



Duke UNIVERSITY CHAPEL

BRIDGING FAITH & LEARNING

SERVICE OF WORSHIP

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 2025, 8:00 p.m.



Lorenzo Monaco (Piero di Giovanni), *The Nativity*, ca. 1406–10.

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

Brass Prelude

Six Christmas Carols

arr. Rob Roy MacGregor

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen
Greensleeves
Once in Royal David's City
We Three Kings
O Tannenbaum
Angels We Have Heard on High

Wexford Carol

arr. Charles Evans

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.

***All rise as able**

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.

Voluntary

Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People

arr. Kevin McChesney

Old Testament Lesson | OT page 600 in pew Bibles.

Isaiah 9:2–7

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 Music

Change Ring on DIVINUM MYSTERIUM

Fred Gramann
arr. McChesney

*Doxology

GREENSLEEVES



So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; come peas - ant,
king, to own him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; let
lov - ing hearts en - throne him. This, this is Christ the
king, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to
bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y!

Thanksgiving and Holy Communion

***The Great Thanksgiving** | Musical setting D, found on page 23 in the hymnal.

***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.**

Sharing of the Bread and Wine | All who love Christ, earnestly repent of their sins, and seek to be at peace with God and neighbor are invited to receive Communion. Bread and wine are used for Communion. After a server places bread in your hands, you may receive wine by dipping your bread into the chalice. If you desire gluten-free bread or grape juice, or to drink from a common cup, these are available from servers at the front near Memorial Chapel and near the back opposite the attendant's desk. If you will not receive Communion, you are welcome to come forward to receive a blessing, indicated by crossing your arms over your chest.

Voluntary

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH
arr. Mitchell Eithun

Communion Hymn | UMH 230

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

***Post-Communion Prayer**

Sending Forth

*Benediction

*Sending Hymn | UMH 246

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH
arr. Robert Hobby

Postlude

My Spirit Be Joyful

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

Carillon

TODAY IN WORSHIP

Presiding Minister

Lyn Pace. *Assistant Dean of Religious Life, Duke University Chapel*

Preacher

Luke A. Powery. *Dean, Duke University Chapel*

Lectors

Tony Willms *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel; Divinity '05, '07*
Drew Middleton. *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

Musicians

Zebulon Highben. *Director of Chapel Music, Duke University Chapel*
Chad Fothergill. *Chapel Organist, Duke University Chapel*
Mitchell Eithun. *Conductor, Bell Durham;
Chapel Carillonneur, Duke University Chapel*
E. Hunter Brooks. *Piano, Bell Durham*
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*

Head Ushers

Ken Arneson *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*
Pete Acker *Member, Congregation at Duke Chapel*

Guest Bell Ensemble | Bell Durham, founded in 2023, is Durham’s first community handbell ensemble. Using six octaves of handbells, handchimes, and various other instruments, the ensemble plays advanced music from around the world and across the musical spectrum including traditional handbell music, classical and contemporary music arranged for handbells, pieces by modern handbell composers, and seasonal classics with a handbell twist. Handbell composer and clinician Mitchell Eithun serves as the group’s artistic director. Bell Durham’s mission is to be rooted in the community, sharing high-quality handbell music with audiences across the Triangle and Central North Carolina. The members of Bell Durham performing this evening are Lesley Chao, Philip Cress, Allison Escher, E. Hunter Brooks, Jerri Bland, Ruth Stevens, and Robin Barbour.

Liturgical Acknowledgments | Prayer of Confession. *The Worshipbook*, published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). **So Bring Him Incense, Gold, and Myrrh (Doxology).** Text: William C. Dix (1837–1898). Music, GREENSLEEVES: English ballad, 16th cent. Public domain.

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.

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.



chapel.duke.edu
919-681-9488
dukechapel@duke.edu



*The Congregation
at Duke Chapel*

congregation.chapel.duke.edu
919-684-3917
congregation@duke.edu

401 Chapel Drive, Campus Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708

401 Chapel Drive, Campus Box 90974, Durham, NC 27708