

ST. MARY OF THE HILLS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA



DECEMBER 24, 2021
THE EVE OF THE NATIVITY
10:00 PM

WELCOME TO SAINT MARY OF THE HILLS!

Dear Friends,

Welcome! Whether you are joining us in person or online this Christmas, it is so very good that you are here to worship and adore the infant Christ, Immanuel, God among us.

It is no secret that the world we inhabit is wearied and worn – by a pandemic that rages on in our midst, by the sad divisions promulgated by pundits and politicians, by the individual and collective pains and griefs that mar our day-to-day lives. Into just such a world enters the Christ, Jesus born of Mary.

The English priest and poet Malcolm Guite penned a Christmas sonnet some years ago that seems fitting, almost as though it was written for this moment, our time –

Christmas sets the centre on the edge;
The edge of town, the outhouse of the inn,
The fringe of empire, far from privilege
And power, on the edge and outer spin
Of turning worlds, a margin of small stars
That edge a galaxy itself light years
From some unguessed at cosmic origin.
Christmas sets the centre at the edge.

And from this day our world is re-aligned
A tiny seed unfolding in the womb
Becomes the source from which we all unfold
And flower into being. We are healed,
The end begins, the tomb becomes a womb,
For now in him all things are re-aligned.

In the child Christ, the babe of Bethlehem, all things are re-aligned. Our world is made new as the eternal takes on temporality, the infinite takes on finitude. This mystery of Christmas is an ancient love story that never grows old, of God who will not remain at a distance.

God has come near to us – to you, to me, to all.

Merry Christmas!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrew +". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

The Rev'd Andrew J. Hege
Rector



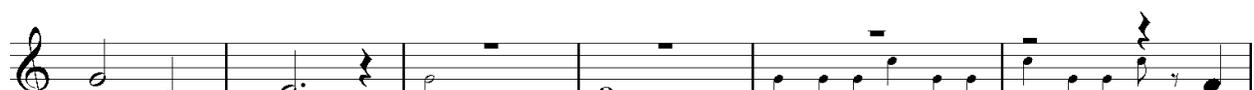
on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God, 4. you



take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



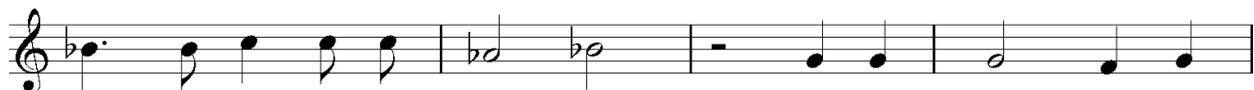
5. you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re -



ceive our prayer. 6. For



you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



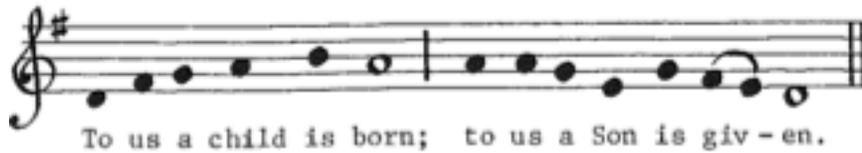
7. you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spi - rit, in the glo - ry of



God the Fa - ther. A - men.



*The refrain is sung by the choir, and then by all;
the Psalm is then sung by the choir, and all join in singing the refrain as indicated.*

- 1 The Lord is King;
let the earth rejoice; *
let the multitude of the isles be glad.
- 2 Clouds and darkness are round about him, *
righteousness and justice are the foundations of his throne. **Refrain**
- 3 A fire goes before him *
and burns up his enemies on every side.
- 4 His lightnings light up the world; *
the earth sees it and is afraid. **Refrain**
- 5 The mountains melt like wax at the presence of the LORD, *
at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.
- 6 The heavens declare his righteousness, *
and all the peoples see his glory. **Refrain**
- 11 Light has sprung up for the righteous, *
and joyful gladness for those who are truehearted.
- 12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous, *
and give thanks to his holy Name. **Refrain**

THE SECOND LESSON

Titus 3: 4-7

When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but according to his mercy, through the water of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit. This Spirit he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN 94

While shepherds watched their flocks by night

Winchester Old

Gospeler The Holy Gospel of Our Lord 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.

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

THE HOMILY

The Reverend Andrew J. Hege

A few moments of silence for reflection follow the sermon.

THE NICENE CREED

BCP 358

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

from Common Worship

The Leader and People pray responsively

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

O God, in this holy night your Son our Saviour was born in human flesh.
Renew your Church as the Body of Christ.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night there was no room for your Son in the inn.
Protect with your love those who have no home and all who live in poverty.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night Mary, in the pain of labour, brought your Son to birth.
Hold in your hand all who are in pain or distress.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night your Christ came as a light shining in the darkness.
Bring comfort to all who suffer in the sadness of our world.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night the angels sang, 'Peace to God's people on earth.'
Strengthen those who work for peace and justice in all the world.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night shepherds in the field heard good tidings of joy.
Give us grace to proclaim the gospel of Christ's redemption.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night strangers found the Holy Family, and saw the baby lying in the manger.
Bless our homes and all whom we love.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night heaven is come down to earth, and earth is raised to heaven.
Hold in your hand all those who have passed through death in the hope of your coming kingdom.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

In this holy night Christians the world over celebrate Christ's birth.
Open our hearts that he may be born in us today.

Holy God,
hear our prayer.

The Celebrant prays,

Father, in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Mary, Joseph and the saints through him who is your Word made flesh, our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

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

The Ministers and People exchange a sign of peace.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant continues the prayer and concludes the preface, singing,

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and every-where to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, 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:

The musical score is written on five staves of music. The lyrics are: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, heaven 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 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 breaking the consecrated bread, the Celebrant sings,

Al - le - lu - ia. Christ our Pass - o - ver is sac - ri - ficed for us;
 There-fore let us keep the feast. Al - le - lu - ia.

THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

and may add Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

AGNUS DEI – S-165

Je - sus, Lamb of God: Have mer - cy
 on us. Je - sus, bear - er of our sins: Have mer - cy
 on us. Je - sus, re - deem - er of the world: Give us your peace.

MINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

To receive the sacrament, extend your hands so that the priest may place the bread in the palm of your outstretched hands. Gluten free wafers are available. If you prefer to receive a blessing, cross your arms over your chest as a sign to the priest.

MOTET—*O magnum mysterium*

William Byrd (1539/40-1623)

O magnum mysterium ed admirabile sacramentum
ut animalia vederent Dominum natum
jacentem in praesepio.

O great mystery and wonderful sacrament,
that beasts should see the newborn Lord
lying in a manger.

HYMN 111

Stille Nacht

Silent night! Holy night!

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

BCP 365

**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.**

THE 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 Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

HYMN IN PROCESSION 100
Joy to the world!

Antioch

THE DISMISSAL

Deacon  *People*



Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Thanks be to God.

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

CHRISTMAS FLOWER OFFERINGS

The Christmas flowers and greenery are given to the glory of God and:

In loving memory of John and Harriet Bagg and Bill and Catherine Norfleet by John and Ann Bagg

In thanksgiving for our family by Mary and Doug Galke

In loving memory of Andy Greene by Beth Greene

In loving memory of and in celebration for family and friends by Susie and Ann Greene

In loving memory of Jordan, Alex, Sara, Gene, Grover and Carrie by Jo Ann Hallmark

In loving memory of George and Novella Frazier, Albert and Trilby Gerth, H. B. and Joanne Hege, and Robert and Rita Schroeder by Andrew, Amanda, Eleanor, and David Hege

In honor of my mother, Kirby Brown, by Juliana Henderson

In loving memory of Randolph and Clementi Holder and Eric and Walter Turnbow by the Holder-Turnbow family

In thanksgiving for the birthday of Megan Redford and in thanks for Alex and Bre Lawler and Lennon and Megan Redford and in loving memory of Tom, Jack and May by Rick and Beth Lawler

In loving memory of William Daniel McGill, Violet Holler McGill and C.B. Barbre, Jr. and in honor of Jo Singletary Barbre and Barbre and Alex Hoar by Loy and Paul McGill

In thanksgiving for my children and grandchildren who bring love, peace and joy to my life by Jane Milner

In loving memory of Mable and Roy Raulerson and Win and Richard Rheutan and in honor of Kit, Maggie, Warner and Hayes Raulerson and Patrick Raulerson by Mary Ellen and Joe Raulerson

In honor of Sue Sweeting by Jorgann and Bill Rogers

In loving memory of our daughter, Jennifer Rundell Leach, and our brother, Charles Bishop, by Luella and John Rundell

In loving memory of my mother, Maria Skibo, by Luba Skibo

In loving memory of Elizabeth Postlethwait by the Postlethwait and Stroh families

In loving memory of Spencer Sweeting Klingeman and in honor of Megan and Dex by Sue Sweeting

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St. Mary of the Hills Episcopal Church

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