

## Church of the Divine Love

### FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY

DECEMBER 28, 2025 10:15 A.M.

### HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer (on insert)

#### THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn (see hymn board for all hymns)

Opening Acclamation page 355

Gloria page 356

Collect for 1 Christmas page 213

First Lesson: **Isaiah 61:10-62:3** (*pages 641 in the Bible*)

Psalm 147 page 804

Second Lesson: **Galatians 3:23-25; §:4-7** (*page 1014*)

Gradual Hymn

Gospel: **John 1:1-18** (*page 922*)

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession page 393

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

#### THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)

The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
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Prayer for the Parish	page 817
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn	

**Sermon Sunday December 28, 2025**

Isaiah 61: 10-62:3; Psalm 147; Galatians 3: 23-25;4: 4-7; John 1: 1-18.

**Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

So, Christmas is over. Where does that leave us? Over the weeks of Advent, we celebrated the prophecies of Isaiah. When the Messiah comes, Isaiah said, the world will have light and love and peace and joy. The faithful will sing in delight, for Immanuel, God with us, will be born. And he was born. And the world was forever changed. But what now? Where is all the light, love, peace and joy when Christmas is over?

And the Word became flesh and lived among us. That's the Christmas story St. John tells in today's gospel (**John 1:1-18**) and it's very different from the one we heard from St. Luke on Christmas Eve (**Luke 2:1-20**). One is not better than the other. They're just different and we need both. Luke tells us what's happening. John tells us what's going on in what is happening. For Luke it is about Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem, Mary giving birth to her firstborn son, an angel announcing "good news of great joy for all the people," the birth of a Savior, "a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger," and shepherds going to "see this thing that has taken place." Luke's story takes place "in those days" and "in that region." It tells us that Christmas happens in the particularities of each of our lives.

For John the story is cosmic. It's an "In the beginning" kind of story, a story of creation. It's about the divine dwelling in flesh, life coming into being, light shining in the darkness, becoming children of God,

and grace upon grace. This beginning, however, is not just a historical point in time, it is an eternal beginning. It tells us that Christmas is larger than and not limited to the particularities of our lives, and it's always happening. The Word is always becoming flesh and living among us. This "festival of re-creation" (**St. Gregory Nazianzen**) is God's celebration of humanity. It is God entrusting God's self to you and to me. It is God's reaffirmation of humanity's goodness. It is the sharing and exchanging of life between God and you and me. That's why the early church could say that God became human so that humanity might become God. Divinity is clothed in humanity so that humanity might be clothed in divinity. That's what's going on in Christmas.

The Church calls that the incarnation. And we have been calling it our original blessing. Where and when have you seen that in another? Do you recognize it in yourself? What has been your experience of our original blessing in yourself or another? Have you ever marveled at a newborn child? I'm not talking about how cute she or he is. I'm asking about the recognition that there is more before you than a baby. There is a mystery, a holiness, a greatness, an I-don't-know-whatness about the moment. You know what that's like, right? "And the Word became flesh and lived among us. "Tell me a story about love in your life. Maybe it's about your spouse or partner, a child, a friend, the environment. Maybe it was a time when someone believed in you and helped you to believe in and rediscover yourself. Maybe you committed and gave yourself to another and it went way beyond your feelings. It was a choice and you held nothing back. Who is someone that has always been there for you? In what ways has she or he shown up over and over? Who have you done that for? "And the Word became flesh and lived among us. "When have you experienced beauty not as something to look at but as a presence holding you? Recall a time when you thought to yourself, I never want this moment to end. Everything is just right. Have you ever lost yourself in a sunset, heard the wind singing a song to you, or felt the forest, the beach, or the hills welcome you home? "And the Word became flesh and lived among us."

Everyone and everything carry and is carried by the image and likeness of the divine. The divine life lives not only in Jesus but in us too. No exceptions. The question isn't whether the Word became flesh in you, me, or anyone else. The question is whether we have eyes and hearts to see and trust that the Word is becoming flesh and living in, through, and among us. Too often we use our humanity as an excuse. I'm only human, we say, as if we are somehow inherently defective or deficient. God, however, chooses our humanity to reveal God's self. That sounds to me a lot like a sacrament. Do you remember the definition of a sacrament? It's an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. What if humanity is God's first sacrament?

Have you ever thought of yourself as a sacrament? Have you ever looked at someone across the street and said, hey, look! There is the sacramental image of God? No? Why not? Why do we not see that in ourselves and each other? And what would it be like if we did? It just might be a beginning that "clears away the crass, the irrelevant and the complicated" so that we might find what is beautiful, essential, and necessary in each day. Today's gospel calls that "grace upon grace. "Graces our life's water with wine; Graces our troubled hearts with peace; Graces our thirst with living water; Graces our hunger with

loaves and fish; Graces our paralyzed legs to stand up and walk; Graces our blindness with eyes that see; Graces our sins with forgiveness; Graces our prodigal trips to the distant country with a homecoming party; Graces our dead parts with new life; Graces our lives with life abundant.

Self-criticism, guilt, shame, violence, and judgment would have no role in or power over our lives. We'd look to the future with hope, expectation, and the possibility of the impossible. We'd be gentler with ourselves and one another. Love, compassion, peace, and justice would determine what we say and do. We'd be a light shining in the darkness, and the darkness would not overcome our light. We would become the children of God we've always been.

Silence is an incredible sound of Christmas. For every one of you who are here this morning, that tells me something. It may be that you are silently standing off in the distance wondering what this God thing is all about. God is at once intriguing and repulsive. Intriguing because of who he is, repulsive because of who you are. Yet if you stand in silence long enough, his light will find you, he will reveal himself with more clarity. Climb a tree for a better view, and he'll find you. And he will love you. And he will give you the greatest gift that you least deserve: the gift of Jesus Christ. Receive Christ in silence, there is a hush that comes with Christmas, for no words can express the incredible grace of God to shine light into the darkness of your life. Whether you are standing off in the distance wondering what it all means, or you have taken off your shoes and can feel the heat from the burning bush, respond in silence, for God has sent his son Jesus Christ into the world to reveal himself to you, and to find you. **Amen.**

***All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.***

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS		
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS DAY	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS		

BIBLE STUDY RESUMES TUESDAY, JANUARY 6th. 6:00 PM

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY - DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

Today

Eucharistic Minister Dana Kenn

Coffee Hour Janet Croft

**PARISH PRAYER LIST**

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Martin
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Joseph
Chris Dickson	John Roccoo	Deb P.
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Scottie Credendino	Michael	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Jan
Shannon & Family	Vincent & Barbara	Sandy
Mary & Family	Wendy	James
Gladys Hadija	Sophia	Aidan

Michael & Family

Brooke & Kylee

Mo

Michelle & Family

Christopher

Annie

Timothy Treasure

Donna A.

Aika

Moises Parra

Misael Varas

Jay

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to the prayer list during the week,

email Janet Croft at [jmc220@optonline.net](mailto:jmc220@optonline.net).

### A Morning Prayer

Father in heaven, I stand ready to receive Your wisdom and guidance. In each decision, big or small, lead me to discern your will and to act accordingly. Help me to understand the depth of Your wisdom, finding guidance in Your word and through prayer. Teach me to be patient as I wait for Your direction, trusting that Your timing is perfect. May I navigate this day with the assurance that Your wisdom is a treasure far greater than any earthly

knowledge. Guide my thoughts and actions, that they may be a reflection of Your discernment and love. In Your guidance, I find the path to a life of purpose and peace.

Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,  
Lay my life before you,  
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus  
And third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and forever. Amen









