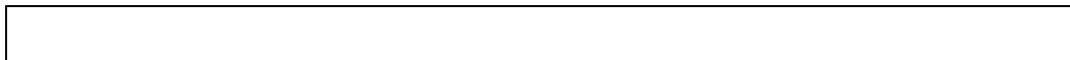


ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH



A QUIET CHRISTMAS
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2023
12:00 P.M.



The Rev. Peter W. Mayer, Rector
The Rev. Patti Sachs, Associate Rector
Jim Douglas, Director of Music

1601 Pleasant Plains Rd. Annapolis, MD 21409
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Emergency Pastoral Number: (443) 837-5463



Welcome to this time, when we can acknowledge that some need a quiet way to celebrate Christ's birth away from the busyness of Christmas activities. For many who have lost a loved one, this is also a time of sharp loneliness. For others who have lost a relationship or job, are in ill health, 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 that this service gives you all peace and comfort.

The People stand as able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Christine Sine, GodSpace

Celebrant Let us seek in the darkness, until we see God's light emerge. Let us wait with hope-filled hearts, as Christ's image grows within us and shows us life. Let him speak to us and teach us love, until we open our hearts to be his home.

People **Amen.**

The People remain standing and sing the Hymn.

HYMN

Come, thou long expected Jesus

Stuttgart

1 Come, thou long - ex - pect-ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art;
3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,
4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;

from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

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.

People **Amen.**

The People may be seated.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah.

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters. Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

PSALM 139:1-5, 13-18 *(read responsively by half verse)*

- 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.
and the peoples with equity.**

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.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:1-14

Priest The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.
People **Glorify to you, Lord Christ.**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of the father's only begotten son, full of grace and truth.

Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The People may be seated.

HOMILY

The Rev. Patti Sachs

The People stand as able.

PRAYERS

Young Clergywoman Project

Leader In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all the good things we need.

For ourselves as we participate in this Christmas, coping with our many different losses.
God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For our families and friends, that they may continue to love and support us.
God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For any person we have loved who has died, for all the losses we know in our lives, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise.

God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For our family and friends, that you may bless them with love, peace, and joy.
God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For peace throughout the world as proclaimed by the Christmas Angels on that faraway hillside.

God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Leader For greater understanding of the lessons of love and acceptance as taught by Jesus your Christ.

God, hear our prayer.

People **And in your mercy, answer.**

Celebrant God of great compassion and love, listen to the prayers of these your people. Give to us, your servants peace so that our minds may be fixed on the doing of your will, and that we may live in peace and quietness; through the mercies of Christ Jesus our Savior.

People **Amen.**

WELCOME

HOLY COMMUNION

The People remain seated and sing the Hymn.

HYMN

In the bleak midwinter

Cranham

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;
3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:
cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim thron - ed the air;
If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fal - len, snow on snow, snow — on — snow,
in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf - ficed
but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
if I were a wise — man, I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

The People stand as able when directed by the Clergy.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Eucharistic Prayer D

- 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 God thanks and praise.**

The Celebrant proceeds

It is truly right to glorify you, O God, and to give you thanks; for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you to serve you night and day; and, beholding the glory of your presence, they offer you unceasing praise. Joining with them, and giving voice to every creature under heaven, we acclaim you, and glorify your Name, as we say;

Celebrant and People

- Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,**
- Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**
- Hosanna in the highest.**
- Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**
- Hosanna in the highest.**

The Celebrant continues

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power. Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love. You formed us in your own image, giving the whole world into our care, so that, in obedience to you, our Creator, we might rule and serve all your creatures. When our disobedience took us far from you, you did not abandon us to the power of death. In your mercy you came to our help, so that in seeking you we might find you. Again and again you called us into covenant with you, and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

You loved the world so much that in the fullness of time you sent your only Son to be our Savior. Incarnate by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, he lived as one of us, yet without sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation; to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy. To fulfill your purpose he gave himself up to death; and, rising from the grave, destroyed death, and made the whole creation new.

And, that we might live no longer for ourselves, but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit, his own first gift for those who believe, to complete his work in the world, and to bring to fulfillment the sanctification of all.

When the hour had come for him to be glorified by you, his heavenly Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end; at supper with them he 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 all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

We now celebrate this memorial of our redemption. Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead, proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand, awaiting his coming in glory; and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us, this bread and this cup, we praise you and we bless you.

Celebrant and People

**We praise you, we bless you,
we give thanks to you,
and we pray to you, Lord our God.**

The Celebrant continues

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us, and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ. Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace. And grant that we may find our inheritance with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Margaret, and all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

People **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

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

Celebrant and People

**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

Celebrant God of promise, you have prepared a banquet for us.
People **Happy are those who are called to the Supper of the Lamb.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ lived and died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

The People are seated.

All are welcome to receive bread and wine during Communion, including children. To receive bread, place your hands palms-up at the Communion rail. To receive wine, assist the Eucharistic Minister in guiding the chalice to your lips, or you may intinct by dipping the bread in the wine. If you do not wish to receive the bread or wine, place your arms across your chest to receive a blessing. Gluten-free wafers are available. Indicate your wish for a gluten-free wafer by first extending your hands palms-down when at the Communion rail. These wafers are kept in a separate holder from which you are invited to take one.

The People stand as able after all are served.

POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Conway, AR

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

**God of the darkness and the light
whose presence is announced
not among the impressive but in obscurity:
come, overshadow us now,
and speak to our hidden places;
that entering your darkness with joy
we may choose Life with you,
through Jesus Christ, your incarnate Word. Amen.**

BLESSING

Celebrant 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.

People **Amen.**

HYMN

O come, o come, Emmanuel

Veni, veni Emmanuel

1. O come, O come, Em - ma - nu - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2. O come, thou Day - spring, come and cheer our spi - rits by thine
 3. O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen wide our
 4. O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on
 5. O come, O come, Em - ma - nu - el, and ran - som cap - tive

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
 ad - vent here; dis - perse the gloo - my clouds of
 heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
 Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile

here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 night, and death's dark sha - dows put to flight.
 high, and close the path to mi - se - ry. Re -
 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.
 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.

joice! Re - joice! Em - ma - nu - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

POSTLUDE

All are welcome for tea in the Parish Hall following the service.

