

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH

ANNAPOLIS • MARYLAND • ESTABLISHED 1692



A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2020
12:00 P.M.

ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH
1601 PLEASANT PLAINS ROAD
ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21409
(410) 974-0200 OFFICE PHONE
(443) 837-5463 EMERGENCY PASTORAL LINE
WWW.ST-MARGARETS.ORG

Blue Christmas Service
Wednesday, December 16, 2020
12:00 p.m.

Welcome to this time when we can acknowledge the "blue" feelings we have at Christmas time. For many who have lost a loved one, this is a time of sharp loneliness. For others, who have lost a relationship, health, a job, or had a financial setback, it may be a time of pain, confusion, or fear. This is not a joyous season for everyone. We hope this service gives you peace and comfort.

HYMN

Comfort, comfort ye my people

Psalm 42

1 Com - fort, com - fort ye my peo - ple, speak ye peace, thus
 2 Hark, the voice of one that cri - eth in the des - ert
 3 Make ye straight what long was crook - ed, make the rough - er
 saith our God; com - fort those who sit in dark - ness
 far and near, call - ing us to new re - pent - ance
 pla - ces plain; let your hearts be true and hum - ble,
 mourn - ing 'neath their sor - rows' load. Speak ye to Je -
 since the king - dom now is here. Oh, that warn - ing
 as be - fits his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry
 ru - sa - lem of the peace that waits for them;
 cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way;
 of the Lord now o'er earth is shed a - broad;
 tell her that her sins I cov - er,
 let the val - leys rise to meet him
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken
 and her war - fare now is o - ver.
 and the hills bow down to greet him.
 that the word is nev - er bro - ken.

OPENING PRAYER

Officiant

Let us pray.

God of Mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent Season for ourselves and our families who live with painful experiences of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of Christ who entered the world at Christmas to share our life in sorrow and joy, despair and promise, death and new birth. **Amen.**

PSALM 139:1-5, 13-18

- 1 O Lord, you have searched me and known me.
- 2 You know when I sit down and when I rise up; *
you discern my thoughts from far away.
- 3 You search out my path and my lying down, *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 4 Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, *
you know it completely.
- 5 You hem me in, behind and before, *
and lay your hand upon me.
- 13 For it was you who formed my inward parts; *
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
- 14 I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. *
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.
- 15 My frame was not hidden from you, *
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
- 16 Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written *
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.
- 17 How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! *
How vast is the sum of them!
- 18 I try to count them—they are more than the sand; *
I come to the end—I am still with you.

READING

Wild Geese

Mary Oliver

You do not have to be good.
 You do not have to walk on your knees for a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.
 You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves.
 Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.
 Meanwhile the world goes on.
 Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain are moving across the landscapes,
 over the prairies and the deep trees, the mountains and the rivers.
 Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air, are heading home again.
 Whoever you are, no matter how lonely, the world offers itself to your imagination,
 calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting –
 over and over announcing your place in the family of things.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying.

All **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

Abide with me

Eventide

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide;
 2 I need thy pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour;
 3 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;
 4 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes;

the dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide:
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's power?
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness,
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;

when o - ther help - ers fail and com - forts flee,
 Who, like thy - self, my guide and stay can be?
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?
 heaven's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain sha - dows flee;

help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.
 Through cloud and sun - shine, Lord, a - bide with me.
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me.
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

CANDLE LIGHTING

First Candle

Officiant We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us this season that anticipates Christ.

All **May God's eternal love surround them. Amen.**

Second Candle

Officiant We light this second candle to redeem the pain and loss – the loss of relationships, the loss of health, the loss of jobs, and the loss of financial security. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our welcome hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

All **Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.**

Third Candle

Officiant We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and for some of us, years of down times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

All **Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.**

Fourth Candle

Officiant This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope that God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

All **Let us remember the one who shows the way and who goes with us into our tomorrows.**

HOMILY

The Rev. Peter W. Mayer

CAROL

In the bleak midwinter

Gustav Holst

*In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God incarnate, Jesus Christ.
Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.
What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him--give my heart.*

PRAYERS

Leader In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask God for what we need. We pray, as well, for ourselves as we participate in whatever way we can this Christmas.
God, hear our Prayer

All **And in your mercy answer.**

Leader For our families and friends that they may know love and peace and happiness in you and that they may continue to help and support us.
God, hear our Prayer

All **And in your mercy answer.**

Leader For those we have loved who have died. For all the losses that we know, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise.
God, hear our Prayer

All **And in your mercy answer.**

Leader For the peace proclaimed by the Christmas angels, to come throughout the whole world.
God, hear our Prayer

All **And in your mercy answer.**

Leader Grant all who are bereaved and saddened this Christmas, the blessing we ask in the name of Christ who taught us to pray together saying,

All **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.**

A COLLECT FOR PEACE

Officiant Most holy God, the source of all good desires, all right judgments, and all just works: Give to us, your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we, being delivered from the fear of all enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior. **Amen.**

1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
 2 Still through the clov - en skies they come with
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the
 4 For lo! the days are haste - ning on, by

glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing
 peace - ful wings un - furled, and still their heaven - ly
 world has suf - fered long; be - neath the heaven - ly
 pro - phets seen of old, when with the ev - er -

near the earth to touch their harps of gold;
 mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
 hymn have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;
 cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,

"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they
 and war - ring hu - man - kind hears not the
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its

heaven's all - gra - cious King." The world in sol - emn
 bend on hov - ering wing, and ev - er o'er its
 tid - ings which they bring; O hush the noise and
 an - cient splen - dors fling, and all the world give

still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 Ba - bel - sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 cease your strife and hear the an - gels sing!
 back the song which now the an - gels sing.

BLESSING

Officiant

Comforting God, during this season we ask you to continue to wrap us in your presence. Be with us in our struggles, and when we get lost in the darkness, shine your light and help us find our way back to you.

All

Amen.

IN THIS SERVICE

The Rev. Peter W. Mayer, *Rector*
 The Rev. Patti Sachs, *Associate Rector*
 Jim Douglas, *Director of Music & Organist*
 Alice Conover, *Cantor & Reader*

**You can give an offering to St. Margaret's Church today
 by texting GIVESMC to 73256.**

You can give online at <https://onrealm.org/smcannapolis/Give>

*A part of the Liturgy was by the Rev. Randall Day, Rector
 of St. Mark's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church, Los Olivas, California.*



Upcoming Services from St. Margaret's

Advent Compline, Sunday, December 20, 8:00 p.m.

Family-Friendly Christmas Eve Service, 5:00 p.m.

Traditional Christmas Eve Service with strings and the Blessing of the Crèche, 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Message from Clergy at 10:00 a.m.

Christmas Lessons & Carols, Sunday, December 27, 9:00 a.m.

Evening Service for New Years' Eve, Thursday, December 31, 7:00 p.m.