush his foes before him *
and strike down those who hate him.

**24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, *
and he shall be victorious through my Name.**

25 I shall make his dominion extend *
from the Great Sea to the River.

**26 He will say to me, ‘You are my Father, *
my God, and the rock of my salvation.’”**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the
beginning is now and will be forever. Amen.**

The Second Reading: *Romans 16:25-27 (Please be seated.)*

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN 66

(Please stand as you are able.)

Come, thou long-expected Jesus

Stuttgart

The Gospel: *Luke 1:26-38 (Please stand.)*

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

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

Priest: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, Lord Christ.

THE SERMON

The Rev. David Wyly

THE 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.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE — FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT

(Please kneel as you are able.)

With our minds and hearts atuned to the Advent of our Saviour's birth, let us pray to the Father, saying,

Lord, have mercy.

For our own rebirth, let us pray that we may be open to receive the gift of Your unconditional love. May we be filled with a peace that surpasses our circumstances.

Lord, have mercy.

For peace and joy in the world, let us give thanks to the Lord for canceling out fear and hopelessness with the sacrifice of His son. In receiving God's promise of eternal life, may we, like Mary and Joseph, be willing to offer ourselves to Him. Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy.

For this city of Goldsboro, may those who live here cultivate a right spirit of community and peace for all people. Let us pray to the Father, who sent his son to reconcile us to himself.

Lord, have mercy.

For the joy that comes when a child is born, let us pray. May each and every child experience the promise of a future. May we, as children of God, rejoice in the eternal hope we have in Jesus.

Lord, have mercy.

For the good, rich earth that God has given us, as it lies fallow, may we, too, take this time of waiting to rest and be restored. Help us to serve you and all people as worthy stewards of your bounty. Let us pray to the Creator.

Lord, have mercy.

As we prepare food to celebrate your son's birth, may we remember to also provide for those who don't have enough to eat. May we remember the gifts of the Magi, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and offer our entire being, heart, head, and hands, to Jesus. Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy.

May God's will be fulfilled through us. Let us pray to our heavenly Father.

Lord, have mercy.

Just as Your star led the magi to Bethlehem, may the path be lit for us. Help us to be open to Your guidance. May we proclaim the greatness of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Like Mary, may our spirits rejoice. Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy.

With grateful hearts, we remember the lowly shepherds, who were the first to kneel before their Lord and Saviour. May we, like them, bow our heads and hearts, in humility and praise this Advent season.

Lord, have mercy.

In the communion of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church and with all the saints, let us commend ourselves, and one another, to Christ, our God.

To thee, O Lord, our God, we pray.

(Silence)

(The Celebrant may add a concluding Collect.)

Amen.

CONFESSION OF SIN

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 PEACE

(Please stand as you are able.)

Celebrant: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

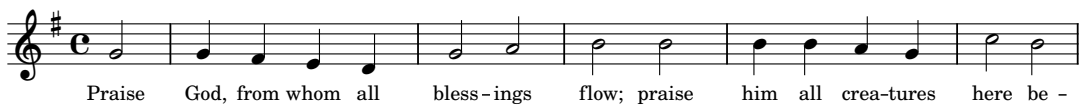
OFFERTORY

The Angel Gabriel

K. Lee Scott

AT THE PRESENTATION OF THE OFFERINGS

(Please stand as you are able.)



THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving (Eucharistic Prayer A)

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. (*Here a Proper Preface is added.*)

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:

Sanctus S124

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might, hea - ven and
earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues:

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, 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,

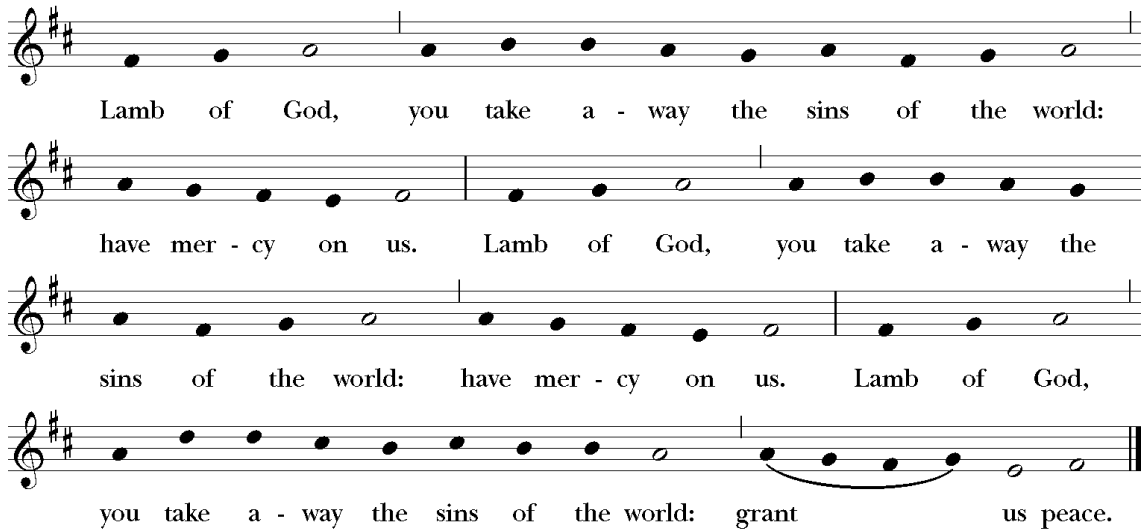
and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread.

FRACTION ANTHEM S161



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation:

The Gifts of God for the People of God

All baptized Christians, regardless of denomination or age, are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Please come forward at the appropriate time. You may receive both the bread and wine, one or the other, come forward for a blessing, or remain seated.

HYMN 56

O come, O come, Emmanuel

Veni emmanuel

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

(Please kneel as you are able.)

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.**

SENDING OF EUCHARISTIC VISITORS

THE BLESSING

HYMN 72

Hark! the glad sound!

Richmond

(Please stand as you are able.)

THE DISMISSAL

The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VOLUNTARY

Fughetta on *People Look East*

Richard Shephard

SERVING TODAY

Celebrant: The Rev. David Wyly

Organist: Patrick Ritsch

Eucharistic Visitors: David & Linda Huard

Live Stream Technician: James Ruggles

The poinsettias on the altar are given to the Glory of God and in thanksgiving for and in memory of friends and family by St. Stephen's parishioners.

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WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

Phone Numbers: Home _____ Cell _____

I am new to the parish, I would like the Clergy to call.

I am interested in _____ ministry.

Marital Status: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Anniversary Date: _____

Baptism Date and Location: _____

Confirmation Date and Location: _____

Please list the people who reside with you and their ages:

Any additional information you wish to include?

Please tear off this sheet with your information entered and place in the offering plate or give to an usher or greeter. Thank you! We look forward to meeting you!



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

200 N. James St., Goldsboro, NC 27530

Church: (919) 734-4263

www.ststephenschurch.com

email: admin@ststephenschurch.com

CLERGY

The Rt. Rev. Robert Skirving, Bishop

The Rev. David Wylly

Rector@ststephenschurch.com

CHURCH STAFF

Organist and Choirmaster: Patrick Ritsch

organist@ststephenschurch.com

Church Administrative Assistant: Vicky Bailey

admin@ststephenschurch.com

Communications Coordinator: Jane Cunningham

cunninghamjane04@gmail.com

Church Sexton: Alfie Barnes

VESTRY

Senior Warden: Katherine MacDonald, Junior Warden: Betty Duncan,

Treasurer: Bob Cagle, Clerk: Nancy Headen

Other Vestry Members Include: Meredith Adams, Don Barnes, Will Bland, Todd Brantley
Susan Brown, Betty Duncan, David Huard, Gwyn LaFave, Larry Tingen, Sallie Wahl