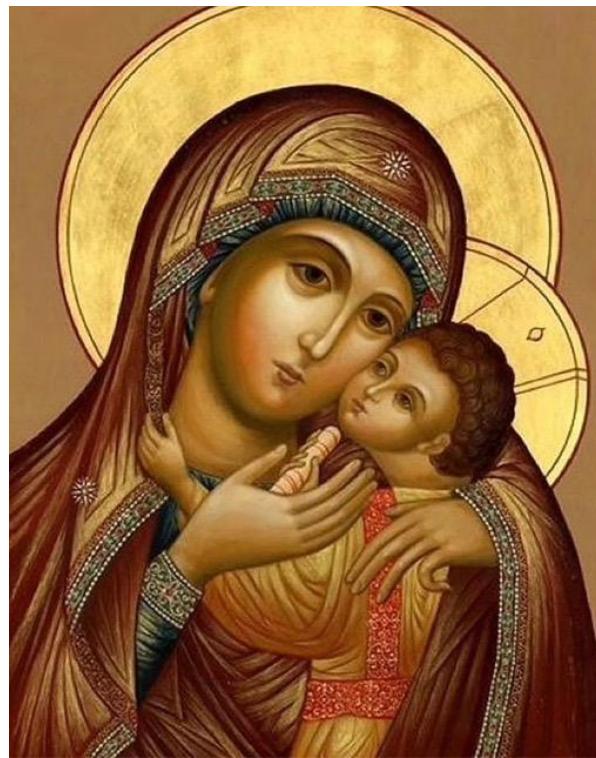


The Nativity of Our Lord

Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist



St. Francis Episcopal Church

December 24, 2025

9:00 p.m.

The Nativity of Our Lord

Ministers: Every member of the Congregation

Welcome to all who gather with us on this holy night when we celebrate the Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the family of God, we greet one another; a special welcome to those visiting with us tonight. St. Francis is an Episcopal Church, part of the wider ministry of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts. If you are visiting with us today, please help us get to know you by introducing yourself at the door, and also by signing our guest book or filling out a pew card. *Please be sure to include an email address if you wish to be added to our mailing list.*

Please remember to take your cell phone or electronic device off silent mode at the end of worship.

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP:

The liturgy that we use for worship is from the red Book of Common Prayer (**BCP**) found in the book racks in the pews. Beginning portions of the liturgy are printed in the bulletin. **Bold** print is to be spoken by the people of God.

You are invited to enter in reverence and awe of God's presence in this holy place. Before the liturgy begins we command the keeping of silence as a time for prayer and reflection.

All baptized persons – regardless of denomination or age – are invited to receive the sacrament with us. All are welcome to the Table; even if you choose to not receive, you may wish to receive a blessing. Gluten-free bread is provided for those who request it; please be in touch with one of the clergy or ushers to make this request.

Our hymns and service music is from the blue **Hymnal** found in the book racks in the pews. Numbers that begin with an S- are in the front of the Hymnal.

THE WORD OF GOD

PRELUDE

MaryAnn DiPinto and Nancy Rogers

PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O come all ye faithful

Hymnal 83

ACCLAMATION AND COLLECT FOR PURITY

BCP 355

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. 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.**

HYMN OF PRAISE

Angels we have heard on high

Hymnal 96

COLLECT FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

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.

Please be seated

FIRST READING *Isaiah 9:2-7*

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.

PSALM 96

- 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.

SECOND READING *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.

Please stand as you are able

SEQUENCE HYMN

It came upon the midnight clear

Hymnal 89

GOSPEL READING *Luke 2:1-20*

The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke.

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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you Lord Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Patrick Perkins

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.

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of your Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; Doug, our Bishop; Miguelina, our Bishop-elect; for our own parish of St. Francis, our clergy, staff, wardens and vestry; for the ministry of unCommon Ground; and for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for Donald, our President; Maura, our Governor; and all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world

That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.

Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints, who have entered into joy;

May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others...

...for The Anglican Church of Burundi; for the parish of St. Matthew's, Worcester; for the mission of Worcester Fellowship;

...for peace throughout the world; for the victims of war and terrorism, for the people of Ukraine and Afghanistan, for peace in Sudan, Yemen, and the region of the Middle East; and for those facing famine and drought in Somalia and the Horn of Africa;

... for all Federal and State employees, for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families, especially J. Pigsley, Gregory Smith, Jason Haynes, Mark Williams, Jacob Pezzini, Tyler Jeck, David Lane, Riley Smith, James Cimochowski;

...for the peace and well-being of all international students, studying abroad in the United States;

...for those in need of healing; Rich, Eric Warner, Kathleen Lloyd Jones, Jack, John Dougherty, Paul Stanovich, Charles Delisle, Tom, Bev, Judy Crosby, Brenda, Hilda Schinsing, Brad, Judy Capone, Mary Lee and Bob Kraushaar, Jen Gadowski, Jeanette, James Kelly, Carmelita Bello, Andrea McDonald, Mary Mullahy, Kathy Vogel, Richard, Donna Giuliani, Jennifer, Grace O'Sullivan, Angela Favulli, Patrick Kelly;

...those suffering from homelessness and all types of addiction and mental illness; the residents and staff of Holden Nursing Home; and those who mourn;

...for those who have died;

Celebrant adds a final collect.

THE PEACE

BCP 360

ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HOLY COMMUNION

*Christmas Offering will be equally divided between
The Mustard Seed, Abby's House, Dismas Farm and Wachusett Food Pantry.*

OFFERTORY HYMN

Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming

Hymnal 81

OFFERTORY PRESENTATION HYMN

Hymnal 380, vs 3

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below,
Praise him above ye heavenly hosts, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING - EUCHARISTIC PRAYER A

BCP 361

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.***

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

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:

SANCTUS

Hymnal S-130

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

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 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN**

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

THE FRACTION ANTHEM:

Agnus Dei

Hymnal S-164

*Jesus, Lamb of God: have mercy on us. Jesus, bearer of our sins: have mercy on us.
 Jesus, redeemer, redeemer of the world, give us your peace, give us your peace.*

COMMUNION ANTHEM (seated)

Wiegenlied (Max Reger)

Nancy Rogers

COMMUNION HYMN

The first Nowell the angel did say

Hymnal 109

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION *Please stand*

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.

CANDLELIGHTING (seated)

Silent night

Hymnal 111

THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

CLOSING HYMN

Joy to the world! The Lord is come

Hymnal 100

SERVERS THIS WEEK

Altar Guild: Bev Giarusso, Lucy Nowak, Kim Whamond

Reader: Mary Cook

LEM: Laura Caswell

Ushers: Cindy Foley and Sara Studley

CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of ...

Janice given by Bill

William Bruce King given by Richard and Reta King

Anson and Madelyn Betts, Marcel and Elvina Delorme, Tyke Crowley
given by Richard and Susan Delorme

Anita Collins given by her loving family

Betty Clark given by Wendy, Jenn and Ethan Christainsen

Allen and Barbara Beck, Richard and Isabelle Pope, Christopher Pope, Linda Dodge
given by Peter and Nancy Pope

Martha and Warren Taylor given by their son, David

Louise and Gordon Johnson given by their son-in-law, David Taylor

Linda E. (Johnson) Taylor given by her loving husband, David Taylor

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Anderson, Mr. and Mrs. Maurice Plante, Miss. Lisa St. Martin
Given by Jeffery and Nancy Plante

Howard Craig, Ruth Gorius, Jim Ragano given by CJ and Margo Gorius

Richard and Edith Jones, Helen Gould Jones, Oscar and Madeline Schmidt
Given by Randy and Carolyn Schmidt

William and Jean Andrews, Charles and Ruth Nowak and Richard Falcon
given by John and Lucy Nowak

Given to the Glory of God and in Loving Memory of ...

Albert S. Bonner given by Susan Dresley

Ruth M. Rollins given by Betty Ann Degon and Hope Caliendo

Stephen White and Mark White given by Clare White

Bill and Charlene Stewart, Iver and Gladys Erickson, Gordon and Dottie Erickson
given by Mark W. and Beverly Erickson Stewart

Elizabeth and Donald Hofstra, Thomas Johnson given by Laurie and Octavio Sanchez

James and Gertrude Warbasse given by devoted son, Phillip

Richard Peterson, Fordyce and Shirley Freeland, Steven Freeland given by Ron and Debbie Freeland

Vito, Julie and Vito John DiPinto given by MaryAnn DiPinto

Diana Carroll given by Nancy Carroll and Elizabeth Carroll

William Carroll given by Nancy Carroll and Elizabeth Carroll

Sandra Charbonneau given by Nancy Carroll and Elizabeth Carroll

Maxwell Baker given by the Baker Family

Henry, Rachael, Vincent Remian given by Anne Remian

Arnold, Joan, Arn, Claire, Donald, Katherine, Margaret, Emma, Carl, Herbert, Mildred, Edward, Jack,
Ellen, Rich, Cousins, Aunts, Uncles, Friends given by their family

Donald Cone given by Patrick and Carol Perkins

Betsy Perkins given by Patrick and Carol Perkins

Samuel Chase Davenport given by The Davenport Family

David Dill, our parents: William and Katherine McDonald, Francis and Esther Dill, Grace Dill, my
brothers David and Raymond McDonald given by Jeanette Dill

Barbara van Schermbeek given by Elizabeth Adams

James and Anna Giarusso, Richard H. and Edith L. Jones, Paul Zenaro, Scott Zenaro
given by Vincent and Bev Giarusso

Sylvia and Ted Cleveland, Elizabeth Bobalek given by Mary Warbasse

And in Thanksgiving for the Blessing of ...

Michael Delorme, Jeff and Jennifer Bastien given by Richard and Susan Delorme

Our grandchildren, Rosie and Henry given by Peter and Nancy Pope

Ohana given by Beth Ann Carrigan

Ashley Williams, my future wife given by David Taylor

Patsy, Douglas, Jeffy Mozian given by CJ and Margo Gorius

Our friends and family given by Randy and Carolyn Schmidt

Our children, grandchildren, family and friends given by Laurie and Octavio Sanchez

My sons, daughter-in-laws and grandchildren given by Laura Caswell

Ashley, Sam, Max, Alex and Marlowe given by Ron and Debbie Freeland

The marriage of Matthew DiPinto and Alyssa Valentine given by MaryAnn DiPinto

Our beloved family and friends given by Kathleen O'Connor and Thomas Ritacco

Kyle Emma and James given by their family

Richard, Allison and Adrian given by Vincent and Beverly Giarusso

Chris, Callan and Maggie Whamond given by Kim Whamond

St. Francis Episcopal Church



Bearing Witness
to
Christ's Love

Office Phone: 508-829-3344 Email: parishadmin@stfrancisholden.org
Web Page: www.stfrancisholden.org

Rector: The Rev. Patrick R. Perkins
Music Minister: Elizabeth Keusch
Parish Administrator: Elena Poirier
Church School: Amy Mellors

rector@stfrancisholden.org
music@stfrancisholden.org
parishadmin@stfrancisholden.org
churchschool@stfrancisholden.org

