



The  
**EPISCOPAL CHURCH**  
of the  
**EPIPHANY**

**THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST**  
December 25, 2023  
*The Holy Eucharist at 10:00 AM*



# MERRY CHRISTMAS!

We are so glad you are here to celebrate this moment with us at The Church of the Epiphany. Today we are here for a very special reason. It is the day we celebrate the birth of baby Jesus in a manger in a stable on a hillside in Bethlehem some 2000 years ago. And yet, God is so near to us. Right here. Right now.

Please accept our very warm welcome from Epiphany to you to be fully engaged with us this night.

Be with us in this celebration. Let the musical offerings wash over you this night. Dip your finger in the font, whether you are already baptized, or just beginning to feel God's tug. Join us at God's table for Eucharist, or come for a blessing, or sit quietly in your seat. You are welcome. God is near.

Please let the clergy or staff know if there is anything we can do to support you on your journey.

Merry Christmas! From our Epiphany family, to yours.

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## WELCOME TO THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY

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Whether you just stopped in to visit, or you are looking for a place of belonging, we welcome you. In our worship, formation, fellowship, and community engagement work, we strive for justice and peace and to honor the dignity of every human being. Whoever you are and wherever you are on your journey, we are glad you are here. We believe God loves you—no exceptions!

For the latest news and events at Epiphany, visit our website at [epiphany.org](http://epiphany.org) or subscribe to our weekly newsletter. There are newcomer cards available in the pew in front of you and on the newcomer page of our website. We hope that you will fill one out while you're here and hand it to one of the clergy so we can welcome you personally.

Children of all ages are invited to participate fully in our liturgy. We welcome wiggles and giggles as signs of life and understand that sometimes children need to move about during worship. Children's bulletins and activity bags are available. Ask an usher to help you locate those near the entrance to the worship space.

If you do not have a nametag, please sign up on the clipboard on the welcome table in the Gallery. For today, there are stick-on nametags available.



We are passing the plate, but if you would prefer to virtually pass the plate today, use your phone's camera to scan this QR code. Visit [epiphany.org/ways-to-give](http://epiphany.org/ways-to-give) to learn about other ways to give to our parish or to make a pledge. You'll also find more information about Realm, our secure online community.

**Recording/Livestreaming May Be In Progress:** Liturgies and meetings at Church of the Epiphany may be live-streamed and/or recorded so that we may include those who cannot be with us physically. If you prefer to sit in a location where you will be less visible to the camera, please let an usher, clergy, or staff person know.

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THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE EPIPHANY, founded in 1898, is a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright, Bishop.

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**Clergy:** The Rev. Amy Dills-Wright, *Rector*; The Rev. Carmie McDonald, *Associate Priest for Family Ministry & Community Engagement*

**Staff:** Julie P. Ryder, *Organist & Choirmaster*; L. Shea McNutt, *Parish Administrator*; Emily Elder, *Director of Children & Youth Ministries*; Susie Boyko, *Bookkeeper*; Anna Democko, *Childcare Worker*; Saffie Coker-Robinson, *Childcare Worker*; Sarah Elizabeth Moore, *Childcare Worker*

**Assisting Priests:** The Rev. Barbara Ryder, The Rev. Bobbi Patterson, The Rev. Caroline Peacock

**Seminarian:** Peter Waggoner

**Wardens:** Bert Bender, *Senior Warden*; Lisa Daily, *Junior Warden*

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## Opening Acclamation

*Celebrant* Blessed be the one holy and living God.

*People* **Glory to God for ever and ever. 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.**

## The Hymn of Praise—Angels from the realms of glory

*Regent Square*

1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er  
2 Shep - herds in the field a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your  
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions; bright - er vi - sions  
4 Saints be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in

all the earth; ye, who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry,  
flocks by night, God with you is now re - sid - ing;  
beam a - far: seek the great De - sire of na - tions;  
hope and fear, sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

*Refrain*  
now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
yon - der shines the in - fant Light: come and wor - ship,  
ye have seen his na - tal star:  
in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

## The Collect for The Nativity of Our Lord

*Celebrant* God be with you.

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

*Celebrant* Together, let us pray.

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 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.**

**Psalm 96—Spoken by all**

*Cantate Domino*

- 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.

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.

Sequence Hymn 107—Good Christian friends, rejoice

*In dulci jubilo*

1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;  
 2 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;  
 3 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joi - ce with heart and soul and voice;

give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;  
 now ye hear of end - less bliss; Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!

ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He hath o - pened hea - ven's door, and we are blest for ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

The Gospel

Luke 2:1-20

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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.

*Gospeller*    The Gospel of the Lord.

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

### **The Sermon**

#### **The Prayers of the People for Christmas—*The People stand***

Let us pray to our incarnate Lord, who in coming to dwell among us has revealed the radiance of God’s glory and brought us into marvelous light.

Christ born for us, Son of God given for us: help us to know you, to worship and to serve you. Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Wonderful counsellor, you order all things with your wisdom: help the Church to reveal the mystery of your love, and fill it with the Spirit of truth. Guide and inspire your faithful people throughout the world: especially Michael our Presiding Bishop and Rob our bishop. Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, the government is on your shoulders: guide the leaders of the nations and bring in your kingdom of justice and righteousness. We pray especially for Joseph our President, Brian our Governor, and Andre our Mayor. Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Everlasting father, eternal mother, you call us to live together in unity: protect by your mercy all your children, bless our families and renew our communities. Be the strength among the people of this parish as we seek to live our core values of faith, integrity, inclusiveness, compassion, social justice, and stewardship. Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

Prince of peace, you bring reconciliation through the cross: by your healing power give to those who suffer your gift of wholeness and peace. Lord, in your mercy

**Hear our prayer.**

*Celebrant’s concluding Collect*

Lord Jesus Christ, Word made flesh, life of the world; hear our prayer. May we, who like the shepherds have seen in your birth a new kind of love, witness to that love in our lives. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

*Celebrant*    The peace of Christ be always with you.

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

### **The Welcome**

*Unison or harmony*

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on  
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where  
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with  
 ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for  
 peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
 sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

*Refrain*

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds

guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to

bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.



## The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer B

*Celebrant* God 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 God thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, 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:

*Celebrant and People*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blest is the One who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*The people stand or kneel*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. For in these last days you sent Jesus to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In Christ, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In Christ, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Savior 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 Jesus 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 poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and People*

**We remember Christ's death,**

**We proclaim Christ's resurrection,**

**We await Christ's coming in glory;**

*The Celebrant continues*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Savior of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through whom we are acceptable to you, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ our Savior, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

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

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**The Lord's Prayer**—*traditional language*

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**

*A period of silence is kept.*

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

**The Communion of the People**

*All God's people are welcome to share in the Holy Eucharist. Communion is received either kneeling or standing at the altar rail. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead of Communion, cross your hands across your chest; the priest will bless you. Gluten free wafers are available upon request.*

**Postcommunion Prayer**

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of 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 Savior. Amen.

**The 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 Holy and undivided Trinity be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

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

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.

The Dismissal

*Celebrant* Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

*People* Thanks be to God.

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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### **FINANCE | Year End Gifts & Pledges for 2023**

Deadline 12/31—Pledges and other contributions need to be received at the church or postmarked by December 31 and stock contributions must be delivered to the church brokerage account by December 31 in order to be recorded for 2023.

### **WORSHIP | Office & Building Closure**

12/26-1/2—The Parish Office will be closed from December 25 through Monday January 1. Outside of worship services, no other services or programs will take place during that time.

### **WORSHIP | Participate in Epiphany Pageant—open to both adults & children**

1/7—Are you interested in playing a part in Epiphany's annual pageant on our Parish's feast day? This year's pageant will take place on a Sunday morning, during our 10 a.m. service. We need both adults and children willing to participate. Please email Emily Elder / [eelder@epiphany.org](mailto:eelder@epiphany.org) if you are interested.

### **PARISH LIFE | Epiphany Feast Day Feast—please RSVP for the lunch**

1/7—Following the Epiphany Pageant service will be our Feast Day Feast: A Tex-Mex potluck lunch. Sign up to bring an entrée (chili-con-carne, tamales, enchiladas, etc.), salad, slaw, cornbread, or toppings (shredded cheese, sour cream, jalapeños, chopped onions). Drinks, desserts and chips & salsa will be provided. Go to [epiphany.org/rsvp](http://epiphany.org/rsvp) to sign up if you plan to stay for lunch and let us know what you are bringing.