

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

December 24, 2022
5PM



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. 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!**

Christmas Eve

Saturday, December 24

9:30PM Music Prelude

10PM Festival Eucharist & Choir

Christmas Day

Sunday, December 25

10AM Holy Eucharist & Carols
(no Sunday school or nursery)

Sunday, January 1

8AM Holy Eucharist

10:30AM Holy Eucharist
(no Sunday school or nursery)

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

The Word of God

Harp Prelude

*Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming
O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

arr. S. Woods
arr. S. Woods

OPENING SENTENCE

Behold, I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: for to you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord.

Processional Hymn 83

O come, all ye faithful

ADESTE FIDELES

BLESSING OF THE CRECHE

God our Father, on this night your Son Jesus Christ was born of Mary, for us and for our salvation. By being born as one of us and lying humbly in a manger, he shows us how much you love the world. Now bless this manger, which we have prepared to celebrate this holy birth; may all who see it be strengthened in faith and receive the fullness of life he came to bring, who is alive and reigns for ever. **Amen**

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Celebrant: Alleluia! Unto us a child is born.

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

Song of Praise 107

Good Christian friends, rejoice

IN DULCI JUBILO

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.**

Crooked Halos and Wiggly Sheep

A Classic Christmas Pageant

(Arranged in 2013 by The Rev. Matthew Kozlowski for St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Stuart, FL)

The congregation will join the children in singing the verses printed in bold.

Narrator: The nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Gospel writings of Luke and Matthew.

Now the birth of Jesus took place in this way: 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. And all went to their own towns to be registered.

Hymn 79

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.**

Narrator: 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 swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

Narrator: And in that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

**Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye, who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:
come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn King.**

Narrator: And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

And the angel said to them,

Gabriel: Do not be afraid; for I am bringing you good news of great joy for all people! To you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord!

Narrator: And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

"Gloria, Gloria, Gloria"
Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!
Gloria, gloria, gloria, glory to God on high!
**And on earth be peace to the people
in whom God is well pleased!**
**And on earth be peace to the people
in whom God is well pleased!**

**Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis deo
Gloria, in excelsis deo.**

Narrator: When the angels had left them, 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.

**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 soon of Mary.**

Narrator: Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of King Herod, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him."

**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.**

Narrator: When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

**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.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE, Form III

BCP 387

Father, we pray for your holy catholic Church;

That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, especially Michael, Rob, and Don, and all priests and deacons, especially, Carol, Ellen, Doug, Lin, Dutton, Christina, and Nikki;

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

We pray for 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. ...

We give special thanks for ...

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

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 and then are seated.

The Holy Communion

Offertory Hymn 87

Hark! the herald angels sing
Congregation please stand for presentation on v. 3

MENDELSSOHN

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:

Sanctus S-130

Holy, holy, holy

Franz Schubert

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and
might, Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of power and might, hea - ven and earth are
full, full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. 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. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

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

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.



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, re - deem - er of the world:

give us your peace, give us your 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 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.

Communion Hymn 99

Go tell it on the mountain

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Communion Solo

We Wish You a Merry Christmas

Traditional

Charles Campbell, piano

Communion Solo

O Holy Night

arr. Jay Althouse

Stacie Court, soprano

Communion Hymn 111

Silent night, holy night

STILLE NACHT

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER (for our livestreaming community)

Enriching Our Worship 2

Faithful God, in the wonder of your wisdom and love, you fed your people in the wilderness with the bread of angels, and you sent Jesus to be the bread of life. Though I cannot physically consume these gifts of bread and wine, I thank you that I have received the sacrament of Christ's presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may I embody your desire, and be renewed for your service, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BCP 366

Almighty and everliving God, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of your Son, and heirs of your eternal kingdom. And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **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.**

Recessional Hymn 100

Joy to the world!

ANTIOCH

THE DISMISSAL

Celebrant: Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit. Alleluia, alleluia!

People: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!**

Postlude



THE FLOWERS ON THE CHRISTMAS ALTAR ARE GIVEN

In Memory of

Dwayne & Thelma Coker, from Jeff & Shelby Welch

William & Evelyn Welch, from Jeff & Shelby Welch

John Rives, from Diane Barret

Iris and Jack Moorhead, from Sheila Kelley

Jackie and Roy Kelley, from Sheila Kelley

Terry Kelley, from Sheila Kelley

Stephen Corn, from Dolores Holt

Cedric Kuhn, from Barbara Kuhn

Dwayne & Thelma Coker, Bill & Kitty Ross, and Bill & Evelyn Welch, from Caley & Amelia Ross

Rita Murphy, from Alexa Lamm

Sandra Everett, from Alexa Lamm

George Watson, Jr. and George Watson, III (Trey), from Nancy Watson & family

George Watson, Sr. and Louise Watson, from Nancy Watson & family

Charles Harrison & Helen Walker Harrison, from Nancy Watson & family

Pattie Hiles, from Nancy Watson & family

Joan Barber, Jane Armistead's mother, from Jack & Jane Armistead

Ophelia Glover, from Alex Glover

Caroline Chapman, from Alex Glover

In Thanksgiving for

Nathaniel, Jenny, Charlie, and Hayden Welch, from Jeff & Shelby Welch

Toni and Wes Chapman, from Jeff & Shelby Welch

Amelia, Caley, Jeffery, & Kitty Ross, from Jeff & Shelby Welch

Jeffery & Kitty Ross, from Caley & Amelia Ross

Jeff & Shelby Welch, Bob Ross, and Paula Moon, from Caley & Amelia Ross

My grandchildren, Scarlett & Carter, from Marlaine Barnes

Karen & Will Klein from Jonathan Klein and Grace Huang

Wen Tseng & M. Y. Huang from Grace Huang and Jonathan Klein

Joe Napoli and the St. Gregory's choir from Jonathan Klein

CAST

Narrator 1: Nessa Avinger

Narrator 2: Sadie Bray

Narrator 3: Charlotte Lamm

Mary – Julia Sanford

Joseph – Reed Smith

The Star – Jonah Yates

Gabriel: Avonlee Boone

Shepherds: Warren Lamm, Jeffery Ross

Sheep: Felix Bjork, Moses Holton

Magi: Simeon Bjork, Charlie Campbell, Aiden Lamm

Angels – Karlee Bethune, Lorraine Bjork, Simone Coppins

Children's Ministry Volunteers: Kate Avinger, Jenifer Borg, Jenifer Marquardt

BAND OF BELIEVERS

Porter Welch

Gavin DeFalco-Avinger

Rae Ann Kretzer

Kelly Black (in absentia)

Mark Tavernier

Vicky Tavernier

Scarlet Buckley

Jeb Byers

Wynn Walter

Maggie Reinberger

Christina Dondero

Eva Daniel

Jonathan Klein

Whatever other kind soul wanders in!

SERVERS

Eucharistic Ministers: David Stooksbury & Beth Thornton

Crucifer: Mariel Sanford

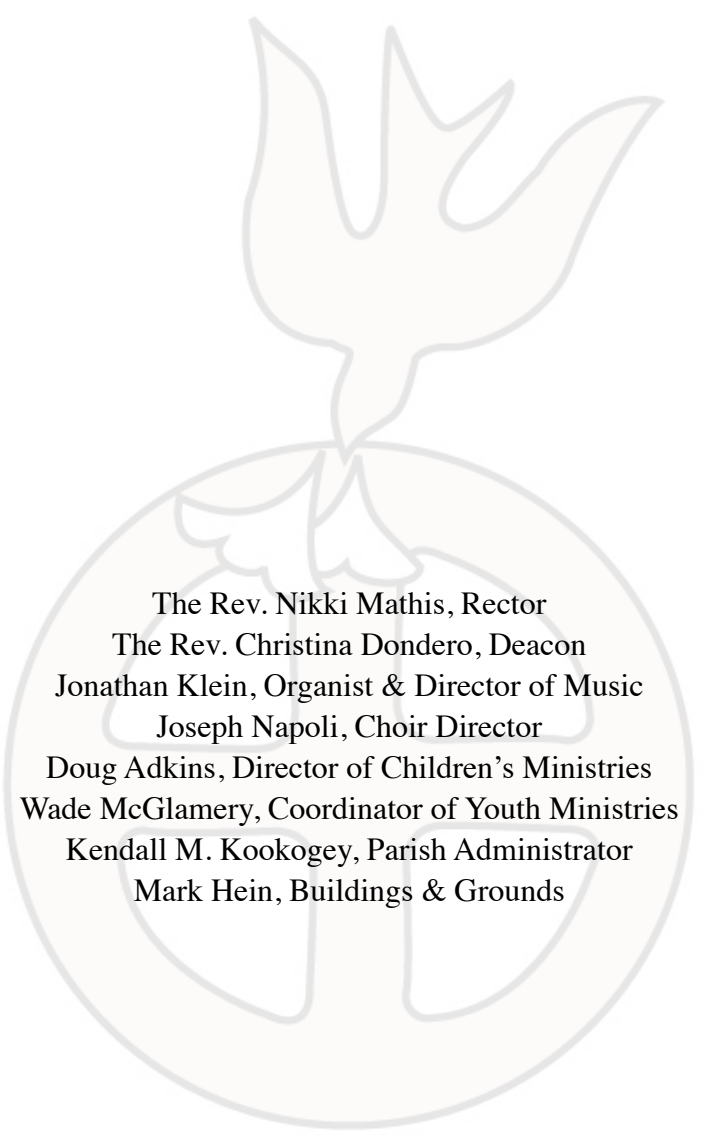
Torches: Roger Schwenke & Anna Thornton

Ushers: Anna Hiers, Eddie Bennett, Shirley Bethune

Altar Guild: Nancy Watson, Carol Schwenke, Jane Sheridan

Flower Guild: Flower Guild





The Rev. Nikki Mathis, Rector
The Rev. Christina Dondero, Deacon
Jonathan Klein, Organist & Director of Music
Joseph Napoli, Choir Director
Doug Adkins, Director of Children's Ministries
Wade McGlamery, Coordinator of Youth Ministries
Kendall M. Kookogey, Parish Administrator
Mark Hein, Buildings & Grounds