



ST. GREGORY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

radiates God's grace, equipping all people to change the world.



christmas eve

12.24.23 | 4:00pm



Welcome to St. Gregory's

If this is your first Sunday here, we invite you to take a Welcome Card from the pew holder, fill it out and put it in the offering plate or give it to a greeter. All are truly welcome to participate in worship, and we believe our community is made stronger by your unique presence as we join in prayer and communion.

Our Worship

In the Episcopal Church, we often say that praying shapes believing, so how we worship in word and action shapes how we believe and respond to God. We are physical creatures made in God's image, and the physical nature of our worship helps us to connect more fully to God.

Our sacred time of worship includes several different activities: singing, listening, praying, and feasting. This liturgy is enriched by the participation of everyone in the room. **All are invited to speak the bolded text aloud.** Some people choose to manifest prayers in physical ways to center their hearts and minds on God's presence in their lives and in the worship – we call these actions "manual acts," which are listed as follows throughout the bulletin:

(+) There are several points during the liturgy, where many people cross themselves by touching their head, chest, and each shoulder (left then right) to remind themselves that God is in their head, heart, and in all of their actions in the world.

(+++) At the declaration of the Gospel, many people make the sign of the cross with their thumb on their forehead, lips, and heart as the Gospel is announced. This action is a prayer asking God's word to be in our minds, our words, and in our hearts.

Generally speaking, we stand to pray, kneel to confess, and sit to hear. Regardless of what others are doing, how you physically worship is up to you and how you experience God. Your presence and participation is what matters.

Cover art: "Let Us Adore Him" by Mike Moyers

The Rev. Dan Puchalla,
Priest-in-Charge
dan@stgregoryschurch.org

The Rev. Max Smith,
Deacon
max@stgregoryschurch.org

Wardens:
Susan Hitch-Zint, Jim Millsbaugh

Vestry:
Sarah Kettlewell, Jon Dutcher,
Sudi Johnson, Jill Polzin,
Butler Sharpe, Val Seilheimer

Kathryn Kinjo Duncan,
Music & Engagement Minister
kathryn@stgregoryschurch.org

Casey Kremer,
Communications Director
sexton@stgregoryschurch.org

Anita Tasher,
Accounting Minister
anita@stgregoryschurch.org

Pastoral Care Visitors:
Susie Dutcher, Fran Ingram,
Sudi Johnson, Marjie Koons,
Val Seilheimer, Cissy Singleton

Vocalists:
Viki Rill, Laura Perrett,
Robin Kessler, Kathryn Kinjo Duncan,
Michael Potsic, Cameo Humes,
Bob Potsic, Keanon Kyles
the St. Gregory's Choir

Instrumentalists:
Chris O'Hara, trumpet
Josh Rzepka, trumpet
Katie Ritter Seybold, horn
Andy Rozsa, trombone
Daniel Coffman, trombone
Alex Wier, percussion
Kailey Rockwell, piano
Sarah Kettlewell, clarinet



Christmas offerings given to the glory of God by

Curtis & Louisa Baddeley
in thanks for all of our many blessings,
especially our children Kat and Grace and good health

Cyndi & Jim Millspaugh
in thanks for family, friends, and community

Lyle & Sybil TenEyck
in thanks for family and friends

Dan Puchalla
in thanks for the amazing people of St. Gregory's

Sharon Gramer
in thanks for my family

Debbie Kinjo
in thanks for Viki, Kathryn, Cameo, and Keanon's
beautiful music each week

Stacy Sharpe
in thanks for Butler

Sudi Johnson
in thanks for the Kent and Wesson families

Sally & Peter Holtz
in thanks for many, many blessings

Nancy Buller

the Calub family

Matt Geiger
in memory of Donna Geiger

Dan Puchalla
in memory of Christopher Puchalla Sr.

Cyndi & Jim Millspaugh
in memory of Georgia, Woody, Phil and Pat

the Regalado family
in memory of Elisabeth & Robert Shawl,
and Gregory Regalado

Karen Nicholas
in memory of Jim Nicholas & Phyllis Widemark

Curtis & Louisa Baddeley
in memory of Jean & Jeff Baddeley

Nana & Megan Agyeman
in memory of Akosua Agyeman

Butler Sharpe
in memory of Yvonne J. Sharpe and Rev. Butler &
Catherine Sharpe, and in thanks for their
wonderful lives of service and love

Sudi Johnson
in memory of Roger Johnson

Catherine Martin
in loving memory of my parents,
Betsy & Bill Stover, and my brother, John

the Seilheimer family
in memory of Jean & Bud Nicholas, Otto Widemark,
and Pat Seilheimer

Susan Koy
in memory of Robert Koy

Sharon Gramer
in memory of my parents, brother,
and many friends and family

Susan Hitch-Zint
in memory of Andrew Zint

Jeff & Cissy Singleton
in memory of Ernest & Irene Singleton
and Edward & Jessie Vlack

Marilyn Knilans
in memory of William Knilans, Ruth & Willard Thiel,
and Willard Thiel Jr.

Suzann Sladcik
in memory of Lucille Sladcik, William Sladcik,
and Katherine Brosnahan

Mary Keller and family
in loving memory of Curt Keller

John Welker
in memory of Debbie Welker

Kathryn Kinjo Duncan
in memory of my dear Chris,
who would have turned 41 today

Stacy Sharpe
in memory of Yvonne Sharpe

the Reichenbach family
in loving memory of our parents and grandparents,
Ralph & Lin Reichenbach



Prelude

"O Magnum Mysterium"
by T. Victoria, arr. Chris O'Hara

We begin our worship in darkness, singing hymns together while seated.

HYMN

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and gath - ered all a - bove,
 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us we pray.

A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
 While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
 Cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;
 O morn - ing stars to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 we hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell,

The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 And prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth!
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el.

HYMN

A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 The cat - tle are low - ing, the poor ba - by wakes,
 Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er, and love me I pray.

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus, look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 And stay by my side un - til morn - ing is nigh.
 And take us to hea - ven to live with thee there.

The people stand, as they are able.



PROCESSIONAL

Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van - guard on the way;
 At his feet the six - wing - ed ser - aph, che - ru - bim with sleep - less eye,
 pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 As the Light of light de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry,
 Christ our God to earth de - scend - - ing, comes our hom - age to de - mand.
 He will give to all the faith - - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
 Comes the pow'rs of hell to van - - quish as the dark - ness clears a - way.
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Blessed is the King who comes in the Name of the Lord.
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.

SONG OF PRAISE

O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O
 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion! O
 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;
 come, ye, O come, ye to Beth - le - hem!
 sing all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove;
 Je - sus, to thee be all glo - ry giv'n!
 Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels; O
 "Glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est," O
 Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing! O
 come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, O
 come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!



LITURGY OF THE WORD

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

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.

The people sit.

FIRST READING

ISAIAH 9:2-7

We follow a three-year cycle of readings called a Lectionary. These are lessons being heard in congregations from many denominations throughout the world on this day. The first reading is from the Hebrew Scriptures, which tell us the story of God's love and faithfulness to God's people from the beginning of time to just before Christ.

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.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



The Psalm is a hymn or poem. The psalms cover the whole range of the relationship between God and God's people. The Book of Psalms, while a "book" of the Bible, consists of 150 hymns intended to be sung.

PSALM 96

Chanted by the cantor.

*All the earth sing to God a new song;
Sing to God and bless God's Name;
proclaim the good news of salvation from day to day.
Declare God's glory and wonders among all peoples.*

*For greatly to be praised is our God,
And more to be feared than all other gods.
Oh, the majesty and magnificence of God's presence!
Oh, the power and the splendor of God's sanctuary!*

*Ascribe to God all honor and power due their Name,
bring offerings and come into their courts.
Worship God in the beauty of holiness; let the earth tremble before them.
Tell it out among the nations that God is King!*

*God made the world so it cannot be moved;
And will judge the peoples with equity.
Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;
let the sea thunder; let the field be joyful and all that is therein.*

*Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
when God comes to judge the earth.
God will judge the world with righteousness
and the peoples with their truth.*

The second reading is usually from one of the New Testament Epistles (or letters), though occasionally from the Acts of the Apostles or the Book of Revelation. They teach us about the formation of the church and instruct us on how to live into our role as followers of Christ.

THE EPISTLE

TITUS 2:11-14

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.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The people stand, as they are able.



SEQUENCE HYMN

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored; Christ the ev - er - last - ing Lord!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners re - con-ciled.
 Late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions rise, join the triumph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see, hail th'in - car - nate De - i - ty,

with th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus our Em - man - u - el,

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

During the Holy Eucharist, there is always a reading from a Gospel. We stand to indicate the importance we place on Jesus' words and actions. Usually the deacon or priest proclaims the Gospel in the midst of the people to represent the Good News that Jesus has come among us, and we all turn toward it. Tonight, however, our youth will proclaim the gospel.

THE GOSPEL

LUKE 2:1-20

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

(+++) **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace those on whom his favor rests!



When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

So the shepherds hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Christ.

SEQUENCE HYMN

An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing.

and the moun - tains in re - ply ech - o back their joy - ous strains.
Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King!

Glo - - - - - ri - a!

in ex - cel - sis De - o! Glo - - -

- - - ri - a! in ex - cel - sis De - o!

The people sit.

SERMON

The Rev. Dan Puchalla, Priest-in-Charge

The sermon is meant to help us make the Word of God a living and transforming reality of our lives today.

NICENE CREED

The people stand, as they are able.

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.

In the Nicene Creed, we respond to the proclamation of God's Word by affirming the historic faith of the Church.



We "believe" (from the Latin *credere*, literally "to put one's heart into") because we offer our trust in the story of God's creating, redeeming, and remaining with the world. "We" believe because the church as a whole, the Body of Christ, carries and strengthens the faith of each individual. Also note that when it is not capitalized, the word "catholic" is defined as universal or inclusive.

The Prayers of the People are always responsive, because everyone gives voice to the supplications. We include prayers for others throughout the world, in our diocese, and those connected to our congregation. This is the part of the liturgy where it is most evident that we would be noticeably less without the contributions of each person present. We voice prayers from our parish prayer list, as well as requests from the onsite and online worshippers.

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human. 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. who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who 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

I ask your prayers for God's people throughout the world; for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, Michael, our Presiding Bishop, and Paula, our Bishop; for Dan, our Priest-in-Charge, and Max, our deacon; for our Better Together clergy, Kristin, Bryan, and Adam; for this gathering; and for all ministers and people. Pray for the church.
Lord, hear our prayer.

I ask your prayers for peace; for goodwill among nations; and for the well-being of all people. (*prayers of joy and gratitude*) Pray for justice and peace.
Lord, hear our prayer.

I ask your prayers for the poor, the sick, the hungry, the oppressed, and those in prison. (*prayers of intercession*) Pray for those in any need or trouble.
Lord, hear our prayer.

I ask for your prayers for all who seek a deeper knowledge of God. Pray that they may find and be found.
Lord, hear our prayer.

I ask your prayers for the dead, witnesses of God's shining splendor. (*prayers for the dead or the dying*) Pray for those we love, but see no longer.
Lord, hear our prayer.

The Presider offers the concluding collect.

O God who sent our Savior Jesus Christ, whose years never fail and whose mercies are new each returning day: let the radiance of your Spirit renew our lives, warming our hearts and giving light to our minds; that we may pass the coming year strengthened by a joyful and vibrant faith; through the one who is the beginning and the end, your Son, Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.



The Peace has been exchanged at the Eucharist since the time of the first Christians. It is a profound act to offer the miraculous peace of God to one another before we join in communion with God and each other.

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.
And also with you.

The congregation greets each other in the peace of Christ.

The people sit.

DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS FOR CHILDREN

All children are invited to come to the front to receive a handmade ornament from the people of St. Gregory's.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

*"Festival Gloria"
by Craig Courtney*

*Gloria in excelsis Deo
et in terra pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te,
adoramus te, glorificamus te.*

*Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace to people of good will.
We praise you, we bless you,
We adore you, we glorify you.*

The Offertory is when we bring our gifts of bread, wine, money, and our very selves to present to the Lord as our initial act of thanksgiving. This collection is a visible reminder that our whole lives are God's, and a part of what God has given us we give back in thanksgiving for all that we have and all that we are. You can use this QR code to give to StGs online.



THE HOLY COMMUNION

The people stand, as they are able.

OFFERTORY HYMN

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spi - rit, God whom earth and heav'n a - dore,
Let us join the an - gel cho - rus as they sing God's praise a - bove.

Glo - ry, bless - ing, praise e - ter - nal, shall be yours, for ev - er - more.
Join, o join in songs to Je - sus, who is all re - deem - ing love.

Hark! the choirs of an - gels sing - ing, glo - ry, glo - ry to the Lamb!
Has - ten, mor - tals to a - dore him, learn his name and taste His joy,

All in heav'n their tri - bute bring - ing, rais - ing high the Sa - vior's name.
'til in heav'n ye sing be - fore him, "Glo - ry be to God most high!"



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, in joyful obedience to his command:

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

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord 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 to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being (+) sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

The Great Amen is the only word in our Book of Common Prayer that is in all capital letters. It emphasizes that we all join together in asking Jesus to be present in the bread and wine, in boldly affirming our desire to receive God. It is appropriate to sing this with enthusiasm!

In the fullness of time, bring all things into the reign of your Christ, and bring us into that heavenly country where, with Blessed Gregory and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your children; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever.

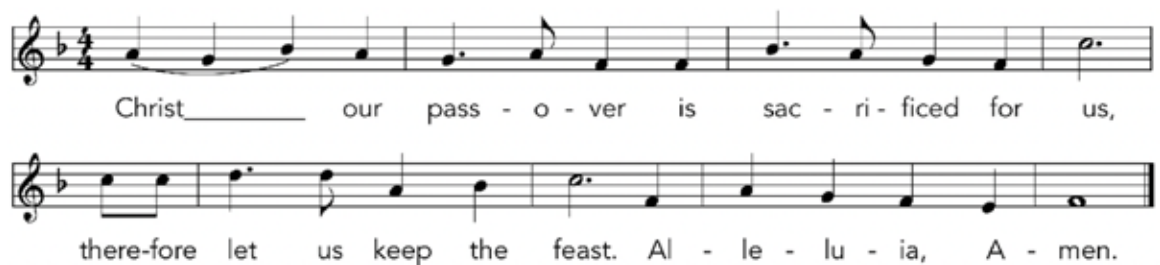


And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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.**

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread.



The Lord's Prayer is the prayer that Jesus gave to his followers when they asked him to teach them to pray. It links our daily bread to the spiritual food we receive in the Eucharist.

The Fraction recalls Jesus breaking the bread at the Last Supper to share with the disciples, and reminds us that Jesus' body was broken on the cross for us to be shared with the world. Therefore we keep a moment of silence for prayers of awe and gratitude.



RECEIVING COMMUNION

General: Please join the line to receive Communion. When you get to the front, hold out your hands to receive bread. Then step to either side to receive wine or juice in an individual cup.

Gluten-free option: Please ask for a gluten-free wafer from the priest when you come forward.

Non-alcoholic option: Please ask for juice from the minister holding the tray of cups. You also have the option to take only the bread to receive Communion.

Not receiving: If you will not be receiving Communion, you are invited to come forward for a blessing. Please join the line and cross your arms over your chest when you get to the front.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

"The Little Road to Bethlehem"

By M. Rose & M. Head

As I walked down the road at set of sun,
the lambs were coming homewards one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them along the little road to Bethlehem.
Beside an open door as I drew nigh,
I heard sweet Mary sing a lullaby.
She sang about the lambs at close of day
and rocked her tiny King among the hay.
Across the air the silver sheepbells rang,
"The lambs are coming home," sweet Mary sang,
"Your star of gold is shining in the sky,
so sleep, my little King, go lullaby."
As I walked down the road at set of sun,
the lambs were coming homewards one by one.
I heard a sheepbell softly calling them along the little road to Bethlehem.

COMMUNION ANTHEM

"Sing We Now of Christmas"

Traditional French carol arr. Kyle Pederson
feat. Sarah Kettlewell, clarinet

Sing we now of Christmas, Noel* sing we here.
Hearts in expectation, Noel drawing near.
Sing we Noel, Noel, Noel.
Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel.
In stillness lays the world in silent reverie;
Longing for the birth of love and mercy.
Yearning for hope, good news to fill our souls;
Turning to the manger that grounds all mystery.
Angels bending low, shepherds bend their knee,
Wise men from the east, all have come the child to see.
All of creation where love has come to dwell;
Sing we now of Christmas, the good news that we tell. Sing Noel!

*The French word "noel" has evolved into meaning Christmas, good news, carol, or birthday.

After communion has been received, the lights will be lowered for the remainder of the service and candles will be lit from the center aisle. When Silent Night begins, the people are invited to kneel as they are able and sing along. You may keep your candle lit through the conclusion of the service.



CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,
 all is bright. Round yon vir - gin moth - er and
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from hea - ven a -
 love's pure light, ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly
 child. Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in
 far, heav'n - ly hosts sing al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the
 face, with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus,
 heav - en - ly peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 Sa - vior is born! Christ, the Sav - ior is born.
 Lord, at thy birth, Je - sus, Lord at thy birth.

The Prayer for Spiritual Communion articulates a hunger for unity with Jesus Christ when you cannot physically receive the Body and Blood of Christ. This prayer connects the one(s) praying with the reception of Holy Communion. Those worshipping online are invited to say this prayer as those onsite receive Communion.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

(for those worshipping remotely)

In union, gracious God, with your faithful people at every altar of your Church where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, we offer to you praise and thanksgiving. We remember your death, O Christ; we proclaim your resurrection; we await your coming in glory. Since we cannot receive you today in the Sacrament of your Body and Blood, we beseech you to come spiritually into our hearts. Cleanse and strengthen us with your grace, Lord Jesus, and let us never be separated from you. May we live in you, and you in us, in this life and in the life to come. **Amen.**

The people stand, as they are able.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of abundance,

**you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation;
 you have united us with Christ and one another;
 and you have made us one
 with all your people in heaven and on earth.**

**Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,
 that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world
 and continue for ever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

After Communion, we give thanks for being part of the communion of God's life and for being fed so that we may go out to feed and serve others in our world.



One of the roles of the priest is to declare the eternal truth of God's ever-present blessing to God's people.

BLESSING

May Almighty God, who sent the Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the shadows of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of God's holiness. **Amen.**

May God, who sent 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 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.**

EXIT HYMN

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth re - ceive her King:
 No more let sins and sor - row grow, nor thorns in - fest the ground;
 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the na - tions prove

Let ev - ery heart pre - pare him room, and
 He comes to make his bless - ings flow far
 The glo - ries of his right - eous - ness and

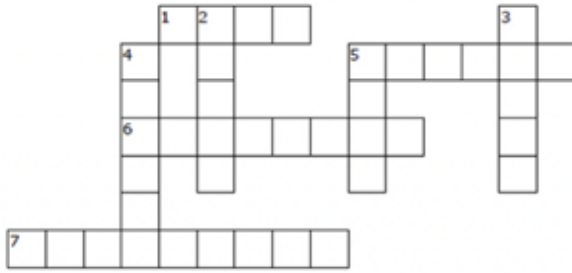
heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture sing,
 as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
 won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his love,

and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing!
 far as, far as the curse is found.
 and won - ders, and won - ders of his love!

Having heard the Gospel and having been fed at communion, the final act of our common worship is the Dismissal. It is not an afterthought, but an integral part of the service. Jesus' final action on earth was to send his followers into the world to make disciples, baptizing and teaching them to obey all he had commanded. And so we are sent out into the world to proclaim the Good News and be Christ's hands and feet on earth.

The Priest dismisses the people, and the people respond,

Thanks be to God.



ACROSS

- 1. An infant or very young child
- 5. The place where Mary laid the baby Jesus
- 6. A person who takes care of sheep
- 7. The city where Jesus was born

DOWN

- 2. Heavenly being that told the shepherds about Jesus' birth
- 3. The savior of the world
- 4. The earthly father of Jesus
- 5. The mother of Jesus

JOSEPH	ANGEL	BETHLEHEM	BABY
MARY	SHEPHERD	JESUS	MANGER

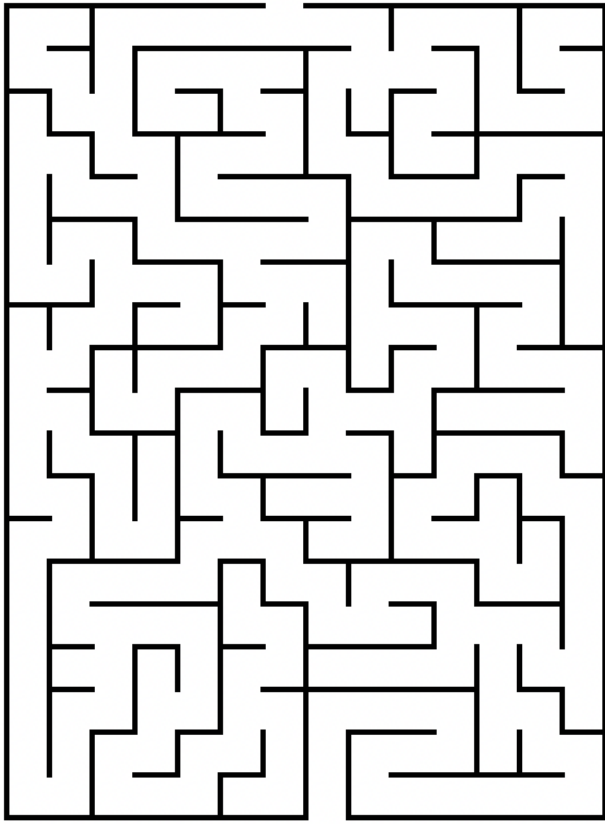
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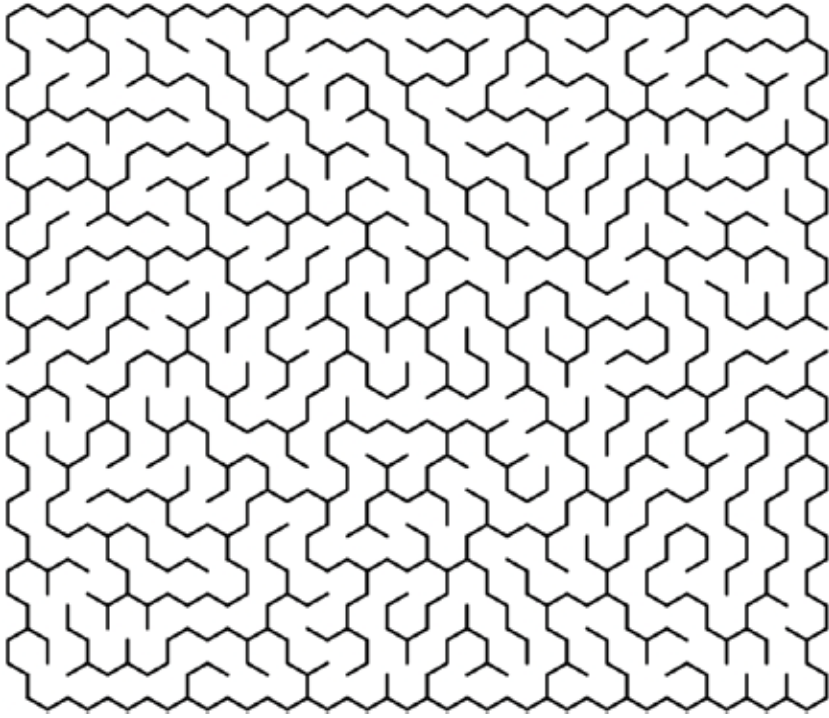
20	8	5	7	9	6	20	15	6	3	8	18	9	19	20	13	1	19	9	19		
6	15	18	5	22	5	18	25	2	15	4	25										



SAVIOR	CENSUS	MARY	MANGER	BORN
CAESAR	SON	JOSEPH	MESSIAH	ROOM
CHILD	SHEPHERDS	ANGEL	BETHLEHEM	BABY

And they came with haste,
and found Mary, and Joseph,
and the babe lying in a manger.
- Luke 2:16





NICASA Donation Results!



Thank you so much to everyone who donated, shopped, wrapped, purchased, and organized all the gifts for the FORTY FAMILIES that StGs sponsored from Nicasa this year! Especially huge thanks to Janet Foltz who coordinated the entire effort and made it all possible.

We filled the whole front of the sanctuary to bless the gifts for our families (pictured below), and couldn't even fit everything in there - we also had an overflow room (pictured at left) that included 18 bicycles!





Christmas Morning Service: come as you are!

Tomorrow morning, 10am onsite/online

Come as you are (PJs welcome!) and enjoy jazzy arrangements of Christmas carols at this celebration of Christ's birth with Eucharist.



COMING UP..

Tech Gremlins: Please Stand By!



Two sneaky little technical gremlins have made an appearance the last few weeks in both our microphones and our internet. We just want you to know we are aware of both, and are actively pursuing solutions on all fronts. Your continued patience and understanding as we execute both short-term fixes and long-term upgrades is very deeply appreciated! One of the short-term solutions is to shut down the StGsGuest wifi network. This will only be temporary, and we hope to have it accessible again early in January.

🔍 Kathryn: kathryn@stgregoryschurch.org

Epiphany Compline & Pageant - Saturday, January 6

Join us for our annual Better Together Epiphany service online only on January 6 at 6pm! We'll premiere the pageant (featuring kids/youth from all the congregations!) and enjoy a short worship service together.



SAVE THE DATE

Town Hall: January 7

Stick around after the service for quick updates on the pledge campaign, the budget, building & grounds work, and more. You'll also have a chance to ask your questions! If you'd like to participate, make sure to join the service via Zoom and not Facebook (online attendees will be able to have their questions answered too).

Annual Meeting, January 28

The Annual Meeting will happen immediately following the 9:30am service! If you'd like to participate, make sure to join the service via Zoom and not Facebook (online attendees will be able to have their questions answered too). More details to come, but put it on your calendar now!

What's your favorite hymn? Between now and the end of 2023 Kathryn wants to hear WHAT your favorite hymn is, and WHY! Choose any song from the red 1982 Hymnal (or even one from another well-known hymnal), and write 2-3 sentences describing why it speaks to your heart. During 2024 Kathryn will use these on Sundays when they fit with the lectionary, and will include your name and reason for loving the hymn in the bulletin! Cut/tear out this page and give to Kathryn, or email her at kathryn@stgregoryschurch.org.

Your name: _____ Favorite hymn title and #: _____

Why is this your favorite? _____



St. Gregory's is Rebuilding and Radiating

Through the leadership and faithfulness of its wonderful people, St. Gregory's has passed through a time of many transitions over the past few years. The year ahead is bright. We will be working intensely and joyfully to rebuild excellent programs for children, pre-teens, teens, and adults.

The heart of our work is to accompany all people from all walks of life on a lifelong journey of spiritual growth. We couple this with deeper connection to one another, responsible stewardship of resources, collaboration with our wider community, and guided by the transcendent encounter with the divine in worship and prayer. Already, a new spirit is blowing through our hallways and a new light radiates in our conversations.

We hope you will be part of this exciting work in 2024. To get started, reach out to Dan, our Priest-in-Charge, at dan@stgregoryschurch.org or (847) 929-9986.

Ongoing connections...

Join us every Wednesday morning on Zoom for a short service of prayer



Anchor your week in prayer and fellowship from the convenience of home or work at 8am on Wednesday mornings. This rich online worship service includes prayers for healing of body, mind, heart, and soul. All are welcome!

Friday morning gentle/meditative yoga on Zoom



Join us at 8am on Friday mornings for a gentle/meditative yoga class to start your day grounded, invigorated and ready to go! Led by certified yoga instructor Mary Aulbach, this free online class is especially helpful for mobility and flexibility. No prior experience required, accessible to all physical abilities (whether you're 9 or 90!).

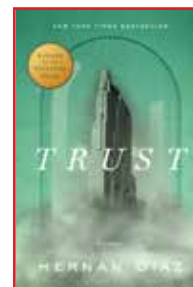


The StGs Book Club will resume in January




Upcoming dates: Jan 22, Feb 21, and Mar 20!

All are welcome to join this monthly book discussion! In January we'll discuss "Trust" by Hernan Diaz, and in February "The First Ladies" by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray. Starting in February, the StGs Book Club will meet on the 3rd Wednesday of the month!



Community Meals - sign up for future dates!

We are once again so thankful to say that we have four cookie bakers and sufficient volunteers for our upcoming Community Meals on December 31! If you are interested in baking cookies or helping serve on future dates, please contact Barb to get on the schedule (Jan 28, Feb 25, or Mar 24).  Barb: bschaper7@aol.com or (847)948-8989