

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ



DECEMBER 24, 2021

9:30PM - MUSIC PRELUDE

10PM - FESTIVAL EUCHARIST

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

www.stgregoryathens.org | 706.546.7553 | office@stgregoryathens.org

3195 Barnett Shoals Road, Athens, GA 30605

**VISION STATEMENT FOR
ST. GREGORY THE GREAT EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

The vision of St. Gregory the Great is to be a program-sized, culturally integrated parish, proclaiming and loving like Jesus with varied worship, music, and outdoor spaces.

DIOCESE OF ATLANTA STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Adopted at Annual Council 2015

*We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we:
Worship Joyfully; Serve Compassionately, and Grow Spiritually.*

Dear Visitor,

Thank you for joining us today in the joyous celebration of the birth of the Christ!

If you are visiting in the area or already have a spiritual home, we send you back to your own congregation with our greetings and our blessings. Please sign our guestbook or fill out a pew card.

If you are looking for a place to know and celebrate God's love for all God's children, we invite you to return tomorrow, Christmas Day, for Holy Eucharist at 10AM and on regular Sundays at 8AM or 10:30AM to worship with us and meet other members of St. Gregory's family. Our 10:30AM services are also live streamed. We are an inclusive community welcoming without barriers all who come to us. In addition to our regular worship services, we celebrate our life in God through study, fellowship, prayer and service to one another and the wider community. We would be delighted for you to consider becoming a member of our parish.

*For further information about St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church, please call the church office at (706) 546-7553 or visit our website at www.stgregoryathens.org. **A blessed and merry Christmas to you!***

Assistance: Please let an usher know if you are unable to come to the altar for communion; the elements will be brought to you.

BCP = Book of Common Prayer

Hymns may be found in The Hymnal 1982

LEVAS = Lift Every Voice and Sing Hymnal

*Service music is at the front of The Hymnal 1982 and is indicated by an *S before the number*

Schedule of Services

Christmas Day
Saturday, December 25
10AM Holy Eucharist & Carols *

Sunday, January 2, 2022
8AM Holy Eucharist
10:30AM Holy Eucharist *

Sunday, December 26
10AM Holy Eucharist *

**** also live streamed***

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Word of God

Music Prelude (*see insert*)

Processional Hymn 83

O come, all ye faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant: Alleluia! Unto us a child is born.

People: **O come let us adore him. Alleluia!**

Hymn of Praise 21 LEVAS

Go, tell it on the mountain

Negro Spiritual

THE COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Eternal God, who made this most holy night to shine with the brightness of your one true light: bring us, who have known the revelation of that light on earth, to see the radiance of your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The people are seated for the reading and psalm.

THE 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.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

Thanks be to God.

Jerome Webster Meachen
(b. 1930)

Psalm 96 *Cantate Domino*

- 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 be-/fore 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 there-/in.
- 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.



© 1979, Robert Knox Kennedy.

THE 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.

*Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
Thanks be to God.*

The people stand to sing and remain standing for the Gospel.

Sequence Hymn 96

Angels we have heard on high

GLORIA

THE GOSPEL

Luke 2:1-20

Celebrant: *The Holy Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, according to Luke.*

People: *Glory to you, O 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, O Christ.*

SERMON: The Rev. Nikki Mathis

THE NICENE CREED

BCP 358

(said by all, standing)

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

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God.

For all people in their daily life and work;

For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world;

For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation;

For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble;

For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael, our Presiding Bishop, and Rob and Don, our Bishops;

and for all bishops and other ministers, especially Nikki, our Priest, and Christina, our Deacon;

For all who serve God in his Church.

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation.

Hear us, Lord;

For your mercy is great.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life.

We will exalt you, O God our King;

And praise your Name for ever and ever.

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom.

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

Deacon: We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE PEACE

Celebrant: *The peace of Christ be always with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

*The people greet one another with a sign of God's peace within their own seating pod and then are seated.
Please do not move about the sanctuary.*

The Holy Communion

Offertory Anthem

Carl Schalk

Before the Marvel of This Night
Before the marvel of this night
Adoring, fold your wings and bow,
Then tear the sky apart with light
And with your news the world endow.
Proclaim the birth of Christ and peace,
That fear and death and sorrow cease:
Sing peace, sing peace, sing gift of peace,
Sing peace, sing gift of peace!
Awake the sleeping world with song,
This is the day the Lord has made.
Assemble here, celestial throng,
In royal splendor come arrayed.
Give earth a glimpse of heav'nly bliss,
A teasing taste of what they miss:
Sing bliss, sing bliss, sing endless bliss,
Sing bliss, sing endless bliss!
The love that we have always known,
Our constant joy and endless light,
Now to the loveless world be shown,
Now break upon its deathly night.
Into one song compress the love,
That rules our universe above:
Sing love, sing love, sing God is love,
Sing love, sing God is love!

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B

BCP 367

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

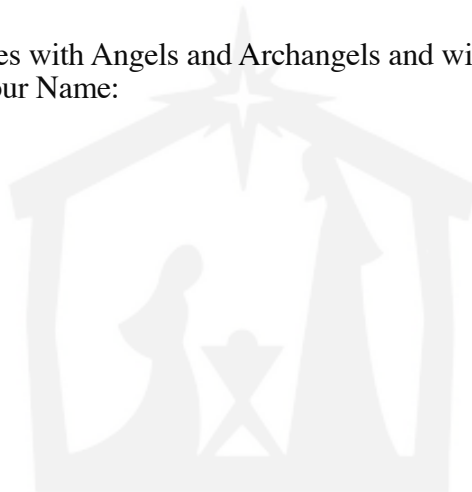
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord.

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. 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:



Unison

Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r, of pow'r and might.

6
Hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

10 *Opt. des.*
Blessed is he, is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Ho - sa - na, Ho - sa - na in the high - est.

14 *molto rit.*
Ho - san - na in the high - est, Ho - sa - na in the high - est.

molto rit.

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, 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, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and People: We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with the Blessed Virgin Mary and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. 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.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP 364

Rejoicing in the presence of God here among us, as our Savior taught us, so we pray

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.

Fraction Anthem S-161

Lamb of God

David Hurd

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

Whoever you are and wherever you are in your journey of faith, know that you are welcome to join with us at God's table to share in the sacrament of holy communion. If you would like to receive a blessing rather than the bread and wine, cross your arms over your chest when the priest comes to you in the communion circle.

Chords: Eb, Ab/Bb, Eb

1 Ma - ry had a ba - by, my Lord;
 2 What did she name him, my Lord?
 3 She named him King Je - sus, my Lord. She
 4 Where was he born, my Lord?
 5 Born in a man - ger, my Lord.

Chords: Gm, Ab, Bb

Ma - ry had a ba - by, my Lord.
 What did she name him, my Lord?
 named him King Je - sus, my Lord. She
 Where was he born, my Lord?
 Born in a man - ger, my Lord.

Chords: Eb, Fm7/Eb, Eb, G+, G7/B, Cm, Cm/Bb

Ma - ry had a ba - by, Ma - ry had a ba - by,
 What did she name him, what did she name him,
 named him King Je - sus, she named him King Je - sus, she
 Where was he born, where was he born,
 Born in a man - ger, born in a man - ger,

Chords: Fm7/Ab, Eb/G, Fm7, Ab/Bb, Eb

Ma - ry had a ba - by, my Lord.
 what did she name him, my Lord?
 named him King Je - sus, my Lord.
 where was he born, my Lord?
 born in a man - ger, my Lord.

WORDS and MUSIC: African-American spiritual

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.

Kevin Green, guitar

(Individual candles are lit as the lights are dimmed; people are invited to kneel, if able.
Please pass your flame to your neighbor.)

Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm,
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake
Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin mo - ther and child.
at the sight, glo - ries stream from hea - ven a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face,

Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in hea - ven - ly
heaven - ly hosts— sing al - le - lu - ia; Christ, the Sa - vior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy

peace. Sleep in hea - ven - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sa - vior, is born!
birth. Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.

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.**

Recessional Hymn 87

Hark! the herald angels sing

MENDELSSOHN

THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant
People

Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

Postlude

Noel fanfare

Charles Callahan

In Memory of

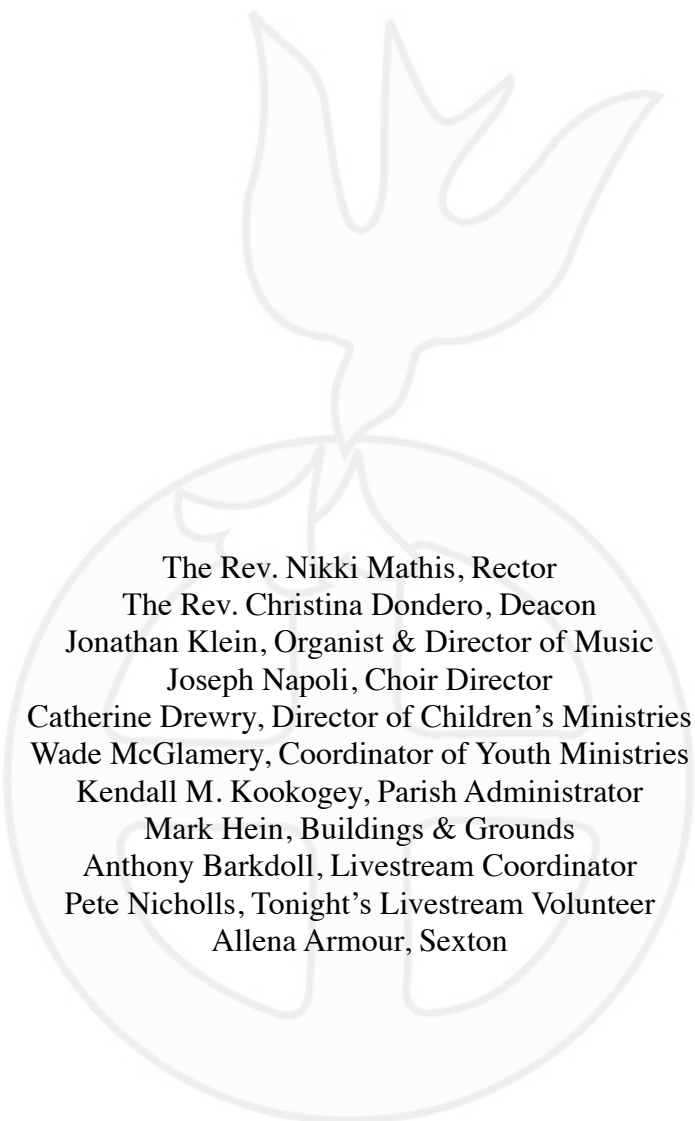
Dwayne & Thelma Coker, by Jeff & Shelby Welch
Bill & Evelyn Welch, by Jeff & Shelby Welch
John Rives, by Diane Barret
Mary Ellen Cherry, by Jenifer Marquardt
Paul Edmonston, by his wife, Elizabeth
Iris and Jack Moorhead, by Sheila Kelley
Jackie and Roy Kelley, by Sheila Kelley
Violeta Moore, by Sheila Kelley
Lucille West, by Jenifer Marquardt
Jack Beach, by Martha Beach
Conoly Hester
George Watson

In Thanksgiving for

Nathanial, Jenny, Charlie, and Hayden Welch, by Jeff & Shelby Welch
Toni and Wes Chapman, by Jeff & Shelby Welch
Amelia, Caley, Jeffery, & Kitty Ross, by Jeff & Shelby Welch
Our children and grandchildren, by John & Linda Barrett
My St. Gregory's Family, by Martha Beach
Robert Wright, by the Napoli Family

In Honor of

Evelyn Wright, by the Napoli family
Joe Napoli and the St. Gregory's Choir, by Jonathan Klein



The Rev. Nikki Mathis, Rector
The Rev. Christina Dondero, Deacon
Jonathan Klein, Organist & Director of Music
Joseph Napoli, Choir Director
Catherine Drewry, Director of Children's Ministries
Wade McGlamery, Coordinator of Youth Ministries
Kendall M. Kookogey, Parish Administrator
Mark Hein, Buildings & Grounds
Anthony Barkdoll, Livestream Coordinator
Pete Nicholls, Tonight's Livestream Volunteer
Allena Armour, Sexton