

## Contents

This Week's Readings

## Rector's Ramblings

Merry Christmas! Ok, just a few days early, but the Advent police are on holiday. To conclude the four weeks of Advent, I leave you with Charles Wesley's great and unsung hymn.

GLORY be to God on high,  
And peace on earth descend!  
God comes down, he bows the sky,  
And shows himself our friend:  
God the invisible appears!  
God, the blest, the great I AM,  
Sojourns in this vale of tears,  
And Jesus is his name.

Him the angels all adored,  
Their Maker and their King.  
Tidings of their humbled Lord  
They now to mortals bring.  
Emptied of his majesty,  
Of his dazzling glories shorn,  
Being's source begins to be,  
And God himself is born!

See the eternal Son of God  
A mortal Son of man;  
Dwelling in an earthly clod,  
Whom heaven cannot contain!  
Stand amazed, ye heavens, at this!  
See the Lord of earth and skies;  
Humbled to the dust he is,  
And in a manger lies.

We, the sons of men, rejoice,  
The Prince of peace proclaim;  
With heaven's host lift up our voice,  
And shout Immanuel's name  
Knees and hearts to him we bow;  
Of our flesh and of our bone,  
Jesus is our brother now,  
And God is all our own."

May God the Word Incarnate be yours this season.

In Christ's love,

## The Good News

December 23, 2017



**This is the final Good News of 2017**

The next edition will be out on January 5, 2018.

### **Fourth Sunday of Advent - Christmas Worship Schedule 12/24**

7:30AM Celebration of IV Advent. (Rite I - no music)

**NOTE: THERE IS NO 10AM SERVICE SCHEDULED ON 12/24.**

4:30PM Evensong and Holy Eucharist for the Feast of Christmas.(hymns and carols are in the service)

10:30PM Candlelight Christ Mass. There will be no pre-service carol sing this year. The sung Mass will include hymns and will begin promptly at 10:30.

### **Christmas Day**

9AM Rite I Mass (no music)

### **Formation Study**

We will resume formation on 12/27.

### **Quilters News**

A major part of the fellowship and activity of our quilters group is to gather on Tuesdays and cut, construct, sew, and tie baby blankets. We always seem to find a need for the blankets that we make without having a real plan when we start.

We have just had the opportunity to participate in the

Dave Halt, Rector  
309-660-8515

## Ministry Links

St. Matthew's Webpage  
The Episcopal Diocese of  
Springfield  
Rector's Blog

annual "Stuff the Bus" campaign. This is at least the 10th year that we have been part of this wonderful program. This year we were able to contribute twelve (12) receiving blankets and thirteen (13) baby quilts. The bus Elves are always very excited to get these hand made items.

It is amazing how the flannel for the receiving blankets shows up just when we need it. It is like magic, as we run out of flannel, new piles just appear in the Quilter's storage room. And it is always perfectly timed.... THANK YOU Flannel Fairies..

*If you would like to join the Quilters group or just see them in action come Tuesday mornings at 10 AM in Parish hall. They are taking a holiday break for two weeks and will begin again on Tuesday, January 9th.*

### **Time to Update the Directory**

In early 2018, we need to publish a new Congregational Directory, and so it is time to gather updates and new information. We will leave 1 copy of the old directory out for you to examine - if your information is incomplete, inaccurate, or missing we ask that you fill out the reporting sheets provided. If you have a photo (.img format) to include, send it to the Office ([office@stmattsbldm.org](mailto:office@stmattsbldm.org)) and if you want to have a photo taken at no charge, see Gary Ploense.

### **The Daily Devotional Reading**

is available by clicking of the link below:

[Good News Daily](#)

### **Serving Schedule**

24-December

7:30 AM

Greeter: Ray Durham

Lector: Liz Gordon

E.M.: Chris Bennett

NO 10:00 AM and No Coffee Hour

4:30 PM Evensong with Holy Eucharist

Acolyte: Christian Pitts

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Volunteer Needed

E.M.: Volunteer Needed

10:30 PM Christmas

Acolyte: Alley Roberson & Brad Bauman

Crucifer: Brad Bauman

Lector: Ann Sokan  
E.M: Volunteer Needed  
Tuesday Counter: SB Carter

31-December

7:30

Greeter: Doug & Dede Dyson

Lector: Bill Johns

E.M.: Bill Johns

10:00

Acolyte: Sarah Halat

Crucifer:

Lector: Jim Cooper

E.M.: Bob Kohlhasse

Tuesday Counter: Roy Laws

Coffee Hour: Debbie & Roger Thgomas

### **Annual Meeting**

In accordance with the canons Sunday, January 21st, 2018 the Eucharistic Community of St. Matthew's Episcopal Church will hold it's Annual Meeting. That day we will have only one morning worship service at 9:30 a.m. Following worship, all are invited to meet for a simple Coffee Hour - hosted by the current MLT and the meeting.

Annual meeting includes presentation of the 2018 Budget, Election of 3 MLT (Mission Leadership Team) members and one lay delegate to Synod, along with distribution for the annual Book of Reports.

Jim Cooper, Gary Ploense, and Kathryn Morris have announced their intention to run for MLT, which fills the three openings. However, any member in good standing is invited to stand for election. Anyone interested in running, contact Wardens Shelley Brenneman Carter or Roy Laws for more information AND please provide a short biography to the office by January 7th, to be printed for congregational preparation. All annual reports must be printed in the official book of reports, so please provide your reports to the office ([office@stmattsblm.org](mailto:office@stmattsblm.org)) by no later than January 7.

### **Outreach Opportunities**

#### **ITEMS-OF-THE-MONTH**

Why the big white box in the hallway across from the office?

That's where we're asking you to place clean, gently used coats you no longer wear. We will deliver them to The Salvation Army's local headquarters for distribution to needy people this fall and winter. We'll also collect other gently used winter wear (gloves, hats, scarves). THANK YOU! The Outreach Committee

## MITTEN TREES

It is an annual tradition at St. Matthew's that Christmas trees be trimmed with hats, scarves, gloves and mittens for children in need in the community. "Mitten Trees" have been placed in the Narthex and hallway outside the Parish Hall. Please help decorate them with store bought or handmade items during Advent and through the season of Christmas.

## **St. Matthew's Schedule for the weeks of December 24 & 31** *Coffee Hour follows 10:00 a.m. worship in the Parish hall (31)*

Sunday-11:00 a.m.-Guild of the Holy Rosary (31st)

Sunday-5:30 p.m.-Evensong

Monday - Office Closed for Family Time - Holidays

Tuesday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Tuesday - morning - Counting

Wednesday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

Wednesday - 5:30 p.m.-Light supper

Wednesday-6:00 p.m.-Adult Formation/CGS

Thursday-7:30 a.m.-Morning Prayer and breakfast

Friday-7:00 a.m.-Morning Prayer

*Office Hours: Tuesday through Friday: 9:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.*

*If you have anything you would like added to the schedule or announcements in the bulletin and news letter please send an email reply to the newsletter, or call the office.*

## **Readings for December 24, 2017 Forth Sunday of Advent**

Old Testament

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.

Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you

wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

## Canticle 15

The Song of Mary Magnificat  
Luke 1:46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; \*  
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.  
From this day all generations will call me blessed: \*  
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his  
Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him \*  
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, \*  
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, \*  
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, \*  
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, \*  
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, \*  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26

Misericordias Domini

1 Your love, O Lord, for ever will I sing; \*  
from age to age my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

2 For I am persuaded that your love is established for ever; \*  
you have set your faithfulness firmly in the heavens.

3 "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; \*  
I have sworn an oath to David my servant:

4 "I will establish your line for ever, \*  
and preserve your throne for all generations."

19 You spoke once in a vision and said to your faithful people:  
\*

"I have set the crown upon a warrior

and have exalted one chosen out of the people.

20 I have found David my servant; \*  
with my holy oil have I anointed him.

21 My hand will hold him fast \*  
and my arm will make him strong.

22 No enemy shall deceive him, \*  
nor any wicked man bring him down.

23 I will crush his foes before him \*  
and strike down those who hate him.

24 My faithfulness and love shall be with him, \*  
and he shall be victorious through my Name.

25 I shall make his dominion extend \*  
from the Great Sea to the River.

26 He will say to me, 'You are my Father, \*  
my God, and the rock of my salvation.'

### The Epistle

Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

### The Gospel

Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then

the angel departed from her.

*Please note: readings for the 4:30 & 10:30 p.m. services are printed in the service booklets.*

Readings for December 31, 2018 1st Sunday of Christmas

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

I will greatly rejoice in the Lord,  
my whole being shall exult in my God;  
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,  
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,  
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,  
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,  
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise  
to spring up before all the nations.  
For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,  
and her salvation like a burning torch.  
The nations shall see your vindication,  
and all the kings your glory;  
and you shall be called by a new name  
that the mouth of the Lord will give.  
You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,  
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

The Psalm

Psalm 147 or 147:13-21

*Laudate Dominum*

1 Hallelujah!

How good it is to sing praises to our God! \*  
how pleasant it is to honor him with praise!

2 The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem; \*  
he gathers the exiles of Israel.

3 He heals the brokenhearted \*  
and binds up their wounds.

4 He counts the number of the stars \*  
and calls them all by their names.

5 Great is our Lord and mighty in power; \*  
there is no limit to his wisdom.

6 The Lord lifts up the lowly, \*  
but casts the wicked to the ground.

7 Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving; \*  
make music to our God upon the harp.

8 He covers the heavens with clouds \*  
and prepares rain for the earth;

9 He makes grass to grow upon the mountains \*

and green plants to serve mankind.

10 He provides food for flocks and herds \*  
and for the young ravens when they cry.

11 He is not impressed by the might of a horse; \*  
he has no pleasure in the strength of a man;

12 But the Lord has pleasure in those who fear him, \*  
in those who await his gracious favor.

13 Worship the Lord, O Jerusalem; \*  
praise your God, O Zion;

14 For he has strengthened the bars of your gates; \*  
he has blessed your children within you.

15 He has established peace on your borders; \*  
he satisfies you with the finest wheat.

16 He sends out his command to the earth, \*  
and his word runs very swiftly.

17 He gives snow like wool; \*  
he scatters hoarfrost like ashes.

18 He scatters his hail like bread crumbs; \*  
who can stand against his cold?

19 He sends forth his word and melts them; \*  
he blows with his wind, and the waters flow.

20 He declares his word to Jacob, \*  
his statutes and his judgments to Israel.

21 He has not done so to any other nation; \*  
to them he has not revealed his judgments.

Hallelujah!

### The New Testament

Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

### The Gospel

John 1:1-18

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 a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

### **Birthdays & Anniversaries December 24 - 30**

#### *Anniversaries*

Karyn Smith & Robin Levine

Grace & Bill Johns

#### *Birthdays*

Halley Brenneman

Woodie Shadid

Chrissy Stoffer

### **Collect for the forth Sunday of Advent, December 24th**

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

### **Contact Information**

St. Matthew's Episcopal Church

