

A photograph of a vibrant red cardinal perched on a branch covered in snow and icicles. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white, suggesting a snowy winter scene. The cardinal is facing right, and its bright red feathers contrast sharply with the white background.

The Second Sunday after Christmas

January 2, 2021
Christ Episcopal Church

Welcome to Christ Church!

We are so glad you have joined us for worship this morning. As we continue to recover from the recent COVID-19 pandemic, here are a few important guidelines for in-person services:

- Masks continue to be required for all indoor gatherings at this time.
- Social distancing is recommended between cohorts. Cohorts are family members and/or friends who agree to share close proximity.
- No one should sit directly behind anyone else unless they are part of a cohort.
- Distance between cohorts should be maintained.
- It is each parishioner's responsibility to follow social distancing guidelines, taking into consideration other parishioners' safety and level of comfort.



*We are a community forgiven and loved by God,
joyfully called to the work of reconciliation.*

christchurchcape.org

Gathering

Prelude

Mary Miller, Organist

Processional Hymn

#107 Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

(See bulletin p.13)

All standing, the Officiant greets the people with these words:

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

Luke 2:10-11

The Confession and Assurance of Pardon

As we worship we ask God's forgiveness for things done and things left undone and things done on our behalf so that we are reconciled to God and each other.

Silence is kept for a time.

Officiant: Word of God,

People: **We confess that we need your wholeness. We have often looked to outward gifts and measures when what we need is your love in our hearts. We have often aimed toward what we can achieve or where we stand in relation to others, when what we desire is the integrity your love bestows. We confess our need for your illumination. Be our Light, O Christ.**

We are assured of God's forgiveness and love:

Officiant: God forgives all our sins and heals all our infirmities. God lifts us from the low places and sets mercy and love upon us. God fills us with goodness and renews our lives.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

–Adapted from Psalm 108;
Daily Prayer for All Seasons, p.35, "Confession and Assurance"

Hymn of Praise

#96 Angels We Have Heard on High, vs. 1

(See bulletin p.14)

The Invitatory

All stand.

Officiant: Lord, open our lips.

***People:* And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.**

Officiant: Alleluia! To us a child is born:

***People:* Come, let us adore him. Alleluia.**

Jubilate

Psalm 100

Be joyful in the LORD, all you lands; *
serve the LORD with gladness
and come before his presence with a song.

Know this: The LORD himself is God; *
he himself has made us, and we are his;
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;
go into his courts with praise; *
give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

For the LORD is good;
his mercy is everlasting; *
and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

***All:* + 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.**

Quam dilecta!

- 1 **H**ow dear to me is your dwelling, O LORD of hosts! *
My soul has a desire and longing for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh rejoice in the living God.
- 2 The sparrow has found her a house
and the swallow a nest where she may lay her young; *
by the side of your altars, O LORD of hosts,
my King and my God.
- 3 Happy are they who dwell in your house! *
they will always be praising you.
- 4 Happy are the people whose strength is in you! *
whose hearts are set on the pilgrims' way.
- 5 Those who go through the desolate valley
will find it a place of springs, *
for the early rains have covered it with pools of water.
- 6 They will climb from height to height, *
and the God of gods will reveal himself in Zion.
- 7 LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; *
hearken, O God of Jacob.
- 8 Behold our defender, O God; *
and look upon the face of your Anointed.
- 9 For one day in your courts
is better than a thousand in my own room, *
and to stand at the threshold of the house of my God
than to dwell in the tents of the wicked.
- 10 For the LORD God is both sun and shield; *
he will give grace and glory;
- 11 No good thing will the LORD withhold *
from those who walk with integrity.
- 12 O LORD of hosts, *
happy are they who put their trust in you!

**All: + 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.**

The Readings

The First Reading

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
proclaim, give praise, and say,
"Save, O LORD, your people,
the remnant of Israel."

See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
among them the blind and the lame, those with child and
those in labor, together;
a great company, they shall return here.

With weeping they shall come,
and with consolations I will lead them back,
I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,

says the LORD.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Song of Mary (Luke 1:46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in you, O God my Savior, *
for you have looked with favor on your lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
you, the Almighty, have done great things for me,
and holy is your name.

You have mercy on those who fear you *
from generation to generation.

You have shown strength with your arm *
and scattered the proud in their conceit,

Casting down the mighty from their thrones *
and lifting up the lowly.

You have filled the hungry with good things *
and sent the rich away empty.

You have come to the help of your servant Israel, *
for you have remembered your promise of mercy,

The promise made to our forebears, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

The Second Reading

Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-19a

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Canticle of Response

Canticle R

A Song of True Motherhood (Julian of Norwich)

God chose to be our mother in all things *
and so made the foundation of his work,
most humbly and most pure, in the Virgin's womb.

God, the perfect wisdom of all, *
arrayed himself in this humble place.

Christ came in our poor flesh *
to share a mother's care.

Our mothers bear us for pain and for death; *
our true mother, Jesus, bears us for joy and endless life.

Christ carried us within him in love and travail, *
until the full time of his passion.

And when all was completed and he had carried us so for joy, *
still all this could not satisfy the power of his wonderful love.

All that we owe is redeemed in truly loving God, *
for the love of Christ works in us;
Christ is the one whom we love.

The People remain seated for the Hymn and Third Reading.

The Sequence Hymn

#89 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

(See bulletin p.15)

The Third Reading

Luke 2:41-52

The parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem every year for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives

and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Gina Thomas

The Affirmation of Faith

Our Advent Creed seeks to affirm our trust in God found in Jesus Christ.

Officiant: Let us affirm our hope in Christ our Light.

***People:* We believe in God,
whose love is the source of all life
and the desire of our lives;
Whose love was given a human face
in Jesus of Nazareth;
Whose love was crucified
by the evil that seeks to enslave us all;
And whose love, defeating even death,
is our glorious promise of freedom.
Therefore, though we are sometimes
fearful and doubting, we trust in God;
And, in the name of Jesus Christ,
we commit ourselves, in the service of others,
to seek justice and to live in peace,
to care for the earth and to share**

**the common wealth of God's goodness,
to live in the freedom of forgiveness,
and the power of the Spirit of love;
And in the company of the faithful,
to be the Church
for the glory of God. Amen.**

The Offertory

#115 What Child Is This

(See bulletin, p.17)

Here at Christ Church, we consider gratitude and generosity to be spiritual disciplines. While some of us still can't be together to pass the collection plate to one another in person, we encourage you to offer your gifts and service in any way that makes the most sense to you.

If you are worshiping with us online, [click here](#) to contribute to our ongoing ministry in downtown Cape Girardeau.

The plate offering for the first Sunday of each month is dedicated to the Rector's Discretionary Fund. On the second Sunday of each quarter, the plate offering is dedicated to the Red Door Jubilee Center Food Pantry.

Officiant: As we come to the stable to adore the newborn Jesus, who was heralded in by sheep, cows, and donkeys, may we remember this humble entry and humble our hearts to find him room.

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray:

All: **Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed by 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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

"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." In this season of anticipation and hope, let us be seekers of the light and peddlers of hope found in Christ Jesus our Savior.

Reader: Wonderful Counselor, please be with those who take counsel for your church. We pray especially for Deon, our bishop, and Annette, our rector. Empower us to remember the sacred trust which has been given to us this night and every night. Come, all ye faithful:

***People:* Come, let us adore him.**

Reader: Mighty God, may the rulers of this world remember you came this night not in might, but to a humble stable with poor refugee parents fleeing from the powers of this earth. Help them to look for the poor, the least, and the struggling in everything they do. Come, all ye faithful:

***People:* Come, let us adore him.**

Reader: Tonight we lift up to you the sick, the homeless, the stranger in our land. So much of legend is in faraway travelers coming to you and finding healing and wholeness. We pray especially for those we lift up to you in heart and voice.

A moment of silence is kept.

Come, all ye faithful:

***People:* Come, let us adore him.**

Reader: We give you thanks for all the blessings of this life. For

the wonder of the night sky, for the glory of your care,
and for those lifted in heart and voice.

A moment of silence is kept.

Come, all ye faithful:

People: Come, let us adore him.

Reader: We pray for those who are in our memories this night.
For those who have gone to be with you in your
kingdom. May they rest in peace and rise in glory,
especially...

A moment of silence is kept.

Come, all ye faithful:

People: Come, let us adore him.

Reader: Prince of Peace, enter into our hearts and minds this
Christmas, so that we may once again receive you as
Emmanuel, God with us. **Amen.**

Officiant: Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Silence is kept for a time.

Collect of the Day

BCP, p.214

Officiant: O God, who wonderfully created, and yet more
wonderfully restored, the dignity of human nature:
Grant that we may share the divine life of him who
humbled himself to share our humanity, your Son
Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity
of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A Collect for Sundays

BCP, p.98

Officiant: O God, you make us glad with the weekly
remembrance of the glorious resurrection of your Son
our Lord: Give us this day such blessing through our
worship of you, that the week to come may be spent
in your favor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Officiant: O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh; and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The General Thanksgiving

BCP, p.101

All: **Almighty God, Father of all mercies,
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks
for all your goodness and loving-kindness
to us and to all whom you have made.
We bless you for our creation, preservation,
and all the blessings of this life;
but above all for your immeasurable love
in the redemption of the world
by our Lord Jesus Christ;
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.
And, we pray,
give us such an awareness of your mercies,
that with truly thankful hearts
we may show forth your praise,
not only with our lips, but in our lives,
by giving up our selves to your service,
and by walking before you
in holiness and righteousness all our days;
through Jesus Christ our Lord, **Amen.****

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

BCP, p.102

Officiant: Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name, you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. **Amen.**

The Conclusion

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

The Officiant concludes with the following:

Officiant: Glory to God, whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Ephesians 3:20-21

Recessional Hymn

#110 The Snow Lay on the Ground

(See bulletin p.19)

We invite you to remain seated to enjoy the beautiful postlude music, centering your hearts and minds in preparation to move joyfully and thankfully into the coming week to serve God and others.

Postlude

Mary Miller, Organist

Servers

Priest-in-Charge

Officiant

Preacher

Reader

Greeter

Altar Guild

St. Isidore's Guild

Vestry Counter

Organist

Rev. Annette Joseph

Chris Masters

Gina Thomas

Sheila Thiele

Sue Balsamo

Mary Alice Regenhardt

Joshua Smith

Cheryl Essner

Mary Miller

Unless otherwise noted, all hymns are taken from

The Hymnal 1982

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WLP

Wonder, Love and Praise: A Supplement to The Hymnal 1982

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LEVAS

Lift Every Voice and Sing II: An African American Hymnal

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107

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice



1 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
2 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;
3 Good Chris-tian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and voice;



give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is born to - day;
now ye hear of end - less bliss; Je - sus Christ was born for this!
now ye need not fear the grave: Je - sus Christ was born to save!



ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
He hath o - pened hea - ven's door, and we are blest for ev - er - more.
Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.



Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

Words: John Mason Neale (1818-1866), alt.

Music: *In dulci jubilo*, German carol, 14th cent.; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944)

66. 77. 78. 55

96

Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sing - ing sweet - ly through the night,

and the moun-tains in re - ply ech - o - ing their brave de - light.

Refrain

Glo - - - - - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - -

- - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Words: French carol; tr. James Chadwick (1813-1882), alt.
 Music: *Gloria*, French carol; arr. Edward Shippen Barnes (1887-1958)

77. 77 with Refrain

89

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
 2 Still through the clov - en skies they come with
 3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the
 4 For lo! the days are haste - ning on, by

glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing
 peace - ful wings un - furled, and still their heaven - ly
 world has suf - fered long; be - neath the heaven - ly
 pro - phets seen of old, when with the ev - er -

near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
 hymn have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong;
 cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,

"Peace on the earth, good will to men, from
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they
 and war - ring hu - man - kind hears not the
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its

heaven's all - gra - cious King." The world in sol - emn
 bend on hov - ering wing, and ev - er o'er its
 tid - ings which they bring; O hush the noise and
 an - cient splen - dors fling, and all the world give

still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 Ba - bel - sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 cease your strife and hear the an - gels sing!
 back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Words: Edmund H. Sears (1810-1876), alt.
 Music: Carol, Richard Storrs Willis (1819-1900)

CMD

Unison or harmony

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
 2 Why lies he in, such mean es - tate where
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
 ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for
 peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds

guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to

bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898)

Music: *Greensleeves*, English melody; harm. *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871, alt.

87. 87 with Refrain



1 The snow lay on the ground, the stars shone bright,
 2 'Twas Ma - ry, daugh - ter pure of ho - ly Anne,
 3 Saint Jo - seph, too, was by to tend the child;
 4 And thus that man - ger poor be - came a throne;



when Christ our Lord was born on Christ-mas night. Ve -
 that brought in - to this world the God made man. She
 to guard him, and pro - tect his mo - ther mild; the
 for he whom Ma - ry bore was God the Son. O



ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num. Ve -
 laid him in a stall at Beth - le - hem; the
 an - gels hov - ered round, and sang this song, Ve -
 come, then, let us join the heaven - ly host; to



ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 ass and ox - en shared the roof with them. Ve -
 ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.
 praise the Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.



ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num. Ve -



ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num.

Words: Source unknown, 19th cent.

Music: *Venite adoremus*, melody adapt. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944)

Irr. with Refrain

Notes on the Service

Second Sunday after Christmas

Jer. 31:7-14 • Ps. 84 • Eph. 1:3-6, 15-19a • Lk. 2:41-52

This Thursday will be the Epiphany, which will conclude the Christmas sea-son as it commemorates the showing of Christ to the wise men, so some churches may condense the calendar by anticipating the Epiphany today. Indeed, the story of the wise men is provided as one of today's Gospels.

Those who adhere to the calendar will find today's collect sums up the meaning of Christmas. God "destined us in love to be his children" states today's epistle; so Pope Leo the Great epitomized it, "the Son of God became the Son of Man that the sons of men may become the sons of God." Today's collect, translated from a seventh century book of prayers attributed to Leo, echoes Leo's dictum, [may we] "share the divine life of him who humbled himself to share our humanity."

Jeremiah's "new covenant" chapter 31 promises that Israel's joy when they return from exile will compensate for all their suffering in defeat and deportation. This lyric passage about the return of the Diaspora to Zion shows God calling himself the "father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." The New Testament will see Jesus as the personification of Israel, and Christian devotion will use this passage to celebrate the redemption of Israel. The verses immediately following this excerpt are Jeremiah's lament about Rachel's weeping for her children, to be quoted by Matthew in his story of the massacre of the Innocents of Bethlehem, deleted from today's Gospel.

Jeremiah's vision of the returnees' "singing aloud on the heights of Zion" is restated of pilgrims by today's Psalm 84, one of the "Songs of Ascents" for those *en route* to Mt Zion's temple. The party of pilgrims which included the holy family as described in Luke 2 (one choice for today's Gospel) could have used Ps 84. Imagine the Boy Jesus there reciting, "blessed are they who dwell in thy house," or even, "look upon the face of thine Anointed."

Ephesians opens with thanks that God destined us to be his children (a thanks which is repeated by the proper preface for Christmastide). God's children should know, first, what is the hope to which they are called; second, what are the riches of Christ's inheritance; third, what is the greatness of God's power, all topics to be discussed further in the text of Ephesians.

The flight of the holy family to Egypt and back recapitulates the history of Israel, a son of God. "Out of Egypt have I called my son," quotes Micah. "He shall be called a Nazorean" might be a variant of "Nazarite" meaning a specially-dedicated servant of God. Notice that the childhood stories in Matthew are told from Joseph's viewpoint; those in Luke, from Mary's.

Rev. Stephen Weissman
Asheville, North Carolina