



HOPE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
BLUE CHRISTMAS
Liturgy of the Longest Night



December 22, 2025 6:30 PM

The Rev'd Bradley L. Mattson, Rector + The Rev'd Nancy Lesher, Deacon

Welcome Guest Clergy

Doug Beach on the Dunlap + Stohler Organ

The Manor Woodwind Ensemble

A PASTORAL WELCOME + INVITATION + SPECIAL OFFERING

On behalf of the Episcopal churches of our region, welcome to Hope Church for this sacred Blue Christmas service. Whether you are here for the first time or have walked this path with us for many years, we are grateful for your presence. Tonight we gather in a space where grief and hope are held gently together, in the quiet and faithful presence of God.

The Blue Christmas service holds a particular place in the life of the Church. Some of us arrive carrying grief that is newly named; others bring grief that has lingered quietly for years. Some carry sorrow that feels heavy and close, while others hold grief that has softened with time but never fully disappears. And still, we come - to pray, to listen, to sing, and to remember that Christ is born into the fullness of our lives, not only into our joy.

This night invites us to honor both personal loss and the shared sorrow of a weary world. We remember the ongoing suffering caused by conflict, displacement, and fear - especially in the Holy Land - and we hold before God all who long for peace, safety, and healing. As we do, we give thanks for the enduring Christian witness in the land of Christ's birth and for the ministries that continue there, often quietly, faithfully, and at great cost.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to bear one another's burdens and to hold fast to the hope that sustains us. God does not stand at a distance from our sorrow. God draws near - walking with us through grief, offering comfort, strength, and that thrill of hope which allows even a weary world to breathe again.

You are welcome here. You are not alone.

God love you, God bless you, and may God hold us all in those almighty arms of Love.

The Rev. Bradley Mattson, *Rector Hope Episcopal Church, Convenor, Lancaster Convocation of Episcopal Churches*

THIS EVENING'S OFFERING

Tonight's offering will support the shared ministry of the Episcopal churches gathered with us tonight, as well as our siblings in Christ who continue to offer mercy, healing, and hope in the Holy Land. A portion of tonight's offering will support of the ministries of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, whose churches, schools, hospitals, and outreach institutions serve people of all faiths amid ongoing humanitarian need.

A MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP HOSAM NAOUM

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ at Hope Episcopal Church,

Christmas greetings to you from St. George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I am grateful to learn of your prayers and your desire to stand with us in the ministry of the Diocese of Jerusalem. Across our parishes and institutions, clergy and lay leaders continue to serve faithfully through worship, education, healthcare, and pastoral care. Our ministries include schools, hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, and homes for the elderly, serving communities across Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria.

These are difficult days for many of the people we serve. Yet even in hardship, the light of Christ is not extinguished. Your prayers, generosity, and solidarity strengthen our witness and remind us that we are not alone in the Body of Christ. May God bless you and your loved ones this Christmas season, and grant us all the grace to walk in hope and peace.

Faithfully yours in Christ, The Most Reverend Hosam Naoum, Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem.

BLUE CHRISTMAS

Liturgy of the Longest Night

HOLY EUCHARIST II

The symbol \oplus indicates when to stand if able.

The symbol **+** indicates where to make the sign of the cross.

Gathering Music

“Lo How a Rose E’er Blooming” - arr. Marsha Schweitzer

Introit

The *Introit* is the first note of our gathering, a musical or spoken invitation that sets the tone for worship. It gently draws us in, preparing our hearts and minds to enter God's presence. Like a quiet opening breath before a song, it centers us, focuses us, and helps us step fully into the sacred rhythm of prayer, praise, and reflection. It reminds us: we are here, together, for something holy.

A Word of Welcome

Prelude

“O Holy Night”

The Spoken Introit

Reader 1

O holy night, the stars shine dimly,
as shadows of grief linger near.
Yet in the quiet, a thrill of hope stirs—
the weary world waits for the light to appear.

Reader 2

Come, O come, Emmanuel,
Enter this space,
where hearts ache and longings rise.
and speak peace to our souls.

Reader 3

In the stillness of this holy hour,
let your light pierce the darkness,
for unto us, a child is born,
and the promise of new life is near.

People

Amen.

Service Bell

THE WORD OF GOD

†The Processional Hymn #56 - "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

(Dec. 23) 1 O come, O come, Em - man - - - u - el, and ran - som
 (Dec. 17) 2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
 (Dec. 18) 3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
 (Dec. 19) 4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from
 (Dec. 20) 5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen
 (Dec. 21) 6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us
 (Dec. 22) 7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the
 (Dec. 23) 8 O come, O come, Em - man - - - u - el, and ran - som

1 cap - tive Is - - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - - ile
 2 all things might - - i - ly; to us the path of know - - ledge
 3 tribes on Si - - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
 4 Sa - tan's ty - - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to
 5 wide our heaven - - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
 6 by thy draw - - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
 7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - - sions
 8 cap - tive Is - - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - - ile

1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.
 3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.
 4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
 5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y.
 6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.
 7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.
 8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.

Em - man - - - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - - - ra - el!

†The Collect of the Day

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant:

Lord Jesus Christ, who carried our sorrows and shared our grief: Be present with those who mourn, those who are weary, and those who are burdened, that they may find rest and peace in your loving arms; who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Christians often begin their services of worship with music. The opening hymn gives us an opportunity to raise our voices in song while worship servers and clergy process into the sanctuary following the cross. It allows us to enter into worship together as a community.

The Collect of the Day

This prayer gathers together the scriptural themes of the readings and the season. The collect follows a consistent pattern: We address God, naming something about God's nature (i.e., Almighty God); we ask God to work in a particular area of human living; and we acknowledge that we ask all of these things in the name of Jesus.

The Lessons

The congregation may be seated for the readings.

First Lesson

Isaiah 61:1-3

Reader A Reading from the Book of the Isaiah.

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me
 because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
 to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives
 and release to the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
 and the day of vengeance of our God,
 to comfort all who mourn,
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
 to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
 the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
 the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Psalter *A Song of Praise*

Psalm 42

Reader: We will read the Psalm responsively.

1 As a deer longs for flowing streams,
 so my soul longs for you, O God.

2 My soul thirsts for God,
 for the living God.

**When shall I come and behold
 the face of God?**

3 My tears have been my food
 day and night,
**while people say to me continually,
 “Where is your God?”**

4 These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
 how I went with the throng
 and led them in procession to the house of God,
**with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
 a multitude keeping festival.**

The Lessons

The next portion of the liturgy focuses on the readings of Holy Scripture that are appointed for the day. The readings have a thematic unity that ties together the message of the Old and New Testaments.

The Psalter

The Psalter, or the Book of Psalms, is the great song book of the People of God. In Jewish and Christian worship these hymns or songs are ordinarily sung and many of them form the lyrics of hymns in our hymnals. At each celebration of Holy Eucharist we read one of the Psalms, or a portion of a Psalm, that is selected to reinforce the theme of the lessons for the day.

5 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?

**Hope in God, for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.**

6 My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

7 Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your torrents;
**all your waves and your billows
have gone over me.**

8 By day the Lord commands his steadfast love,
**and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.**

9 I say to God, my rock, “Why have you forgotten me?
**Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses me?”**

10 As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually, “Where is your God?”

11 Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
**Hope in God, for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.**

The Epistle

Revelation 21:1-7

Reader A Reading from the book of Revelation.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

“See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them and be their God; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”

And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

†Gradual Hymn

“Thou Who Was Rich Beyond All Splendor”

D A/D G/D D7 G/D D Bm G/B D D/F#C#m* D A
 1. Thou who wast rich be - yond all splen - dor, all for love's sake be -
 2. Thou who are God be - yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be -
 3. Thou who art love be - yond all tell - ing, Sav - ior and King, we

Bm Asus4/G A7 Dsus4 D D DM7 G/D D Bm D F#
 cam - est poor; thrones for a man - ger didst sur - ren - der,
 cam - est man; stoop - ing so low, but sin - ners rais - ing,
 wor - ship thee. Em - man - u - el, with - in us dwell - ing,

F#m C#m* Bm D G/D A D A/D G/D D7
 sap - phire paved courts for sta - ble floor. Thou who wast rich be -
 heav'n ward by thine e - ter - nal plan. Thou who are God be -
 make us what thou wouldst have us be. Thou who art love be -

G/D D G/B F#m/AG/B D/F# D/A A6 GM7/A A7 D
 yond all splen - dor, all for love's sake be - cam - est poor.
 yond all prais - ing, all for love's sake be - cam - est man.
 yond all tell - ing, Sav - ior and King, we wor - ship thee.

¶The Gospel

Matthew 3:28-30

Celebrant The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to

Matthew. ✕✕✕

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

Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

The Sermon

The Rev. Bradley Mattson

Special Music

Prayers of the People for Blue Christmas

Leader Beloved in Christ, we gather tonight as those who mourn, as those who long for hope, as those who carry burdens unseen. Let us bring our prayers before the God who comforts, the Christ who carries our sorrows, and the Spirit who breathes peace into our weary hearts. Let us pray together, saying:

People **You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.**

Leader For those whose hearts are heavy with grief, for the memories of loved ones who have gone before us, and for the silence that echoes where laughter once dwelled, we pray for your tender care.

People **You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.**

Leader For those who feel the weight of this season, burdened by loss, illness, or loneliness, and for those whose souls thirst for your presence, as the deer longs for the water-brooks, draw near to them, O God of peace.

People **You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.**

The Gospel

We customarily stand and face the Gospel Book as the Gospel of the Lord is read. It is a sign that the Word of the Lord is living and we honor its presence among us.

The Sermon

The purpose of the sermon is to help us understand the meaning of the word of God in Scripture and to make it real in our lives.

The Prayers of the People

The prayers of the People follow the form of a litany, with the Leader offering petitions to God and the People responding or affirming the petition. These are the prayers of the entire community where we offer to God our concerns for the Church and the surrounding world. Prayers of the People always follow a particular order: prayers for the Universal Church, its mission and its members, for the Nation and all in authority, for the welfare of the world, for the concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or are in any trouble, for life's blessings, and for the departed.

<i>Leader</i>	For all who yearn for new beginnings, for those who long to see the holy city, where every tear is wiped away, and mourning and crying are no more, we pray for the promise of your resurrection light.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.
<i>Leader</i>	For the weary and the burdened, for those who come to you seeking rest for their souls, may they find your yoke easy and your burden light, and may your love surround them like a mother's embrace.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.
<i>Leader</i>	For the grief of conflict around the world, for those whose lives are torn apart by war and violence, especially in the land of your birth. Even as we remember your nativity, we know that Bethlehem and the Holy Land endure sorrow and loss. We pray for peace, for all who stand in the breach, and for the ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.
<i>Leader</i>	For the holy child born in Bethlehem, who entered our darkness to bring us light, help us to behold your nativity as a sign of hope: the God who comes to dwell with us, even in our sorrow.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.
<i>Leader</i>	For the promise of Christmas, that Christ's birth is the dawn of a new creation, where peace reigns and love overcomes all fear, we give thanks and praise to you, O God.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.
<i>Leader</i>	For blessings upon all the churches, who in their wisdom and in the light of God's mercy, have undertaken this service of light in the darkness. For all who minister to those seeking hope, may their work be a reflection of your love and grace.
<i>People</i>	You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.

Leader: For the gift of this sacred season, where darkness and light meet, where sorrow and joy intertwine, and where Christ is born anew in our hearts, we give thanks.

People **You are our refuge and strength, O God, a very present help and comfort.**

Leader: God of all comfort, you have anointed us with your Spirit, to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort those who mourn, and to proclaim good news in the midst of sorrow. Grant us your peace, which passes all understanding as we anoint with this holy oil. Guide us to the hope of your eternal kingdom, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer.

People **Amen.**

Anointing With Oil

Service music offered during time of anointing. Please come forward at will.

¶The Peace

Deacon The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

The Offertory

The offering will be taken at this time.

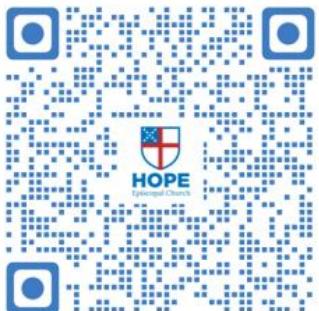
Please take this time to make an offering to Hope Church:

1. *Online: <https://hopeepiscopal.breezechms.com/give/online> or scan the QR code in the margin of your bulletin*
2. *Text: “[AMOUNT]” to (717) 999-5991 to make a donation to the General Fund. If it is your first time using text giving, a link will be sent by return text to complete the donation.*
3. *Offering plate: cash or a check payable to “Hope Episcopal Church”. You may designate any ministry in the ‘memo’ line.*

Thank you very much for your contribution to advance the mission of Hope Episcopal Church! Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

The Peace

After the Prayers of the People, the Priest extends Christ's peace to the congregation and the congregation shares the peace with one another. The Peace is real and also symbolic. It is real because in the forgiveness of our sins we are restored to Christ's peace. It is also the way we remind ourselves that because we have received the gift of God's forgiveness we can and must be reconciled to one another.



Offertory Hymn

#109 "The First Nowell, The Angel Did Say"

1 The first No - well the an - gel did say
 2 They look - ed up and saw a star
 3 And by the light of that same star
 4 This star drew nigh to the north - west,
 5 Then en - tered in those wise men three

1 was to cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay;
 2 shin - ing in the east be - yond them far,
 3 three wise men came from coun - try far;
 4 o'er Beth - le - hem it took its rest,
 5 full rev - erent ly up - on their knee,

1 in fields as they lay, keep - ing their sheep,
 2 and to the earth it gave great light,
 3 to seek for a king was their in - tent,
 4 and there it did both stop and stay
 5 and of - fered there in his pres - ence

1 on a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.
 2 and so it con - tin - ued both day and night.
 3 and to fol - low the star wher - ev - er it went.
 4 right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.
 5 their gold, and myrrh, and frank - in - cense.

Refrain

No - well, No - well, No - well, No - well,
 born is the King of Is - ra - el.

6 Then let us all 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.

Refrain

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Doxology

The congregation stands

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above ye heavenly host; praise, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

†The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer 2

The people stand.

The Sursum Corda

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

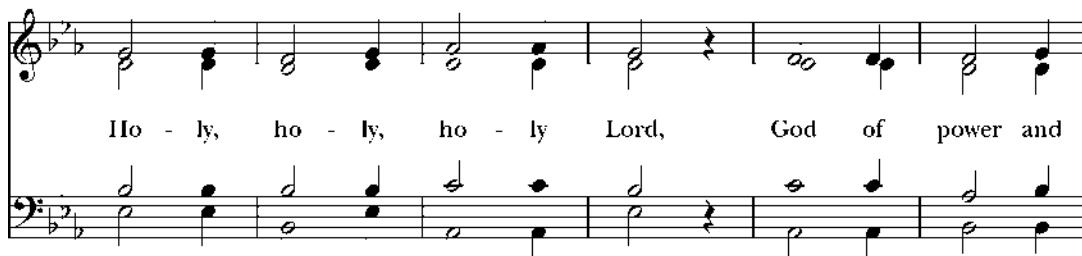
Then, facing the Altar, the Celebrant proceeds

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love.

And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:

†Sanctus - Holy, Holy, Holy

The people kneel or stand.



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and

The Holy Communion or Holy Eucharist

Eucharist means “thanksgiving.” This celebration of thanksgiving with its bread and wine is at the heart of the Christian faith. The Eucharist can also be called Holy Communion, the Lord’s Supper, or the Mass. In Holy Eucharist Christians give thanks for the gift of salvation given to us in the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ Jesus and the gift of new life that comes from it.

Gathering Together for the Meal of Christ

Offertory: At the beginning of the Eucharist we offer gifts to God, which are really just a return of the gifts God has given us—bread and wine for the Lord’s Supper, our financial gifts, and our lives.

Ablutions: The Priest comes to the front of the altar and wash his or her hands. This symbolic washing cleanses the Priest on behalf of all of the People so that we might all come to the holy meal refreshed. It is a reference to Psalm 26:6-12 which starts, “I wash my hands in innocence, O Lord, that I may go in procession around your altar.”

Sursum Corda: Literally, “we lift up our hearts.” Here in the *Sursum Corda* the People affirm that they have turned wholeheartedly to God.

Sanctus: Sanctus means “holy.” We sing this hymn that the angels and archangels sing in heaven as a reminder that our worship here is an echo of the heavenly worship of God (Isaiah 6:3, Revelation 4:8).

Sheet music for the Sanctus hymn, featuring two staves of music with corresponding lyrics in a three-line format. The music is in common time, with a key signature of two flats. The lyrics are as follows:

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.

Then the Celebrant continues

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God. Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love. Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: “Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.” ✕

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: “Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me.” ✕

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world. Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. AMEN.

Praise for the Work of God the Father

Preface: The opening prayer of the Eucharist is a prayer of blessing, praising God and giving thanks for his mercy to us. This opening prayer of blessing ends with a section that refers to the death and resurrection of Christ and focuses our prayers for the remainder of the liturgy.

Praise for the Work of God the Son

The next portion of the prayer of thanksgiving remembers the gift of salvation that came through Jesus Christ. It is followed by the Institution, the words of Jesus that explained the bread and the wine to His disciples at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:26-28).

Praise for the Work of God the Holy Spirit

This prayer asks that the Holy Spirit be present and bless and sanctify the bread and wine so that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. It also asks for blessings on the People that we might be holy. At the end of the prayers the People say, “Amen” which means, “So be it,” or “So it is.”

†The Lord's Prayer

Celebrant

And now, as our Savior Christ ha taught us, we are bold to say,
Notre Père..., Padre nuestro..., Vater unser...,

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.

Padre nuestro que estás en el cielo,

santificado sea tu nombre;

venga tu reino;

hágase tu voluntad

en la tierra como en el cielo.

Danos hoy nuestro pan de cada día.

Perdona nuestras ofensas,

como también nosotros perdonamos

a los que nos ofenden.

No nos dejes caer en la tentación

y líbranos del mal.

Porque tuyo es el reino,

el poder y la gloria,

ahora y por siempre. Amén.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

Celebrant Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

Celebrant The Gifts of God for the people of God.

Communion

Communion is received at the altar rail. All are invited to receive communion. If you prefer to receive a blessing, please come forward and cross your arms over your chest.

The Prayer of Spiritual Reception of the Sacrament

Lord Jesus Christ, I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament, and, since I cannot at this time receive communion, I pray you to come into my heart. I unite myself with you and embrace you with all my heart, my soul, and my mind. Let nothing separate me from you; let me serve you in this life until, by your grace, I come to your glorious kingdom and unending peace. Amen.

Music During Communion

“Ukrainian Bell Carol” - arr. Marsha Schweitzer

“Fete Noel” a medley of French carols - arr. Marsha Schweitzer

The Lord's Prayer

The last prayer of the Eucharist is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. The Priest and the People say it together (Matthew 6:9-13).

Breaking of Bread

The Priest breaks the bread so that it might be shared among the People. It is seen as a symbol of the breaking of Christ's body on the cross and an invitation to each of us to enter into the life of Christ.

The Communion

In 1 Corinthians 10: 16-17, St. Paul says, “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread”. In receiving Communion week after week,

The Thanksgiving

The congregation stands

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

The Celebrant says

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer, be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

†The Dismissal

Celebrant Let us bless the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

The Closing Hymn “Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus” - Hyfrydol

1 Come, thou long expected Jesus,
 born to set thy people free;
 from our fears and sins release us,
 let us find our rest in thee.
 Israel’s strength and consolation,
 hope of all the earth thou art;
 dear desire of every nation,
 joy of every longing heart.

2 Born thy people to deliver,
 born an child and yet a King,
 born to reign in us forever,
 now thy gracious kingdom bring.
 By thine own eternal spirit rule
 in all our hearts alone;
 by thine all sufficient merit,
 raise us to thy glorious throne.

Postlude

“The Holly and the Ivy” arr. Marsha Schweitzer

The congregation are invited to remain at their seats and enjoy the postlude while the Clergy process.

Christians are sacramentally united with Christ in His life, death, and resurrection.

Prayer after Communion

In this prayer of thanksgiving for the gifts of grace we are given in the Communion we ask God to send us out into the world as ambassadors of the good news of the Gospel. It is important to remember that the gifts we have been given during worship are gifts given to us to share with all the world.

The Blessing & Dismissal

In the blessing and dismissal we are reminded that we carry the peace and love we have received from Christ into the world. We are challenged to live out the Gospel in our lives outside the walls of the church so that others may see and be drawn into new life in Christ.

Thank You for Joining Us

Thank you for being with us this evening for our Blue Christmas service. In the stillness and sacredness of this time, we hope you have found a measure of peace and the gentle reassurance that you are not alone. Whether tonight marks the beginning of your journey or a quiet pause along the way, the Episcopal churches of our region warmly welcome you. We are here for you—in all seasons of life, wherever you are on your path of faith.

Beginning January 1, the Episcopal churches of this region will come together as part of the newly formed Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna. This new diocese is born from a shared history and a hopeful future, uniting congregations across central and northeastern Pennsylvania in deeper collaboration, shared ministry, and faithful witness. As part of this new chapter, the Episcopal churches in and around Lancaster and Lebanon will form a new regional convocation, strengthening our relationships and our common work in Christ.

These congregations include:

Hope Episcopal Church, Manheim

St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Manheim
St. John's Episcopal Church, Marietta
St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Columbia
St. James Episcopal Church, Lancaster
St. Edward's Episcopal Church, Lancaster

St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Lancaster
St. John's Episcopal Church, Lancaster
Bangor Church, Churchtown
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Lebanon
St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Mount Joy

Together, these churches reflect a diverse and faithful witness—historic and living—seeking to embody God's love through worship, pastoral care, community engagement, and service to our neighbors.

A New Chapter: The Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna

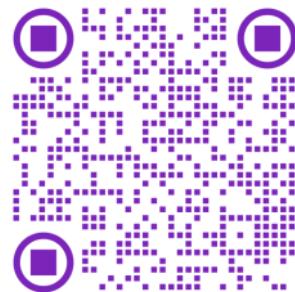
The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania and the Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem have reunified, and as of January 1, 2026 will be the Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna. This reunion marks a hopeful and joyful step toward deeper collaboration, shared ministry, and a renewed commitment to serve the people and communities of Pennsylvania.



The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem

The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is a vibrant and faithful part of the Anglican Communion, serving the Holy Land and surrounding areas. With ministries in education, healthcare, and pastoral care, the diocese brings hope and healing to people of all faiths. Its presence in the land of Christ's life and ministry continues to be a profound witness to reconciliation, peace, and God's love for all creation.

Learn more at: www.j-diocese.org



May you leave tonight in the light of Christ knowing that you are loved, you are welcome, and you are not alone.

December 22, 2025

Please remember in your prayers:

Elizabeth Grace & the Mattson Family, John, Marian, Michael, Bob, Janice, Barbara, Angie, Jerry, Paul, Braiden, Diane, Judith, Lydia, Jeff, Lester, Beth Ann, Mose, Ed, Daphne, Peg, Stephanie, Bertha, Lily, Carol, Steve, Lori, Patrick, Kyle, Betsy, Bud Dissinger, Katie, and our Creation Care, Outreach, Property and Yarn Ministries.

Those suffering from all illnesses and those who caring for them;
Those impacted by natural disasters and violence;
The People of Ukraine and all those supporting them;
Those living in nursing homes, group homes, and prisons;
The People of the Diocese of Navajoland & all indigenous peoples;
Those serving in the military;

Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: St. John's Episcopal Church, Lancaster
The Anglican Church of Burund

To add people to our Parish Prayer List, including those in the military please call the church office so they can be added to our prayer list.

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IThe first Nowell the angel did say, #109 from The Hymnal 1982 – Words: English Carol, 18th cent. Music: *The First Nowell*, English carol, 17th cent.; harm. John Stainer (1841-1901); alt. refrain harm. and desc. Healey Willan (1880-1968). Alternative setting with descant, Copyright © 1926, by Oxford University Press, Inc.



A Jubilee Parish

A parish of The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania
The Most Reverend Sean Rowe, Presiding Bishop, Episcopal Church
in the United States of America
The Right Rev. Audrey Cady Scanlan, Bishop of Central Pennsylvania

Worship at Hope Church

10:00 AM Holy Eucharist and live-streamed on YouTube.

Our Clergy and Staff

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Steve Palmer, Sr. Warden

Jeremy Brown, Jr. Warden

Gwen Norton, Sexton

Bob Sims, Verger

J.D. Hynick, Jr. Verger

Our Vestry & Parish Officers

Steve Palmer, Sr. Warden; Jeremy Brown, Jr. Warden; Gwen Norton, Treasurer;

Denice Weaver, Steve Norton, Tom Brown, Brandon Peach, Janelle Weckerly

Lucy Longo, Assistant Treasurer; Micah Roldan, Delegate to Convention, Bob Sims, Alternate

Supporting Volunteer Staff

Lynette Brown, Altar Guild; Gail Edgell & Missy Gebhard, Card Ministry; Bob Sims, Cemetery; Micah Roldan, Facebook;

Lucy Longo, Finance Committee; Kathleen Peach, Outreach Committee; Jeremy Brown, Property Committee

Rebecca Warren, Creation Care; Gail Edgell, Garden of Hope; Stephanie Seaman, Live Stream; Janelle Weckerly, Special Events

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