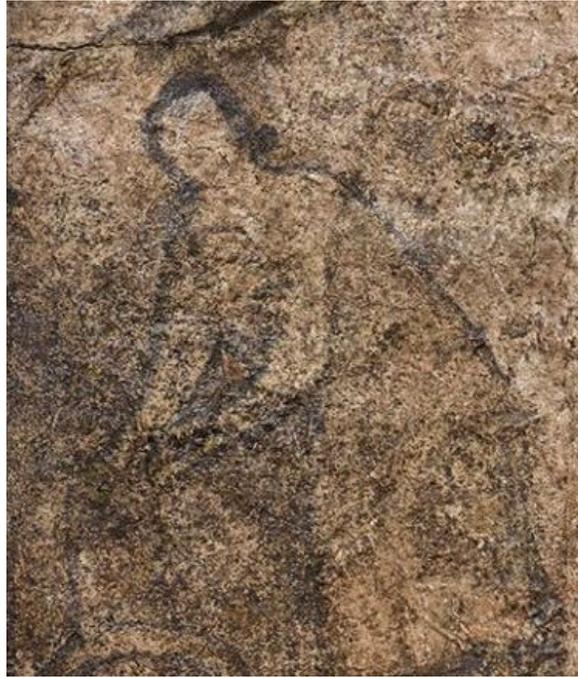


Saint Matthew's Episcopal Church
Growing in Love to Become One with God's Purpose



Magnificat from the House Church, in Dura Europos, Syria.
Oldest known depiction of Mary. Circa ~235 A.D

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020 | 9:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist

Prelude

“I Bind Unto Myself Today”

arr. J. Sutheran and P. Brain

Verse 1

I bind unto myself this day
The strong name of the trinity
I humbly praise the awful name
The Three in One, the One in Three

Verse 2

Of whom all nature hath creation
Eternal Father, Spirit Word
Praise to the God of my salvation
Salvation is of Christ the Lord

Verse 3

I bind this day to me forever
By power of faith Christ's incarnation
His baptism in the Jordan river
His death on cross for my salvation

Verse 4

His bursting from the spiced tomb
His riding up the heavenly way
His coming on the day of doom
I bind unto myself this day

Priest: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: And blessed be God's kingdom for ever and for ever. Amen

Collect

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Celebrant: Let us pray.

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.

Kyrie

Celebrant: Lord have mercy.

People: Christ have mercy.

Celebrant: Lord have mercy.

Let us pray

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Old Testament

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.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

For I the Lord love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the Lord has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

The Response

Magnificat

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.

People: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever, world without end. Amen.

The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this

Reader: The word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Meditation

“Soon and Very Soon”

by Andrae' Crouch

Verse 1

Soon and very soon
We are going to see the King
Soon and very soon
We are going to see the King
Soon and very soon
We are going to see the King

Chorus

Hallelujah hallelujah
We're going to see the King

The Gospel

John 1:6-8,19-28

Clergy: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: Glory to you, Lord Christ.

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.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal." This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

Clergy: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise be to you, O Christ.

Sermon

The Rvd. Náz Javier

The Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

That we may all 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, priests, and deacons;

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; especially for our current President Donald J. Trump, and President-Elect Joseph R. Biden.

That there may be justice, peace, and unity over all 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 especially Dorothea, Terry, Carol, Phil, Mary Lou, Edward, Dick, Karen, Lou, June, Margaret, Constance, Priscilla, Dorothea, and Bob; ***That they may be delivered from their distress.***

Give to the departed eternal rest, particularly Ella Fisher who passed away this week. Additionally, we pray for those who have departed due to the coronavirus pandemic. ***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.

God, our Gracious Shepherd, we offer you our deepest worship and honor for your faithfulness to the people of St. Matthew's through the years. You have blessed us with faithful clergy and leaders who have led us to you, nurtured us in your care, and encouraged us in our work for you. Today, we are particularly grateful that you have led us to our new rector, Father Rodney Roehner, who will walk with us in the next chapter of our common life and ministry. Be with him and his family as they say farewell to their current parish and community and as they prepare to come to us. Provide everything necessary for their life and salvation as they travel and begin to settle in our midst. Prepare our hearts to receive them into our parish family with patience and joy. Provide from your bounty all that we need to follow the mission you have set before us all in the years to come as priest and people. In your most Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

Confession

Celebrant: Let us confess our sins to God.

Leader and People

Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; in your compassion forgive us our sins, known and unknown, things done and left undone; and so uphold us by your Spirit that we may live and serve you in newness of life, to the honor and glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Absolution

Almighty God, have mercy upon you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

— Holy Communion —

Sharing of the Peace

The Great Thanksgiving

Eucharistic Prayer A

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 him 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. For you are the source of light and life, you made us in your image and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all. He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world. Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

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

The Celebrant continues

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

Celebrant and People

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.**

The Celebrant breaks the bread.

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the Feast. Alleluia.

The Gifts of God for the People of God.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

This prayer is an ancient prayer of the Church. Its old forms can be found in St. Augustine's Prayer book, and in every Intercession Paper of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament. At this time of the Virus when we cannot be physically present, it can become a way to receive a spiritual communion as we watch a living streaming Mass.

My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things,

and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,

come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there

and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

Offertory

"The River"

by Jordan Feliz

Verse 1

I know a place where we can go
To lay the troubles down eating your soul
I know a place where mercy flows
Take the stains make you whiter than snow

Verse 2

I've seen it move in my own life
Took me from dusty roads into Paradise
All of my dirt all of my shame
Drowned in the streams
that have made me born again

Pre-Chorus

Like a tide it is rising up deep inside
A current that moves
and makes ya come alive
Living water that brings the dead to life
Oh oh

Pre-Chorus

Like a tide it is rising up deep inside
A current that moves and makes ya come alive
Living water that brings the dead to life
Oh oh

Chorus

We're goin' down to the river
Down to the river
Down to the river to pray
Let's get washed by the water
Washed by the water
And rise up in amazing grace
Let's go down down down to the river
You will leave changed
Let's go down down down to the river
Never the same

Closing Prayer

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

Parish Announcements

Song of Service

“Revival”

by Robin Mark

Intro

I hear the voice of one crying
I hear the voice of one crying
Prepare ye
Prepare ye the way of the Lord

Verse 1

As sure as gold is precious and the honey sweet
So You love this city and You love these streets
Ev'ry child out playing by their own front door
Ev'ry baby laying on the bedroom floor
Ev'ry dreamer dreaming in their dead-end job
Ev'ry driver driving through the rush hour mob
I feel it in my spirit feel it in my bones
You're going to send revival
Bring them all back home

Chorus

For I can hear the thunder in the distance
Like a train on the edge of the town
I can feel the brooding of Your Spirit
Lay your burdens down
Lay your burdens down

Verse 2

From the preacher preaching when the well is dry
To the lost soul reaching for a higher high
From the young man working
Through his hopes and fears
To the widow walking through the veil of tears
Ev'ry man and woman ev'ry old and young
Ev'ry father's daughter ev'ry mother's son
I feel it in my spirit feel it in my bones
You're going to send revival
Bring them all back home

Bridge

Revive us revive us
Revive us with Your fire
Revive us revive us
Revive us with Your fire

— PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS —

LIFE LONG LEARNING MINISTRY

Adult Lifelong Learning Forum: Continues this morning at 11:00 AM. Led by a group of rotating leaders, the forum aims to focus on understanding the root causes of systemic racism, and how Christians are called to respond. Join the forum every Sunday at 11:00 AM on *Zoom*. In January, the Adult LLL Forum will begin a month-long study of the Gospel of Mark. You can join the forum each Sunday by logging on here: <https://zoom.us/j/98376656289?pwd=QmF-Ga1AxRmpYc1NuLzNKbjNRaFtOT09>

Sunday School: Is a virtual learning opportunity streamed live on the second Sunday of the month. Before the lesson is offered, children and their parents can pick-up engaging materials at no cost in the lower parking lot of Saint Matthew's. Then, families can choose how they interact with our lessons — join us live today at 8:45 AM, or review our recorded lesson posted on our Facebook page and church website. The next lesson will be held remotely on January 10th at 8:45 AM. Materials are available for pickup now. You can join us here: <https://tinyurl.com/y6mdedqq>

Youth Group: Is taking a break from our bible study on James' letter for the month of December. Instead, we'll meet on December 16th at 5:00 PM for a virtual Christmas Party held over Zoom. We'll catchup, play some games, and finish with a Christmas movie depending on the turn out. Stay tuned for updates on our program in January! You can join our party here: <https://zoom.us/j/91363746529>

Christmas Pageant 2020: It remains a challenge for Saint Matthew's to gather in person during this most special and holy season. In times like these, I wonder how technology might bring us together?

What is a virtual pageant? A *virtual pageant* means that we won't be performing inside of our church building this year. Instead, we'll each record our lines in advance, combine them together, and interact with a recording being streamed live to our homes. Though this experience might feel new and maybe even a bit strange, *do not be afraid!* With your help, all of us will be able to create a memorable, joyful, and holy memory as Saint Matthew's this year.

How will it work?

Anyone can participate, but we will prioritize children for the major roles! After you or your family signs up as a participant, they'll be sent a few lines from our pageant script. From there we'll ask you to record those lines, and send them to us when you're done. We'll stitch all of the clips from Saint Matthew's together into one pageant *movie*, which you'll be able to interact with at your home during the Advent and Christmas seasons. You'll also be able to keep pageant forever, and send it to your loved ones with the click of a button.

What Now?

We're asking families to sign-up to participate by heading to: <https://tinyurl.com/yyekqzqf> Around December 8th, we'll send your family a few lines to record — we'll ask if you'd like to create your own costumes, or if you'd like Saint Matthew's to lend you a few of our own. Once you record your lines, we'll show you how to send them to us. We ask that you do this before **December 20th**.

Who Do I Go To With Questions?

Reach out to a member of the Pageant Team! Anthony Carrella, Janine Buesgen, Antonia Edwards, and Martha Reynolds.

ST MATTHEW'S INVITES YOU TO OUR CHRISTMAS SERVICES

CHRISTMAS EVE

**3:00 P.M. EUCHARIST &
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT (VIA
ZOOM)**

**5:00 P.M. CONTEMPORARY
EUCHARIST (LIVESTREAM)**

**7:00 TRADITIONAL
EUCHARIST (LIVESTREAM)**

CHRISTMAS DAY

**10:00 A.M. HOLY
EUCHARIST
(LIVESTREAM)**



PARISH TRANSITION COMMITTEE

The Rvd. Rodney Roehner, his wife Carolina, and their twin daughters Alexa and Sophia arrived in Pennsylvania this Wednesday. While the family residence in Lower Gwynedd is being prepared, they will reside in a comfortable, local AirBNB. The Transition Committee invites you in welcoming Fr. Rodney for yourself! Choose a welcoming option that works best for you and your family this season.

Send a Word of Welcome

<https://tinyurl.com/y3nprkg6> or call the parish office.

Recommend Favorite Local Opportunities

<https://tinyurl.com/y3nprkg6> or call the parish office.

Purchase Groceries for the Pounding of the Pantry

Sign-up to purchase grocery staples as we pound Fr. Rodney's pantry by going to <https://tinyurl.com/y6xabtck> or by calling the parish office.

Prepare and Deliver a Home-cooked Meal

<https://tinyurl.com/y57e7pjb> or call the parish office.

Donate Toward a Welcome Gift

<https://saintmattsec.org/giving> You may also choose to send your contribution to Saint Matthew's Church, c/o Carolyn Bedics.

We know the hospitality and warmth of this blessed place abounds. Should you have any questions, please contact any member of the Transition Committee below. Joyfully, **Chris Suhy, Anthony Carrella, Jon Clark, Connie Dee, Treva McLaughlin, Pam Dunlap, and Antonia Edwards.**

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Operation Bear Hug 2020: Saint Matthew's is spreading Christmas cheer by collecting and donating brand-new bears to local centers including Fox Subacute and other senior residences in our community. We are hoping for a record-breaking year — our goal is to collect over 300 bears! We presently have 164 bears and will need about 150 more to fulfill the needs of three senior centers, and Abington/Lansdale Hospital. We will be collecting bears until December 21. If you have any questions about Operation Bear Hug, please reach out to Lisa Walsh. Here's how to get involved:

- Purchase a brand-new bear and drop it off in the boxes by the kitchen, or outside St. Matthew's (919 Tennis Ave, Maple Glen) in the plastic bins at the lower parking lot entrance to the Narthex.
- Purchase a brand-new bear online via an online retailer or Amazon (see our Wish List: <https://tinyurl.com/y26yrs2m> and send to Lisa Walsh. Her home address is: 126 Morning Walk Dr, Warrington PA, 18976. Call her at: (215) 518-3316
- Make a donation through our online giving page by choosing "Operation Bear Hug" from the dropdown menu, and we will purchase bears for you!

STEWARDSHIP 2020

Don't forget to make your pledge of support for 2021

Our current stewardship campaign has a goal of 140 pledges (our 2019 number) for \$357,000. That amount will allow us to continue our current level of staffing to support our new rector. Our new rector is anxious to direct both new and current programs to help us realize our hopes and dreams as a church community. Many thanks to those of you who have made your pledge already. For those who have not, pledges may be made online (just click on the "make a pledge" graphic in your weekly emails, or visit our website), or you may email the parish manager

FROM THE VESTRY

Welcome Newly Elected Vestry Members: Nancy Austin, John Gill, Karen Sawyer
Rotating off with our thanks: Joe Buesgen, Tim Jennings, Chris Strittmatter