



Duke UNIVERSITY CHAPEL

BRIDGING FAITH & LEARNING

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 2025, 5:00 p.m.



Manger, Liz Valente, 2021.

Christmastide (named after the principal celebration of the “Christ Mass”) is the twelve-day festival during which Christians celebrate the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago. This vulnerable infant, long awaited and yet still a surprise, is the incarnation of God on earth. As we share gifts with our friends and families this season, we seek to capture the joy and wonder of the original gift of Christmas: Jesus Christ, coming into a broken world to dwell among us as the Son of God, our Savior.

Gathering

Carillon

Choral Prelude

Hodie Christus Natus Est

arr. Laura Farnell

God Rest You Merry Gentlemen

arr. Vicki Tucker Courtney

Angels!

arr. Ken Berg

Greeting and Call to Worship

*Gathering Hymn | UMH 240

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

MENDELSSOHN

arr. Václav Nelhýbel

*Prayer of Confession and Words of Assurance | In unison:

Generous God, you give us the greatest gift of all: yourself. But often we find it hard to take notice; we are caught up with our own gifts, given and received. Forgive us, generous God, for the casual way we treat your gift of love. Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.

The minister speaks words of assurance.

*Peace | All exchange signs and words of God's peace.

Minister: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Proclamation

Prayer for Illumination | In unison:

Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope; in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*All rise as able

Old Testament Lesson | OT page 600 in pew Bibles.

Isaiah 9:2–7

Lector: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

arr. Alex Gartner

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appears.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

—*Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710*

New Testament Lesson | NT pages 202–203 in pew Bibles.

Titus 2:11–14

Lector: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

***Gradual Hymn** | UMH 238, stanzas 1 and 2. Turn to face the Gospel procession.

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

arr. Nelhýbel

***Gospel Lesson** | NT pages 54–55 in pew Bibles.

Luke 2:1–20

Lector: The word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Gradual Hymn | UMH 238, stanzas 3 and 4. Turn to face the Gospel procession.

Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

arr. Nelhýbel

Sermon

The Gospel of Great Joy

Response

Call to Prayer

Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Minister: Let us pray.

Prayers of the People | The congregation responds to each petition:

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Offertory Anthem

The First Noel

arr. Trevor Manor

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

The first Noel, the angel did say,
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth, it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night.

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

They let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
that hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
and with his blood mankind hath bought.

Noel, Noel, Noel! Born is the King of Israel.

—traditional English carol

*Offertory Hymn | UMH 219

What Child Is This

GREENSLEEVES

Thanksgiving

*Prayer of Thanksgiving

*The Lord's Prayer | All are encouraged to pray the Lord's Prayer in the language of their choosing.

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.
Amen.

Sending Forth

*Benediction

*Sending Hymn | UMH 246

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH
arr. Hobby

Postlude

My Spirit Be Joyful

Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685–1750)
arr. Harry Herfort

TODAY IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister

Bruce Puckett *Assistant Dean, Duke University Chapel*

Preacher

Luke A. Powery *Dean, Duke University Chapel*

Lectors

Jamee Lynch *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

Kenyon Davenport *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

Musicians

Zebulon Highben *Director of Chapel Music, Duke University Chapel*

Chad Fothergill *Chapel Organist, Duke University Chapel*

Durham Children's Choir *Choir*

Dena Byers *Artistic Director, Durham Children's Choir*

Amy Davis *Accompanist, Durham Children's Choir*

Paul Neebe *Trumpet, Amalgam Brass*

Tim Altman *Trumpet, Amalgam Brass*

Kim Van Pelt *Horn, Amalgam Brass*

Mike Kris *Trombone, Amalgam Brass*

Steve Truckenbrod *Tuba, Amalgam Brass*

Mitchell Eithun *Chapel Carillonneur, Duke University Chapel*

Head Ushers

Ken Arneson *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

Pete Acker *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

About the Durham Children's Choir | The Durham Children's Choir (DCC) is a community organization that seeks to provide exceptional choral education to children regardless of race, creed or socio-economic station. Founded in 2004 by Scott Hill, and under the leadership of Artistic Director Dena Byers, the Durham Children's performs music of various cultures and genres and shares that music with the community at public and private events. DCC enjoys local collaborations with area music educators, composers and arts organizations including their annual participation in WRAL's Tower Lighting at the American Tobacco Campus. They have performed internationally and nationally, have opened for GRAMMY Award-winning musician Lauren Daigle and will perform again in Carnegie Hall in June 2026. These ventures enable the Durham Children's Choir a greater presence in the community and provide the children with invaluable learning opportunities. For more information, please visit their website at www.durhamchildrenschoir.org.

Today's Flowers | The Advent Wreath is made possible by the Elizabeth Lucina Gotham Memorial Endowment, established by Dr. and Mrs. James H. Semans in loving memory of Elizabeth Gotham. The interior decorations and the wreaths on either side of the front entrance of the Chapel are given to the glory of God in celebration of the Christmas season by the Ferguson Family.

Liturgical Acknowledgments | Prayer of Confession. *The Worshipbook*, published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Christmas Eve Offering | Tonight's cash offerings and checks will be used to support World Relief Durham and Hurricane Helene relief efforts in western North Carolina.

World Relief Durham (WRD) helps refugees and other immigrants rebuild their lives in North Carolina through resettlement, employment, education, health, mental health, immigration legal, advocacy, volunteering, and youth mentorship programs. WRD provides case management, housing support, job-placement, financial literacy, and trauma-informed mental health services. WRD's Refugee & Immigrant Youth Services offer tutoring, mentoring, and family advocacy to help children succeed in public school. They also connect families with healthcare, Medicaid, and community resources, while empowering families to navigate systems independently. As a Christian organization, WRD partners with public, private, sacred, and secular entities to create a more just and welcoming Triangle.

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) continues work in western North Carolina to mitigate loss and damage from Hurricane Helene. All of the funds sent to UMCOR will be used to help those in need.

Send checks to: Duke University Chapel, Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708-0974. You are invited to give online at chapel.duke.edu/offering.

ACCESSIBILITY

Hearing assistance technology, as well as large-print worship guides and hymnals, is available at the AV console in the rear of the Chapel. For other accommodations, please approach a minister or usher.

RESTROOMS

For public restrooms, exit the Chapel through the main front doors and turn left to enter the Divinity School. Restrooms are along the Divinity School hallway.

LEARN MORE AND ENGAGE

Scan the QR codes to learn more about the missions and ministries of Duke Chapel and the Congregation at Duke University Chapel. Also, read this week's announcements, see upcoming events, and find out how to engage with the Chapel and the Congregation.



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