



SAINT JOHN'S
CATHEDRAL
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FLORIDA

LOVE *at the* CORE.

The Glorious Impossible Christmas Pageant

December 24, 2023 10 a.m.



✻ THE HOLY EUCHARIST ✻

On each of the four Sundays of Advent, a candle is lit on the Advent wreath as the light of Christ comes into the world. At the sound of the bell, all stand.

Voluntary

Go Tell it on the Mountain, Paul Manz

In Procession, Hymn 54

“Savior of the nations, come!”
Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

✻ THE LITURGY OF THE WORD ✻

Celebrant Blessed be God.
People **Forever and ever. Amen.**

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Silence.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

All sit.

Canticle 15

Reader: Cora Thakkar

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of
mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.
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.

Romans 16:25-27

Reader: Lyla Poole

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

All stand and sing.

Gospel Hymn

Friendly Beasts, Traditional Carol

Jesus, our brother, strong and good,
was humbly born in a stable rude,
and the friendly beasts around him stood,
Jesus, our brother, strong and good.

“I,” said the donkey, shaggy and brown,
“I carried His mother uphill and down,
I carried His mother to Bethlehem town;
I,” said the donkey, Shaggy and brown.

“I,” said the cow, all white and red,
“I gave him my manger for his bed,
I gave Him hay to pillow his head;
I,” said the cow, all white and red.

“I,” said the sheep with curly horn,
“I gave Him my wool for His blanket warm,
He wore my coat on Christmas morn;
I,” said the sheep with the curly horn.

“I,” said the dove, from the rafters high,
“I cooed Him to sleep that he should not cry,
we cooed Him to sleep, my mate and I;
I,” said the dove from the rafters high.

Thus all the beasts, by some good spell,
in the stable dark were glad to tell
of the gifts they gave Emmanuel,
the gifts they gave Emmanuel.

All sit.

The Nativity (as told by Madeline L'Engle in *The Glorious Impossible*)

Reader: Jack Haley

And so he was born, this gloriously, impossible baby, in a stable in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph had to leave home because of the general census ordered by Rome; so Joseph took his young, pregnant wife to register in Bethlehem, because he was of the house of David. Little Bethlehem was crowded, overcrowded with people coming to register. There was no room in the inn, no place for Joseph to take Mary, whose labor was beginning.

How terrifying for Mary to be wracked with pain while Joseph tried helplessly to find someplace for them to stay. Finally, they were guided to a cave where animals were lodged. There Mary gave birth to the infant Jesus, surrounded by lowing cattle, by donkeys and oxen. Exhausted, but filled with joy, she laid him in a manger.

All stand and sing.

Hymn 101

“Away in a manger”
Luther's Carol

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.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
close by me forever, and love me I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

All sit.

Reader: Rosemary Thakkar

Nearby, some shepherds were out in a field with their flocks when suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared before them, and the glory of the Lord shone brilliantly all around them. And they were terrified.

“FEAR NOT!” the angel cried and told them of the birth of the child who would bring joy to all people. They were told that they would find this holy child wrapped in linen cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly the angel was surrounded by a host of heavenly angels, singing in a mighty chorus to the glory of God.

All stand and sing.

Hymn 96

“Angels we have heard on high”
Gloria

Angels we have heard on high
sweetly singing through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their brave delight.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear?
Gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gloria in excelsis Deo.

All sit.

Reader: Lena Keyser

When the angels left and the shepherds were able to speak, they hurried to Bethlehem. There they found Mary and Joseph, just as the angel had said, and the baby lying in a manger. They told Mary and Joseph about the angels, and Mary listened and treasured their words. Gently the shepherds placed simple gifts- a lamb, a woolen wrap, a ball by the baby and then Mary and Joseph were left alone with the child, marveling.

All stand and sing.

Hymn 111

“Silent Night, holy night”
Stille nacht

Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from thy holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

All sit.

Reader: Frances Poole

Holding the child in her arms, rocking, singing, Mary wondered what was going to happen to him, this sweet innocent creature who had been conceived by the incredible love of God and who had been born as all human babies are born. God, come to be one of us.

All stand and sing.

Hymn 100

“Joy to the world”
Antioch

Joy to the world! the Lord is come:
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
let us our songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.

Remain standing or kneel as able.

Prayers of the People

Leader Holy One, simplify our lives, that we might find time for you.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

Leader We pray for peace. Peace in the Middle East, in Ukraine and in all areas torn apart by war. Grant us your peace.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

Leader We pray for all who suffer: the sick, the lonely, those who struggle with poverty, grief or loneliness.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

Leader We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world, that they might find wisdom and strength to meet the days ahead.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

Leader We pray for all who have died. May they find rest in your presence.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

Leader We give thanks for the gift of this congregation, this nation, for our friends, family and all those who we love and especially for the precious gift of life itself.

People Quiet our hearts, O Lord, and come among us.

The Celebrant concludes the prayers.

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

Greet one another with the peace of Jesus.

Welcome and Announcements



As the altar is prepared for Communion, please place your offering in the collection plate as it is passed. You may also give by texting jaxcathedral \$(amount) to 73256. Or use the QR code to give online. Thank you for your generosity.

∞ THE HOLY COMMUNION ∞

Offertory Anthem

Light one candle to watch for Messiah, Wayne L. Wold
Celebration Choir

Hymn 380 (*Stanza 3*)

“Praise God from whom all blessings flow”
Old 100th

The Great Thanksgiving

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.

Blessed are you, Lord God, our light and our salvation; to you be glory and praise for ever!

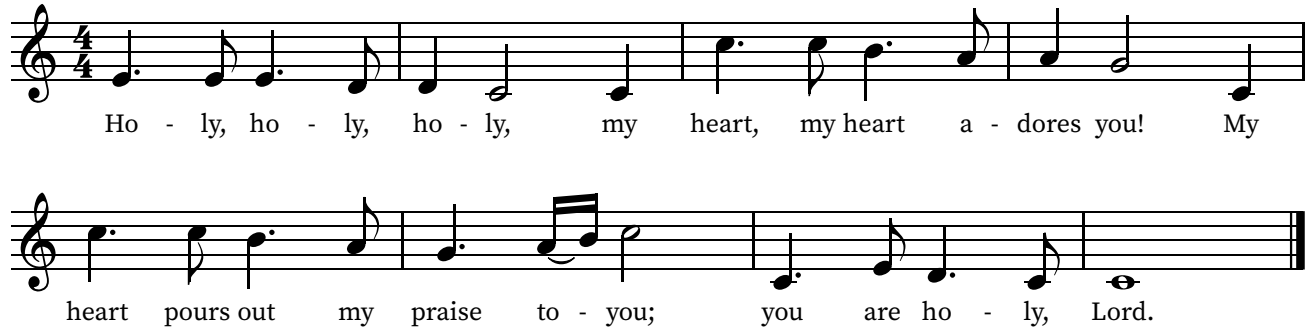
From the beginning you have created all things and all your works echo the silent music of your praise. In the fullness of time you made us in your image, the crown of all creation.

You give us breath and speech that with angels and archangels and all the powers of heaven we may find a voice to sing your praise:

Sanctus *(Sung three times)*

Holy, Holy, Holy, My Heart

WLP 785



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, my heart, my heart a - dores you! My
heart pours out my praise to - you; you are ho - ly, Lord.

All stand or kneel.

Celebrant How wonderful the work of your hands, O Lord! As a mother tenderly gathers her children you embraced a people as your own. When they turned away and rebelled your love remained steadfast. From them you raised up Jesus our Saviour, born of Mary, to be the living bread, in whom all our hungers are satisfied. He offered his life for sinners and with a love stronger than death he opened wide his arms on the cross.

On the night before he died, he came to supper with his friends, and taking bread, he gave you thanks. He broke it and gave it to them, saying: Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you.

At the end of supper, taking the cup of wine, he gave you thanks, 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. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.

Great is the mystery of faith:

All **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

Celebrant Father, we plead with confidence his sacrifice made once for all upon the cross; we remember his dying and rising in glory, and we rejoice that he intercedes for us at your right hand. Pour out your Holy Spirit as we bring before you these gifts of your creation; may they be for us the body and blood of your dear Son. As we eat and drink these holy things in your presence, form us into the likeness of Christ, and build us into a living temple to your glory. Remember Lord your Church in every land. Reveal her unity, guard her faith, and preserve her in peace. Bring us at the last with John and all the saints to the vision of that eternal splendor for which you have created us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, by him, with him, and in him, with all who stand before you in earth and heaven, we worship you, Father almighty, in songs of everlasting praise:

All **Blessing and honor and glory and power be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
All 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.

Celebrant breaks the consecrated bread.

All Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Celebrant The gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All baptized people are welcome to receive communion. Please let clergy know if you would like a gluten free wafer. Everyone is welcome to come to the altar for a blessing, indicated by folding your arms across your chest. If you like to receive communion and are unable to come to the altar, please ask an usher for assistance. You are also invited to receive prayers in our chapel to the left of the altar.

Music at Communion

My soul in stillness waits, Marty Hauger
Celebration Choir

The Postcommunion Prayer

Celebrant Let us pray.

All 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.

Blessing

Celebrant The blessing of God Almighty be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

All stand.

In Procession, Hymn 57

“Lo, he comes with clouds descending”
Helmsley

The Dismissal

Priest Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia!
People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

Voluntary

Prelude on *Puer nobis nascitur*, Gerald Near

+ + +

The Glorious Impossible

Readers

Cora Thakkar, Lyla Poole, Jack Haley, Rosemary Thakkar,
Lena Keyser, Frances Poole

Cast

Mary and Joseph: Phoebe and Malcolm Harmon
Lead Angel: Angie Wilmink
Lead Shepherd: Owene Courtney
Lead Animals: Felicia Bullock and Liam Ivey

Director

Katie Garner



Poinsettias at the Christmas Altar

are given in thanksgiving for

The Cathedral Clergy and Staff
Marie Tarver, Anice Brown, Debbie Scroggins, and Corey Tandy
The Cathedral Choir

Tim Tuller and his gift of music
Lorraine Lewis Corey

The Doiron's Children and their families:
Leslie, Roger & Margo Clark and Laura, Kenny, Savannah & James Kwaak
Pam & David Searcy's Children: Paige & John
Pam & David Searcy's parents: Nina & John



*Poinsettias at the
Christmas Altar*

are given in loving memory of

Lillian & William Armsby	Andy Lavender
Sophia & Jim Bolling	Edward & Dorothy Lee
David Burrell	John Leonard
Tom Burrell	Jan Lott
Dick Bush	Nancy C. Mason
Isabella Carrington	Harry T. Mason
Jean Carrington Cook	Stephen C. Mason
Olive Smith Cook	Clarence & Edith Osborn
Thomas Corey, Jr.	Oliver & Evelyn Oswalt
Melvin & Fay Doiron	Ron Pinkerton
George Dorion	Robby Pinkerton
Todd Fischer	Artis & Bertha Pinkerton
Cecil B. Fisher	Eugene & Joyce Schrader
Diane Friedman	Cynthia Searcy
The people we have lost	Marie Sefton
Betty & Curly Gordon	Wilmer Sefton
Taylor & Ed Graves	Edith Hulsey Shurley
Larry & Mabrine Griswold	Fletcher R. Shurley
Bruce Hardman	Douglas Tandy
James & Marzelle Harmon	Hannella Tandy
Dorothy Haussman	Terrence Tandy
Ted Haussman, Sr.	Janice Beckwith-Tandy
Col. Jim & Adele Higgins	Rolf Towe
Curtis Hill	Terri Bachara Tucker
Enrique Iguina	Patty Waidner
Sandy Jackson	Calvin T. Watts
Bobby Jackson	Mary Laverne Watts
Carol Jennings	Alfred "Sis" Williams
Douglas Jennings	George "Sue" Williams
John Jordan	Kate Willis
Jimmy Judge	Jack Willis
Jean F. Kasten	Wanda Willis
Sue & Keith Kirwan	Fred & Jean Wilson
Diana Kovarik	James Horner Winston

We invite you to return to St. John's Cathedral soon.
Sunday worship is at 8 & 10 a.m.

Join us for two more opportunities to celebrate the Christmas season:

Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist

The Very Rev. Kate Moorehead Carroll, preaching
10 a.m.*

New Year's Eve

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

5 p.m. *

Champagne Reception following in Taliaferro Hall

*These services will be livestreamed on our website
<https://www.jaxcathedral.org/st-johns-live/>