

ST. MARY OF THE HILLS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLOWING ROCK, NORTH CAROLINA



DECEMBER 24
THE EVE OF THE NATIVITY

5:00 PM

WELCOME TO SAINT MARY OF THE HILLS!

Dear Friends,

Welcome! As we celebrate this Christmas, it is so very good that you are here to worship and adore the infant Christ, Immanuel, God among us.

From the ancient prophet, Isaiah, we read, “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.” The prophet’s hope reaches across generations - from a people so long ago, eagerly longing to know the presence of the Almighty, to us here gathered to proclaim anew the Savior’s birth.

Light has come into the world, even as long shadows remain.

The great twentieth-century American theologian, Howard Thurman, penned these series of verses, naming all the shadowed places where the light of Christ, the light of Christmas

I will light candles this Christmas.
Candles of joy, despite all the sadness.
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch.
Candles of courage where fear is ever present.
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days.
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.
Candles of love to inspire all of my living.
Candles that will burn all the year long.

In the holy child, the babe of Bethlehem – Jesus born of Mary – the heavens burst forth with the light of life and the hope of our redemption is made new. The shadows of our old, broken and hurting world are lifted as the eternal takes on temporality, the infinite takes on finitude.

The mystery of Christmas is an ancient love story that never grows old, of God who cannot, does not, and will not remain at a distance. God has come near to us – then, now, and always.

Merry Christmas!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew +". The "A" is large and stylized, with a long vertical stroke. The word "Andrew" is written in a cursive script, and a small "+" symbol follows it.

The Rev'd Andrew J. Hege
Rector

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

5:00 PM

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN 83 (*omit vs. 4 & 5*)

Adeste Fideles

O come, all ye faithful

THE OPENING ACCLAMATION

BCP 355

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

People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

COLLECT FOR PURITY

The Celebrant says the Collect for Purity and the people respond, Amen.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS – S 278



1. Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and
peace to his peo - ple on earth. 2. Lord God, heaven - ly King, al -
might - y God and Fa-ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we
praise you for your glo - ry. 3. Lord Je - sus Christ,
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.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The People are seated.

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

SHARED BY OUR CHILDREN

The People remain seated to sing the carols.

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

St. Louis

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light:
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth!
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

“Away in a Manger”

Crib Song

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed
The little Lord Jesus lay down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down here He lay,
The little lrd Jesus asleep on the hay.

“Angels from the Realms of Glory”

Regent Square

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Younger shines the infant Light;
Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King!

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

Gloria

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear?

Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo.

“What Child is This?”

Greensleeves

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing.
Haste, haste to bring him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

“We Three Kings”

Three Kings of Orient

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light!

Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God, and Sacrifice.
Heaven sings Alleluia:
Alleluia, the earth replies.

O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright;
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light!

The first Nowell the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,
Born is the King of Israel

Then let us with one accord
sing praises to our heavenly Lord;
that hath made heaven and earth of nought,
and with his blood our life hath bought.

THE HOMILY

The Reverend Andrew J. Hege

A few moments of silence for reflection follow the sermon.

The people stand, as able, for the Creed.

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,

O God, in this holy night angels and shepherds worshipped at the manger throne. Receive the worship we offer in fellowship with Blessed Mary, Blessed Joseph and all the saints, through him who is your Word made flesh, your Son our Savior 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

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE OFFERTORY

HYMN 87

Mendelssohn

Hark! the herald angels sing

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER A

Celebrant *People*
The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Celebrant *People*
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People
It is right to give him thanks and praise.

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:

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 the prayer, recalling God's activity in our salvation history, the institution of the Lord's Supper, and inviting the people to join in saying,

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

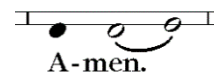
Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues, invoking the Spirit's present work, concluding the prayer, and inviting the people to join in the doxology of the prayer, saying,

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.



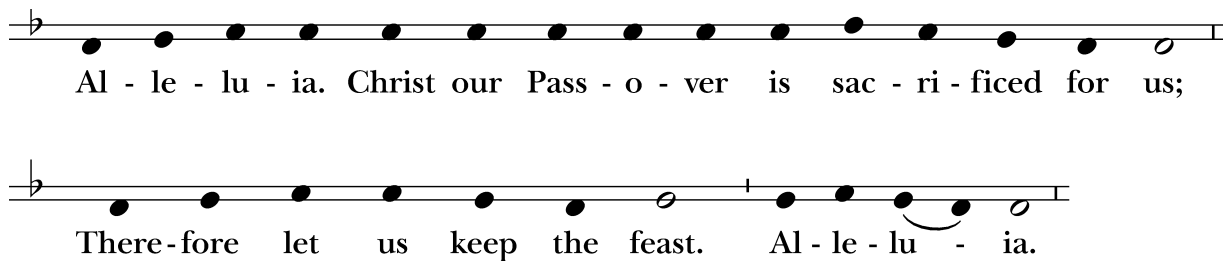
As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your Name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin against us
 Save us from the time of trial,
 and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and for ever. Amen.**

FRACTION ANTHEM

S 152

After breaking the consecrated bread, the Celebrant and People sing responsively,



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.**

MINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

All baptized Christians, regardless of denomination, are welcome to receive Communion in the Episcopal Church. If you have not been baptized, we would love to talk to you about baptism. 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. For those who desire to receive the wine that follows, guide the chalice toward your lips to drink from the cup. We kindly ask that you not intinct (dip) the bread into the chalice. If for any reason, you don't want to receive Communion, you are still invited to come forward, kneel, and cross your arms over your chest to signify this to the priest who will offer a blessing.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

AGNUS DEI



HYMN 99

Go tell it on the mountain

Go Tell It on the Mountain

HYMN 111

Silent night, holy night

Stille Nacht

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

Antioch

Joy to the world!

THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant says the dismissal, and the people respond, **Thanks be to God.**

ORGAN VOLUNTARY

THE CHRISTMAS FLOWERS AND GREENS ARE GIVEN BY:

-
- Marty Moore – In honor of my husband Pat
- Rick & Beth Lawler – In honor of our children and grandchildren.
- Bob & Anne Jones – In memory of our mothers Carrie Buxton and Clyde Jones
- Peter & Valerie Purcell – In honor of our children Booker, Rebecca, and Elizabeth
- Sue Sweeting – In honor of Megan, Dex, and the Altar Guild
- Walt & Martha Ameika – In memory of Michael W. Ameika
- Jim & Joyce Gibson – In memory of James Edward Gibson, Kathryn Setzer Gibson, Robert Bruce Gibson, Peggy Wingate Gibson, John Baptist Talton, Jessie Smith Talton, Frances Lorraine Talton, John William Sanders III, Barbara Weedon Page.
- Chris Cooley & Brendan Housler – In memory of Charles and Margaret Cooley and in honor of Harry and Gail Housler
- Andrew, Amanda, Eleanor, and David Hege - In loving memory of George and Novella Frazier, Albert and Trilby Gerth, H. B. and Joanne Hege, & Robert and Rita Schroeder

CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO THE MUSIC PROGRAM ARE GIVEN BY:

- Kaye Culp – In memory of Marshall Culp
- Pete & Sally Page – in honor of all musicians and singers



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St. Mary of the Hills Episcopal Church

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