

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Santa Clarita

The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

10:30am — February 1, 2026

The Altar flowers are given to the glory of God.

Before the service begins, we encourage you to use the following for meditation.

At the acme of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches us the Lord's Prayer. May the prayer be for us like the unforgettable view from a mountaintop summit, a relivable memory that guides our lives as followers of Jesus. -Br. Jamie Nelson, SSJE

-Generally, we stand to give praise, sit to listen (to scripture and sermon), and stand or kneel to pray. These postures help us stay focused on the worship, but there are no strict rules and you should take whatever posture is appropriate to your needs.-

Prelude

Buon Giorno Principessa

Nicola Piovani

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the beginning of the service they signify an intention to move toward the altar and into direct relationship to worship God. Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

Please stand as you are able.

Entrance Hymn #440

"Blessed Jesus, at thy word"

Liebster Jesu



-The liturgy is God's community gathered to actively share the Word and the Eucharist. We invite and encourage your participation in this community. Please join in the spoken responses and hymns shown in the service bulletin.-

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

-The opening acclamation is the greeting of the people by the presider and their response, which begins the service. Its purpose is to bring the congregation corporately into dialogue with the presider and set a tone for the celebration.-

Priest: Blessed be the one, holy, and living God.

People: Glory to God for ever and ever.

Collect for Purity

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 Savior. **Amen.**

Gloria

Judith M. Baity

Refrain

Glo-ry to God in the high-est, glo-ry to God!... Glo-ry to God in the high-est, glo-ry to God!... And peace to His peo-ple on earth, peace to His peo-ple on earth. Glo - ry, glo-ry to God!...

Verse 1

Lord God, ourheav'n-ly King, al-might-y God the Fa - ther, we wor-ship you, we give you thanks... We praise you Lord, We praise you Lord, We praise you for your glo - ry.

Verse 2

Je - sus Christ, the Son, the Lamb, you take a - way our sin. Lord God have mer - cy up - on us. You have the seat at God's right hand, re - ceive our prayer, re - ceive our prayer. *To Refrain*

Verse 3

You a-lone are the Ho - ly One, You a-lone are Lord, For you a lone are the Most High! Lord Je-sus Christ, Lord Je-sus Christ,

with the Ho - ly Spir - it in the glo - ry of our Fa - ther, in the glo - ry of our God the Fa - ther.

Refrain

Glo-ry to God in the high-est, glo-ry to God! Glo-ry to God in the high-est, glo-ry to God! And peace to His peo-ple on earth, peace to His peo-ple on earth. Glo - ry! Glo - ry! glo-ry to God! Glo - ry!

-A Collect is a short prayer with a specific structure. Its purpose is to gather into one the individual prayers of the People. The Collect of the Day is a specific prayer that reflects upon the lectionary readings for the given day of the liturgical year.-

The Collect of the Day

Priest: God be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

The First Reading Micah 6:1-8

Reader: Marianne Zinkiewicz

A Reading from the Book of Micah.

Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with his people, and he will contend with Israel. "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord." "With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of

thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

-The Book of Common Prayer has always placed great importance on the Psalms in worship. They are sung or said in every service of the church, and their words make up the petitions and language of our liturgy.

Psalm 15

Reader: Michael Richards

- 1 Lord, who may dwell in your tabernacle? *
who may abide upon your holy hill?
- 2 Whoever leads a blameless life and does what is right, *
who speaks the truth from his heart.
- 3 There is no guile upon his tongue;
he does no evil to his friend; *
he does not heap contempt upon his neighbor.
- 4 In his sight the wicked is rejected, *
but he honors those who fear the Lord.
- 5 He has sworn to do no wrong *
and does not take back his word.
- 6 He does not give his money in hope of gain, *
nor does he take a bribe against the innocent.
- 7 Whoever does these things *
shall never be overthrown.

The Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Reader: Michael Richards

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength. Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

-The Gospel procession moves into the congregation as a liturgical reminder that Jesus walked among us.-

Please stand as you are able.

Gradual Hymn #656

“Blest are the pure in heart” (vs. 1, 2 & 4)

Franconia



1. Blest are the pure in heart, for they shall see our God;
2. The Lord, who left the heavens for our life and peace to bring,
3. He to the low - ly soul will still him - self im - part
4. Lord, we thy pre - sence seek; may ours this bless - ing be;

the se - cret of the Lord is theirs, their soul is Christ's a - bode.
to dwell in low - ly - ness with us, our pat - tern and our King.
and for his dwell - ing and his throne will choose the pure in heart.
give us a pure and low - ly heart, a tem - ple fit for thee.

-The Gospel is comprised primarily of the words Christ himself spoke, and so we stand out of reverence for the good news that has been brought for us and all people.

Those who wish, make the sign of the cross with the right-thumb on the forehead, the lips, and the heart when the Gospel is announced, praying silently, God be in my head and in my thinking. God be in my lips and in my speaking. God be in my heart and my departing.-

The Gospel Reading Matthew 5:1-12

Priest: The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People: Glory to you, O Christ.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Priest: The Gospel of the Savior.

People: Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

-The Sermon or Homily helps us apply the words of the early prophets and Christ in our lives.-

The Sermon

The Very Rev. Christopher Montella
Rector

-The Nicene Creed is the statement of what we believe. It is one of the most ancient and corporate confession of our faith, having been adopted by the first ecumenical council in the year 325. When we recite this creed we are joining a great heritage of the holy universal Church through the centuries.

Some people may choose to bow their heads at the verse, For us and for our salvation...and was made man. This gesture marks the mystery of the Incarnation as the central Christian message of God's love for the world.-

Please stand as you are able.

Nicene 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.

-Prayer is offered for the Universal Church, the Nation and all in authority, the welfare of the world, concerns of the local community, for those who suffer or who are in any trouble, and for the departed.-

Prayers of the People

Reader: Kelsey Raub

God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.
So let us pray to God, saying, "For your blessing and guidance, we give you thanks."

God, bless your Church. May our souls hunger and thirst for righteousness. Give us the grace to do those things you require of us: to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with you.

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

God, bless the people of this and every nation. You make foolish the wisdom of the world; we pray that our leaders find their wisdom in you. Teach us to be merciful and open us to receive mercy from others.

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

God, bless your creation. Your mighty, creative voice echoes through the mountains. We offer back to you all the many gifts that spring forth from this earth

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

God, bless our local community. May we be a people who do no evil to our friends, who heap no contempt upon our neighbors.

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

God, bless the poor in spirit with the inheritance of your realm. You choose what is weak in this world to shame the strong. Be the source of life for all those suffering and sick. We pray for all those on the prayer list, especially Joy, Dennis, Monica, Roxana, and Greg.

The congregation may add their own petitions and thanksgivings.

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

God, bless the dying and the dead, especially Robert Nolet, Russell Boyington and Jacob Pearlman. May their reward be great in heaven. Give to those who now mourn the blessing of your comfort.

Silence

Intercessor: For your blessing and guidance,

People: **We give you thanks.**

Priest:

O Jesus, Light of the World, hear our prayers, and make us reflections of your Light, that the places of darkness in our world would be pierced by your Light, and that all nations would be drawn to you and be overwhelmed with joy. **Amen.**

Confession

Let us confess our sins to God.

God of all mercy,

**we confess that we have sinned against you,
opposing your will in our lives.**

**We have denied your goodness in each other,
in ourselves, and in the world you have created.**

**We repent of the evil that enslaves us,
the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf.**

**Forgive, restore, and strengthen us
through our Savior Jesus Christ,
that we may abide in your love
and serve only your will. Amen.**

Absolution

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

-The Peace is an extension of Christian greeting and teaching to love our neighbor as ourselves. It symbolizes our intent to forgive as we are forgiven, to live in peace with all people. Members are encouraged to greet one another with a sign of God's peace with the clasping of hands, a reverential bow, a hug, or a peace sign.-

The Peace

Priest: The peace of Christ be always with you.
People: **And also with you.**

Members of the congregation who are joining us via livestream are encouraged to post "Peace be with you" in the comments or to use the "like" or "love" reaction button to take part in the virtual exchange of God's peace with the rest of the congregation at this time.

Please be seated.

Welcome and Announcements

We are pleased to celebrate the following birthday: Jace Engles on Feb. 1st, Bethani Clark on Feb. 2nd, Bonnie Warburton on Feb. 4th, and Bianca Echenard & Desiree Spencer-Walters on Feb. 6th.

Offertory Prayer

The People remain seated and say together:

Loving God, you alone are the source of every good gift. Everything we have, and all that we are, comes from you. Now, help us to be grateful, accountable, and, with praise and thanksgiving, to give of ourselves generously, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE TABLE

Offertory

The Beatitudes
St. Stephen's Parish Choir

Edward Eicker

-A Sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself. For Anglicans there are two great sacraments: Eucharist and Baptism.

As continuation of thousands of years of spiritual practice, talent, treasure, and oblations are offered before the altar in our response to God's care and nurture.-

Please stand as you are able.

Doxology

Old 100th

Praise God from whom all blessings flow, Praise God all creatures,
here be low. Praise God, you hosts in heav'n a-
bove; Praise God the Trin - i - ty of Love. A - men.

-The *Sursum Corda* (*Lift up your hearts*) is a form of introduction to prayer handed down over the centuries. This dialogue is an invitation for the people joining in the Eucharistic offering, to raise minds and hearts to "things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God."

Priest: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to God.

Priest: Let us give thanks.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

-We praise God for the long arc of salvation history. We do not approach with petition but simply with grateful remembrance of all that God has done.-

Worship and praise belong to you, God our maker. Out of nothing, you called all worlds into being and still you draw the universe to its fulfilment. Day and night celebrate your glory till time shall be no more.

In Jesus Christ, your Word became flesh, when he was born of the Virgin Mary. He emptied himself, taking our human form, that through his incarnation and passion we might come to share in his divine nature.

Filled with the Spirit, who at the first Creation moved over the face of the waters, and who overshadowed the blessed Virgin at Nazareth, we await with joy the fulfilment of your new Creation.

As children of your redeeming purpose who celebrate the birth of your Son, we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending glory:

-The holiness of God is a strong theme in the Old Testament, present here in the *Sanctus*, which echoes the words of the high angels in the prophet Isaiah's vision of the dwelling place of God (*Isaiah 6:1-3*).

Our worshipful cry, "Holy, Holy, Holy," is coupled with the acclamation "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."-

Sanctus

Judith M. Baity

Ho - ly Lord, Ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,-

Ho - ly Lord, Ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might.. Heav'n and

earth are full of your glo - ry, heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.— Ho

san-na, ho-san-na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Blest is he, blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord,

Blest is he, blest is he who comes in the name of the Lord.. Ho -

san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.— Ho

san-na, ho-san-na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high est.— Ho

san-na, ho-san-na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.— Ho

san-na, ho-san-na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

Standing or kneeling as you are able.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving God. In Jesus the Messiah you have come to us, and live among us, that we might forever live with you. In the manger at Bethlehem, in his flight to Egypt, and as the carpenter's son, the Only Begotten humbled himself to meet us.

Obedient to your calling, he accepted death on the cross. When you exalted him on the third day, and bestowed on him the name above all names, he opened the gate of glory that we might be your children, and share in his kingdom of Peace.

Before he was given up to suffering and death, desiring to complete the work for which he came into the world, at supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying: "Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying: "Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

We now obey your Son's command.

Priest and people say together.

We recall his blessed passion and death, his glorious resurrection and ascension; and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.

Made one with him, we offer you these gifts with them ourselves, a single, holy, living sacrifice.

-The epiclesis is the point at which the church, through the voice of the Celebrant, asks God to make holy, 'sanctify', 'send', 'pour', 'breathe', both the gift of bread and wine and also the gathered community.

Hear us, most merciful God, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by your Spirit's life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us who are baptized into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, Stephen and all your saints, the apostles and prophets, and all of our siblings living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Savior, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory be to you, O God of all ages, world without end. **Amen.**

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

A period of silence is kept.

-The fraction (breaking of the bread) is a crucial link between what has come before and what comes after it. Christ has offered his life for us, and the breaking of the bread makes it possible for all to share in that life.-

Priest: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

-The outward and visible sign in the sacrament of the Eucharist is the bread and the wine. We eat and drink the sacramental foods. Through the inward and spiritual grace of this sacramental action we are reconstituted as Christ's body, infused with Christ's life, and empowered to be Christ's presence in the world.-

The Gifts of God for the People of God.
Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All are welcome to receive communion. The table we set belongs to God. Wherever you find yourself on your spiritual journey you are welcome to receive the Bread and Wine made holy.
The church teaches that temporal isolation cannot constrain the sacrament's ineffable power.
Calling us to "massive, corporate, spiritual communion,"

The Invitation to Holy Communion

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

Priest and People say together:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Please be seated.

Please follow usher instructions for taking communion.

-In the post communion prayer we give thanks for the sacramental signs of Christ's presence to us and we ask God to empower and accompany us into the world to witness to God's love.-

Please stand as you are able.

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

Infinite, intimate God,
in this Eucharist
we have celebrated your presence with us.
May we grow in the divine life of Christ
who humbly shared our human life.
Fill us with joy and send us out
to share this good news with others.
We ask this through Jesus Christ Emmanuel. Amen.

-The blessing is God's promise to be with us as we leave communal worship and return to the world to serve God and God's people.-

Blessing

May God,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you also in your pilgrimage to find Him.

May Jesus,
who turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana
transform your lives and make glad your hearts

May the Holy Spirit,
who came upon the beloved Son
at his baptism in the river Jordan,
pour holy gifts upon you
who have come to the waters of new birth.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the one, holy and undivided Trinity be among
you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

-Processions have long been an important part of liturgical worship. At the conclusion of the service the retiring procession represents the carrying of the Gospel message into the world.

Those who wish to may bow in reverence as the cross passes to acknowledge Christ's sacrifice upon it.-

Closing Hymn #542

“Christ is the world’s true light”

St. Joan

1. Christ is the world's true Light, its Cap-tain of sal - va - tion,
 2. In Christ all rac - es meet, their an- cient feuds for - get - ting,
 3. One Lord, in one great Name u - nite us all who own thee;

the Day - star clear and bright of ev - ery race and na - tion;
 the whole round world com - plete, from sun - rise to its set - ting:
 cast out our pride and shame that hin - der to en - throne thee;

new life, new hope a - wakes, for all who own his sway;
 when Christ is throned as Lord all shall for - sake their fear,
 the world has wait - ed long, has tra - vailed long in pain;

free - dom her bond - age breaks, and night is turned to day.
 to plough-share beat the sword, to prun - ing - hook the spear.
 to heal its an - cient wrong, come, Prince of Peace, and reign.

-The dismissal asserts the relationship between worship and living. It is a call to mission, a call to live the baptismal and Eucharistic life in the world.-

Dismissal

Priest: Let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.
 People: Thanks be to God.

Prayers of the People taken from *Praying the Scriptures* by Jeremiah D. Williamson, ©2014 by Jeremiah D. Williamson. All Rights Reserved.
 From *The Hymnal 1982 #4* with the exception of the words: Words: Thomas Cranmer (1488-1553); alt. Catherine Winkworth (1822?-1878), alt. Music: *Liebster Jesu*, melody Johann Rudolph Ahle (1625-1673); alt. *Das grosse Cantional oder Kirchen-Gesangbuch*, 1687; harm. George Heriot (1545-1603), #6536-Blest are the pure in heart Words: Sts. 1 and 3, John Keble (1792-1866), alt.; sts. 2 and 4, William John Hall (1793-1861), alt. Music: *Franconia*, melody Johann Balthasar König (1691-1758); adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870) #542 "Christ is the world's true Light"; Words George Walles Briggs (1875-1950), alt. Music: *St. Joan*, Perry E. B. Caller (b. 1895).
 Sanctus #4—Judith M. Baily, Copyright ©2009—Celestial Melodies Publishing Company. All Rights Reserved.
 Doxology—Music: Old 100%; melody from *Pseumes octante trois de David*, 1551; alt.; harm. After Louis Bourgeois (1510?-1561).
 Gloria—Judith M. Baily—© 2009 by Celestial Melodies Publishing