

# ST. JOHN'S CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of East Tennessee

A Christmas Festival of Lessons & Carols

10:30 AM Sunday, December 21st, 2025

Service items listed in red can be found in the red Book of Common Prayer. Hymns, listed in blue, can be found in the blue Hymnal.

## Prelude

Four Carols for Brass Michel Rondeau (b. 1948)  
*The holly and the ivy | O little town of Bethlehem*  
*Tomorrow shall be my dancing day | In dulci jubilo*

## The Opening Sentence (Stand at the bell)

*Celebrant:* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
*People:* And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever.  
Amen.

**Hymn 102: *Once in royal David's city***  
(v. 1 & 2 sung by the choir, 4 & 6 sung by all)

## The Christmas Prayer of Invitation and the Lord's Prayer

*The People remain seated for the Lessons & Hymns.*

## The First Lesson

*Isaiah 40: 1-11*  
Reader: Callie Broyles

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass; their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers; the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers; the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good news; lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms and carry them in his bosom and gently lead the mother sheep.

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

**Hymn 105: *God rest ye merry, gentlemen*** (v. 1 & 4)

## Anthem

arr. Alice Parker & Robert Shaw  
*The holly and the ivy*

The holly and the ivy when they are both full grown  
Of all the trees that are in the wood  
the holly bears the crown

*Oh the rising of the sun and the running of the deer*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing all in the choir*

The holly bears a blossom as white as the lily flower  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our sweet Savior

*Oh the rising of the sun...*

The holly bears a berry as red as any blood  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
To do poor sinners good

*Oh the rising of the sun...*

The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
On Christmas day in the morn

*Oh the rising of the sun...*

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all.

*Oh the rising of the sun...*

## The Second Lesson

*Luke 1: 26-38*  
Reader: Kay Preston

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power



And so our Christ is saved from death  
His mission to complete  
To change the world by selfless love  
Satan's legions to beat.

*Poem by Robert Tear (1939–2011)*

An offering will be taken during the singing of the following hymn.

*Hymn 115: What child is this, who, laid to rest*

The Sixth Lesson

*John 1: 1-18*

Reader: Stella Sudderth

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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

Collects and Blessings

*All stand for the Hymn.*

*Hymn 87: Hark! the herald angels sing*

Dismissal

Postlude:                      Michel Rondeau (b. 1948)  
*The Twelve Days of Christmas*

*All music is reprinted under [OneLicense.net](https://www.onelicense.net) A-724978.*

## Altar Flowers

The flowers in the Church are given to the glory of God and in loving memory of Sue Elizabeth Redden by Carl Reitz and Ronda Redden Reitz

And in loving memory of John David Fox by Georgianna Vines

And in honor of those who dedicate time and service to the Backpack for Kids program at Green Magnet Academy

## Lay Ministries

Ushers	David Jones - Lead, Zollie Cantrell, Mark Love Tommy Siler, Robert Straight
Greeters	Missy Minking, Anne Wilson
Crucifer	Becca Burress
Thurifer	Lloyd Terry
Verger	Braxton Hunter
Safety	Ryan Anderson, Larry Hutsell
Altar Guild	Anne Wilson & Team
Flower Guild	Kathy Lasater & Team

## Announcements

more information available at [www.stjohnscathedral.org](http://www.stjohnscathedral.org)

### Today at the Cathedral

9:20 am      Donuts & Discussions - Jr./High School - 2nd Floor  
9:20 am      Nursery & Childcare Opens - 2nd Floor  
10:30 am      S.K.i.P. Children's Church - ages 5 & up - 2nd Floor  
11:30 am      Coffee & Cookies - Ross Hall

### Cathedral Holiday Office Hours

The Cathedral Office will be closed December 24th, 25th and at 2:00 pm on Wednesday, December 31st. The office will also be closed Thursday, January 1st.

### A Visit with St. Nicholas

Sunday, December 21st | 11:30 AM | Ross Hall

### Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, December 24th, 2025

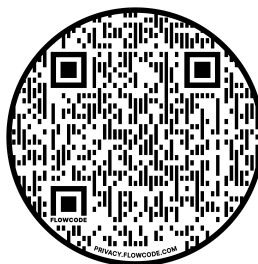
2:00 PM	Choir & Organ
4:30 PM	Choir & Orchestra <i>with Messiah prelude</i>
7:00 PM*	Choir & Orchestra <i>with Messiah prelude</i>
10:45 PM*	Choir & String Quartet

Nursery & S.K.i.P. offered at 2:00 PM, 4:30 PM, and 7:00 PM.

\* Streamed LIVE on YouTube & Knoxville Community Media

### Christmas Day

10:00 AM Thursday, December 25th, 2025



Scan QR Code for:

- Guest Information
- Online Giving
- Prayer Request Submission
- Weekly Cathedral Update
- And more