

**St. Stephen's Lutheran Church**  
**"People of Christ Making a Difference"**  
**119 N Church Street**  
**Lexington, SC**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas**  
**January 3, 2021**

**WELCOME TO OUR VIRTUAL WORSHIP SERVICE!**

During this time of social distancing here are a few things to remember:

We are back to regular office hours Monday through Friday. Please don't hesitate to let us know how we can help! The pastors are available by calling the church (359-6562), calling the Crisis Care Line after hours (808-6471), or emailing them ([pat@sslc.org](mailto:pat@sslc.org) and/or [jasonantley@earthlink.net](mailto:jasonantley@earthlink.net))

If you visit our website ([www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)) you will see additions to the main page. On your phone, please make sure you are on the full website (just scroll down and click the icon that says full website). At the top you will see SIX RED BOXES. Here are the details:

Box 1) **"Weekly Bulletins"** – which will correspond to the services on YouTube.

Box 2) **"Virtual Communion"** – explanation and instructions for communing at home during virtual worship.

Box 3) **"Click Here For Our YouTube"** – where you can click to participate in our virtual worship services, or you can copy and paste [tinyurl.com/SSLCWorship](http://tinyurl.com/SSLCWorship) into your browser to take you there directly. Services will be livestreamed at 12:30 PM on Wednesdays and 8:30 AM on Sundays.

Box 4) **"Latest Church Update"** – where we will post the latest COVID-19 church update.

Box 5) **"Online Giving"** – Don't forget to support our ministry during this time apart by either mailing your donations to the church (119 N Church Street, Lexington, SC 29072), giving online, or giving through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please call the church office to contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds.

Box 6) **"Green Sheet Announcements"** – this is the green bulletin insert you would normally get on Sunday.

If you need any sort of assistance (ie needing food, getting groceries or prescriptions, going to medical appointments, anything at all), please call the church office or one of the pastors. We have folks who are willing to help in any way they can! Please take time to call folks who may not have a strong network and may be in need. Neighbors helping neighbors is one way we can be "People of Christ Making a Difference!"

We will continue sending out emails but you can also check out our website and our Facebook page for updates. God bless you! We love you! Stay safe out there!

## GATHERING MUSIC

## GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## A MOMENT FOR PEACE

## PRELUDE

## BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy One of Israel, the Word made flesh, the Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Gathered in the name of Jesus, let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor.

Gracious God,

**in Christ Jesus you come among us as light shining in darkness. We confess our failure to welcome this light. Forgive us and renew our hope, so that we may live in the light of your grace, and welcome the truth of Christ the Lord. Amen.**

I bring you good news of great joy for all the people: To you is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. Your sins are forgiven in + Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

## GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## RESPONSIVE LITURGY

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;  
**those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.**

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy;  
**they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.**

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders;  
**and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing this Christmas,  
**So that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## THE SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

## FIRST READING

Jeremiah 31:7-14

<sup>7</sup>Thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." <sup>8</sup>See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. <sup>9</sup>With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. <sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." <sup>11</sup>For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. <sup>12</sup>They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. <sup>13</sup>Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. <sup>14</sup>I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM

Psalms 147:12-20

<sup>12</sup>Worship the LORD, | O Jerusalem;  
praise your | God, O Zion,  
<sup>13</sup>**who has strengthened the bars | of your gates  
and has blessed your chil- | dren within you.**  
<sup>14</sup>God has established peace | on your borders  
and satisfies you with the | finest wheat.  
<sup>15</sup>**God sends out a command | to the earth,  
a word that runs | very swiftly. R**  
<sup>16</sup>God gives | snow like wool,  
scattering | frost like ashes.  
<sup>17</sup>**God scatters | hail like bread crumbs.  
Who can stand a- | gainst God's cold?**  
<sup>18</sup>The LORD sends forth the | word and melts them;  
the wind blows, and the | waters flow.  
<sup>19</sup>**God declares the | word to Jacob,  
statutes and judg- | ments to Israel.**  
<sup>20</sup>The LORD has not done so to any | other nation;  
they do not know God's judgments. | Hallelujah! **R**

## SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:3-14

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup>just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup>He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## THE GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia. I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. Alleluia.**

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 1st chapter.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

[<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.] <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>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. <sup>15</sup>(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.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Pat

## SERMON

Pastor Pat

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!  
 Oh, come ye, oh come ye to Bethlehem!  
 Come and behold him, born the King of angels. *Refrain*

*Refrain:* Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,  
 Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

The highest, most holy, Light of light eternal  
 Born of a virgin, a mortal he comes;  
 Son of the Father, Now in flesh appearing! *Refrain*

## APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

### OFFERING

It is during times like these that we notice an even greater purpose for our ministry and life together in Christ as we love and support each other and the world around us. Don't forget to support our ministry by mailing your offering to the church, giving online ([www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)) or through the Givelify app. This may also be a time to consider direct deposit giving. For more details please contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, at (803) 359-6562.

Anthem                    *"The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy"*                    West Indian Carol arr. by John Barnard

The virgin Mary had a baby boy, the virgin Mary had a baby boy,  
 the virgin Mary had a baby boy, and they say that his name is Jesus.

The angels sang when the baby was born, the angels sang when the baby was born,  
 the angels sang when the baby was born, and they sang that his name is Jesus.

*Refrain:* He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom. He come from the glory,  
 he come from the glorious kingdom. Oh, yes, believer! Oh, yes, believer!  
 He come from the glory, he come from the glorious kingdom.

The shepherds came where the baby was born, the shepherds came where the baby was born,  
 the shepherds came where the baby was born, and they say that his name is Jesus. *Refrain*

### OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray together.

**Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The image shows four staves of musical notation in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains a melody line with lyrics underneath. The first staff has two measures: 'The Lord be with you.' and 'And al - so with you.'. The second staff has two measures: 'Lift up your hearts.' and 'We lift them to the Lord.'. The third staff has one measure: 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.'. The fourth staff has one measure: 'It is right to give our thanks and praise.'.

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

### THE LORD'S PRAYER

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, forever and ever. Amen.

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

### RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! This Holy Sacrament is a fundamental part of how we participate in worship and receive Christ's body and blood, given and shed for us for the forgiveness of our sins. It is customary to use bread and wine for this meal, however with the given circumstances we invite you to find whatever is most appropriate in your context for your family to share. As you gather together to receive the real presence of Christ found in, with, and under the elements, be assured that the gifts we are given by God in the Holy Sacrament transcend space and time. May we be fed and nourished by God through this meal so that we may persevere and continue in discipleship this and every day.

*(As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:*

*The body of Christ, given for you.*

*The blood of Christ shed for you.*

*The communicant may say: "Amen.")*

## **BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

## **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

## **BENEDICTION**

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, the peace of the Christ child, and may almighty God, Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## **SENDING HYMN**

*"Hark the Herald Angels Sing"*

ELW 270

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;  
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful, all ye nations rise; Join the triumph of the skies;  
With angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the son of righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings,  
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise each child of earth, Born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the good news that Christ is born!  
**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

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### **The Church Staff**

The Rev. Dr. Patrick W. Riddle  
Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life  
Mr. Stephen Abbott, Seminarian  
Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator

### **Crisis Care Line: 808-6471**

The Rev. Dr. Dennis Bolton, Pastor for Welcome and Visitation  
Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus

### **Website: [www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)**

The Rev. Jason T. Antley  
Mrs. Bailey Slice Parker, Music Director  
Mrs. Beth Haggard, Preschool Director  
Mr. Eric Abramson, Sexton