

Sunshine Cathedral
The Largest Progressive Queer Church in the World

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

December 24th, 2023

Walt Lawrence & Stephen Lewis Center for Worship and the Arts
Fort Lauderdale, Florida



Welcome!

Rev Dr Durrell Watkins, Senior Minister

Welcome All this Magical Night.

Rae Armantrout is an avant-garde poet of the Language poet style. Her short poems are often concerned with dismantling conventions. I love her poem, "Advent":

*In front of the craft shop,
a small nativity,
mother, baby, sheep
made of white and blue balloons.*

*~ Sky ~
~ god ~
~ girl.
Pick out the one that doesn't belong.*

*Some thing
close to nothing
flat
from which,
fatherless, everything has come.*

Isn't that beautiful? It is a gift to see what is available to everyone but to see in it something that most others miss. The poet sees a child of unknown paternity, a young unprepared mother, the "nothingness" of the air in the balloons (if the balloon bursts, where does the air go? It returns to the allness that we all share).

The universe, the divine, the mundane all share the moment. We all come from the nothing, the No Thing, that is in fact the ground of all things. These philosophical notions are summoned by a simple balloon nativity.

When you see or hear the familiar tonight, the candles, the carols, the communion chalice, the trees and lights...what more will you see? What flash of insight or touch of grace might be waiting for your observation. What if you are the only one who can see it? And when you do, how will you share your sacred gift?

Welcome to our annual Christmas Eve celebration at Sunshine Cathedral. Your presence has consecrated the hour and your observations will become part of the good news that we have to offer. We are glad you are here and we hope you will return soon. And every time you worship with us, look for what you haven't seen before, be open to a new word, a fresh experience, a deeper insight, a special touch of the sacred.

Merry Christmas my dear friends, and I wish you a very happy New Year.

Durrell⁺



Thank You 2023 Christmas Angels

Christmas Eve Host

Phil Cordell

In Memory and Honor of Loving Parents.

Archangels

Dick Schwarz & Tom Massey

Jim Pamplin and Rudy Wang

In Honor of the Sunshine Pride House.

Mark Messinger and Scott Schwab

In Memory of our Mothers and Brothers, Phillip M. and Wayne S.

Mark Nogal

In Honor of the Sunshine Cathedral Family.

Dr and Mrs Phillip and Sara Burns

In Honor of Clayton Burns.

Angels

Peter Oberdorf

Robert Bragg

Cherubim

Brad Sterl and Tedd Davis

In Memory of Liz Sterl and Matilda Davis.

Michael Spatz

In Memory of my Therasas, Aunt and Grandma.

Phil McChesney & Joel Scinto

In Memory of our Parents.

Ronald Couture and Bob Easton

Seraphim

Rev Dr Anne Atwell and Amy Walker

In Honor of our Mothers.

Art Morris and John Matteo

In Memory of loved ones passed.

Arthur and Patricia Wenzel

In Memory of Elizabeth Arndt.

Brian Flanagan and Cory Hagopian
In Memory of Carter and Chase.

Darlene and Bill McMillan
In Honor of Sara, Phillip and CJ.

Carl Shearer and Mario Rios
In Honor of our chosen family, Sunshine Cathedral.

Deacon Ed Huckemeyer
In Memory of John Shaffer and Alex Velez Correa.

Joseph Huck
In Memory of Marcia and William Huck.

Keith Muller and Stephen Plescia
In Memory of our beloved Parents.

Rev Kevin Tisdol and Michael Mitchell
In Honor of our 36 Years Together.

Marc Dickerman
In Memory of my Parents.

Margie and Edie Baker
In Memory of our Angels, Mommy, Daddy, Opi and Cathy.

Melody Fiore
In Honor of Sunshine Cathedral and Church Family.

Rick Brown
In Memory of Nan, Aunt Kate, Mom and Dad.

Robert DeCamillo
In Memory of my partner, Ken Sasser.

Robert Woodman
In Memory of Stan Ainsworth.

Steve McGehee
In Memory of Those Whom I Name in Prayer.

William "Bill" Bryan and Juan Martinez
In Memory of our Parents.



Christmas Eve What Child Is This?

Service of Gathering

Welcome

Rev Dr Durrell Watkins

Introit

Ave Maria

Performed By Laura Gonzalez



Christ Candle Lighting

Nicole Stodard, Bree-Anna Obst and Family - 7PM

Dr and Mrs Phil & Sara Burns and Family - 9PM

Please rise as you are able.

Sunshine Cathedral Affirmation

*Sunshine Cathedral is a different kind of church
where:*

**Our God is love.*

**Kindness is our worship.*

**Compassion is our prayer.*

**The sacred value of all people is our creed; and*

**Healing the hurts caused by hatred is our mission.*

The Call to Worship

This is the night our faith becomes sight.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it!

A New Thought Christmas

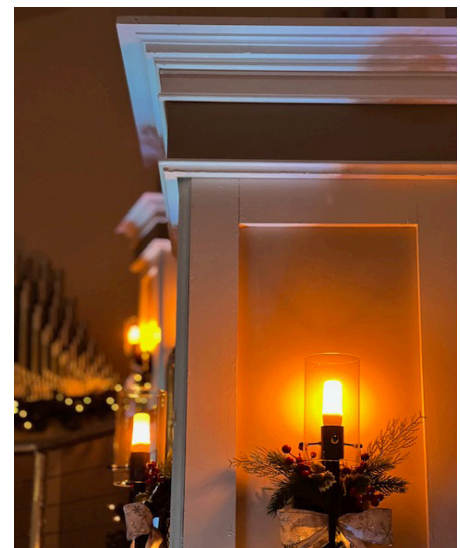
by Rev. David Alexander

The Christmas Season is a magical and special time for millions of people world-wide. We each have our unique version of storied memories of lights, food, music, sacred ritual and festive gatherings of friends and family. All seemingly gathered around a central birth narrative. Yet, this narrative too has its versions and unique interpretations through time.

Not even the Gospel writers themselves all agree on the particulars of the story. Further, many of the narrative elements seem to be borrowed from other, more ancient stories and traditions. Through it all something still calls to us, something mysterious and mystical, something profound yet simple enough for a child to comprehend. It calls to us to overcome fears and doubts, to keep watch over our thoughts and follow the illumined star of our intuition to the manger of our heart. The season calls to us to awaken and give birth to a higher ideal of ourselves and of humanity. It calls us to remember the Light Within and to share it with our world.

From the Holy Qur'an

"The angels said, 'O Mary, indeed God gives you good news of one whose name will be the Messiah Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and in the Hereafter, and of those who are near to God. He will speak to the people in the cradle, and in old age, and he will be of the righteous...He will be a messenger to the Children of Israel (saying), 'Indeed I have come to you with a sign from your Lord. I make for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, then breathe into it, and it becomes a bird by the permission of God. And I heal the blind and the leper, and I bring the dead to life by the permission of God. And I inform you of what you eat and what you store in your houses. Surely, there is a sign for you in that, if you are believers...Indeed, God is my Lord and your Lord, so worship God. This is the straight path.'"



Paradox

by G.K. Chesterton

Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home.

A Christmas Reflection

by Bart Ehrman (New Testament scholar)

One of the things I haven't lost... is my love of Christmas... I now know that the story of Jesus' birth in the Gospel of Matthew is very different from the story in the Gospel of Luke, that their accounts are not simply differently nuanced, but factually at odds... But they are beautiful stories. Angelic visitors, heavenly inspired dreams, miraculous works... There are shepherds and wise men and wicked kings and murdering soldiers and near escapes; tragedy and salvation.

The stories live on, with or without my faith in them as history. And the meaning of the stories continues to touch me. This is a season of giving... It is a season of brightness, of music, of reflection, a season of winter and snow and Christmas trees with lights to be observed with rapt contemplation.

Our True Home at Christmas

by Thich Nhat Hanh

Jesus, as soon as he was born, had to be on the run right away and to be a refugee, a runaway without a home. When he grew up and became a young man, it was the same; he was still a wanderer with no real home to return to. In one of his discourses, he protested that even the birds have their nests to return to... but [he had] no place to lay his head, no place to call home.

Siddhartha, as an adult, found himself in a similar situation. He was born into a royal family that was wealthy and privileged... He had a bright future ahead of him; destined to be [a] king... But still, he did not feel comfortable even with all this. He did not feel at home. He was not at peace. Therefore, one day, he decided to leave... in search of inner peace.

For our home to be true, there needs to be love, warmth, and fulfillment.

In the end, Jesus found his true home in his heart. He found the light in his heart. He taught his disciples that they too have their own light and he taught them to bring that light out for others to see.

This Christmas... remember that your 'True Home' is not found outside yourself, but it is right in your own heart... We do not need to travel far to arrive at our true home. If we know how to generate the energy of mindfulness and concentration, then with each breath, with each step, we arrive at our true home. Our true home is not a place far removed from us in space and time. It is not something that we can buy. Our true home is present right in the here and now; if only we know how to return and to be truly present to it.

Service of Praise

Crucifer

Deacon Lydya Chapman - 7^{PM}

Rev Renwick Bell - 9^{PM}

Processional Hymn

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

*O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and with your captive children dwell.
Give comfort to all exiles here,
and to the aching heart bid cheer.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come within as Love to dwell.*

*O come, you Splendor very bright,
as joy that never yields to might.
O come, and turn all hearts to peace,
that greed and war at last shall cease.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come within as Truth to dwell.*

*O come, you Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by our presence here.
And dawn in every broken soul
as vision that can see the whole.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come within as Light to dwell.*

*O come, you Wisdom, from on high,
from depths that hide within a sigh,
to temper knowledge with our care,
to render every act a prayer.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come within as Hope to dwell.*

Opening Prayer (by St. Pope John XXIII, adapted)
Rev Dr Anne Atwell

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in the hope, peace, and joy of Christmas. Put into our hearts this peace for which we sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give. Help us to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same God. Reveal to us also your beauty and holiness. Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your goodness. Join us all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace.

Amen.

Please be seated



About Sunshine Cathedral

Our Affirmation:

Sunshine Cathedral is a different kind of church where:

Our God is love.

Kindness is our worship.

Compassion is our prayer.

The sacred value of all people is our creed.

And healing the hurts caused by hatred is our mission.

Our Core Values:

Inclusion, Compassion, Spiritual Transformation, and Social Action

Our Sacraments & Rites:

Sacrament of Hospitality (Eucharist)

Sacrament of Belonging (Baptism)

Sacrament of Sharing (Tithing)

Rite of Matrimony

Rite of Responsibility (Confirmation)

Rite of Ordination

Rite of Healing Prayer

About the Sacrament of Hospitality ~

Our Communion feast is open to all regardless of church membership or personal belief. Anyone who wants to share the love feast with us is welcome, just as you are.

About the Sacrament of Belonging ~

Everyone who calls Sunshine Cathedral their spiritual home is immersed in our love and we know that all people are immersed in the divine presence. Those who wish to celebrate this truth with a water ritual (for oneself or one's child) may ask for the Sacrament of Belonging (Baptism), but no such ritual is required to be a full member of our faith community.

Sacraments and Sacramental Rites are outward signs of inward grace. They symbolize a Love that is with and within us. They help us focus on the One Power, the One Presence in the Universe: God, the Good. These symbolic reminders of our enormous potential and sacred value are part of the worship experience of the Sunshine Cathedral.

Christmas Carol
BY SARA TEASDALE

The kings they came from out the south,
All dressed in ermine fine;
They bore Him gold and chrysoprase,
And gifts of precious wine.

The shepherds came from out the north,
Their coats were brown and old;
They brought Him little new-born lambs—
They had not any gold.

The wise men came from out the east,
And they were wrapped in white;
The star that led them all the way
Did glorify the night.

The angels came from heaven high,
And they were clad with wings;
And lo, they brought a joyful song
The host of heaven sings.

The kings they knocked upon the door,
The wise men entered in,
The shepherds followed after them
To hear the song begin.

The angels sang through all the night
Until the rising sun,
But little Jesus fell asleep
Before the song was done.

Service of Proclamation

The Wisdom of Thich Nhat Hanh Rev Dr Anne Atwell

Jesus, as soon as he was born, had to be on the run right away and to be a refugee, a runaway without a home. When he grew up and became a young man, it was the same; he was still a wanderer with no real home to return to. In one of his discourses, he protested that even the birds have their nests to return to...but he had no place to lay his head, no place to call home...

For our home to be true, there needs to be love, warmth, and fulfilment.

In the end, Jesus found his true home in his heart. He found the light in his heart. He taught his disciples that they too have their own light and he taught them to bring that light out for others to see.

This Christmas...remember that your 'True Home' is not found outside yourself, but it is right in your own heart... We do not need to travel far to arrive at our true home. If we know how to generate the energy of mindfulness and concentration, then with each breath, with each step, we arrive at our true home. Our true home is not a place far removed from us in space and time. It is not something that we can buy. Our true home is present right in the here and now; if only we know how to return and to be truly present to it.

In these human words, God's voice is heard.
Thanks be to God.

Please rise as you are able.



Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

*Hail the Bearer of God's peace!
Hail the Sun of righteous- ness.
Light and life our savior brings,
risen with radiant, healing wings.*

*Mildly laying glory by,
born that fear we might defy,
born to raise us all from earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing, '
Glory to the christ-child bring!'*

A Reading from Luke's Gospel (2.7-14)

...Mary gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

In the nearby countryside there were shepherds living in the fields and keeping watch over their flock throughout the night. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terror-stricken, but the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news of great joy for all the people. For this day in the city of David there has been born to you a Savior who is Christ, the Lord.

"This will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all those on whom divine favor rests."

In these human words, God's voice is heard.

Thanks be to God.

Song of Response *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see you lie
above your deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by;
yet in your dark streets shine forth the everlasting light,
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in you tonight.*

Please be seated.

Join the Cathedral at Easter!



Ash Wednesday Service

February 14th - 7pm

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

MARCH 29th - 7pm

**EASTER SUNDAY
Worship Services**

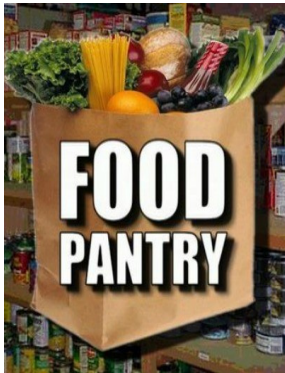
March 31st
9:00am and 10:30am



**Sunshine Cathedral Food Pantry
is open**

Every Wednesday from 11^{AM} - Until food runs
out....usually around 12:30^{PM})

**No ID required.
No income
verification.
No questions.
No judgment.**



For more
information or to
schedule an
appointment, please contact Rev. Anne
954-462-2004 ext. 208
Anne@SunshineCathedral.net

To make a donation to the Sunshine
Cathedral Food Sharing Program, check out
our website sunshinecathedral.org and click
on the Food Sharing tab.

**Thank you to our Corporate, Business,
and Non-profit donors for 2023.**

Broward House
Broward Women's Chorus
Care Plus
Community Foundation of Broward
Croissant Park Civic Association
Feeding South Florida
Ka'ton Salon
Our Fund
Patrick Thomas Lighting
Project Lifeline (United Way)
Publix
Campbell's Company
South Florida Hunger Coalition
The Cupboard – A Kosher Pantry
The Warten Foundation

The Anthem

Baby Jesus Is Born
Performed By Gabe Salazar

Homily *What Child is This?* Rev Dr Durrell Watkins

Invitation to Prayer

Altar Call and Anointing

Prayer Chorus *What Child Is This*

*What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?*

*This, this the angels sing,
Is Christ, God's holy offering:
Haste, haste your praise to bring,
The Babe, the child of Mary!*

*Why lies the Christ in manger bare,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Give heed, draw near; for wounded here
The silent Word is pleading.*

*This, this the angels sing,
Is Christ, God's holy offering:
Haste, haste your praise to bring,
The Babe, the child of Mary!*

Pastoral Prayer & Affirmations

Sign of Peace

Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child

*Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek and mild:
New life, new hope the child will bring.
Listen to the angels sing,
"Glory, glory, glory," let the heavens ring.*

*Jesus, Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child.
Jesus, Jesus, so holy, meek and mild:
New life, new hope the child will bring.
Listen to the angels sing,
"Glory, glory, glory," let the heavens ring.*

Service of Sacraments

Sacrament of Sharing

Rev Kevin Tisdol

Donating to Sunshine Cathedral

Venmo - @SunshineCathedral

CashApp - \$SunshineCathedral

Text to Give - 954.399.7333

Offering Prayer

May God bless every gift and ever giver. Amen.

Offering Music

O Holy Night

By John S Dwight and Adolphe Adam

Performed By Sara Burns

Please rise as you are able.

Doxology

Angels, from the Realms of Glory

*Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth.*

*As you sing creation's story,
now proclaim Messiah's birth.*

*Come and worship, come and worship,
worship now, give thanks and sing.*

*Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing,
yonder shines the infant light.*

*Come and worship, come and worship,
worship now, give thanks and sing.*



NEW YORK SUN 1987

DEAR EDITOR: ... IS THERE A SANTA CLAUS?
~ VIRGINIA O'HANLON

VIRGINIA,

...ALL MINDS, VIRGINIA, WHETHER THEY BE [ADULTS'] OR CHILDREN'S, ARE LITTLE. IN THIS GREAT UNIVERSE OF OURS [WE ARE] A MERE INSECT, AN ANT, IN [OUR] INTELLECT, AS COMPARED WITH THE BOUNDLESS WORLD ABOUT [US], AS MEASURED BY THE INTELLIGENCE CAPABLE OF GRASPING THE WHOLE OF TRUTH AND KNOWLEDGE.

YES, VIRGINIA, THERE IS A SANTA CLAUS. HE EXISTS AS CERTAINLY AS LOVE AND GENEROSITY AND DEVOTION EXIST, AND YOU KNOW THAT THEY ABOUND AND GIVE TO YOUR LIFE ITS HIGHEST BEAUTY AND JOY. ALAS! HOW DREARY WOULD BE THE WORLD IF THERE WERE NO SANTA CLAUS. IT WOULD BE AS DREARY AS IF THERE WERE NO VIRGINIAS. THERE WOULD BE NO CHILDLIKE FAITH THEN, NO POETRY, NO ROMANCE TO MAKE TOLERABLE THIS EXISTENCE. WE SHOULD HAVE NO ENJOYMENT, EXCEPT IN SENSE AND SIGHT. THE ETERNAL LIGHT WITH WHICH CHILDHOOD FILLS THE WORLD WOULD BE EXTINGUISHED.

NOT BELIEVE IN SANTA CLAUS! YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT BELIEVE IN FAIRIES! YOU MIGHT GET YOUR [PARENTS] TO HIRE [PEOPLE] TO WATCH IN ALL THE CHIMNEYS ON CHRISTMAS EVE TO CATCH SANTA CLAUS, BUT EVEN IF THEY DID NOT SEE SANTA CLAUS COMING DOWN, WHAT WOULD THAT PROVE? NOBODY SEES SANTA CLAUS, BUT THAT IS NO SIGN THAT THERE IS NO SANTA CLAUS. THE MOST REAL THINGS IN THE WORLD ARE THOSE THAT NEITHER CHILDREN NOR [ADULTS] CAN SEE. DID YOU EVER SEE FAIRIES DANCING ON THE LAWN? OF COURSE NOT, BUT THAT'S NO PROOF THAT THEY ARE NOT THERE. NOBODY CAN CONCEIVE OR IMAGINE ALL THE WONDERS THERE ARE UNSEEN AND UNSEEABLE IN THE WORLD.

YOU MAY TEAR APART THE BABY'S RATTLE AND SEE WHAT MAKES THE NOISE INSIDE, BUT THERE IS A VEIL COVERING THE UNSEEN WORLD WHICH NOT THE STRONGEST [PERSON], NOR EVEN THE UNITED STRENGTH OF ALL THE STRONGEST [PEOPLE] THAT EVER LIVED, COULD TEAR APART. ONLY FAITH, FANCY, POETRY, LOVE, ROMANCE, CAN PUSH ASIDE THAT CURTAIN AND VIEW AND PICTURE THE SUPERNAL BEAUTY AND GLORY BEYOND. IS IT ALL REAL? AH, VIRGINIA, IN ALL THIS WORLD THERE IS NOTHING ELSE REAL AND ABIDING.

NO SANTA CLAUS! THANK GOD! HE LIVES, AND HE LIVES FOREVER. A THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW, VIRGINIA, NAY, TEN TIMES TEN THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW, HE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE GLAD THE HEART OF CHILDHOOD.





Christmas Is

by Rev. Dr. Durrell Watkins
Senior Minister, Sunshine Cathedral

*Christmas is carolers and angel choirs.
Christmas is joy.*

*Christmas is shepherders and toy
makers.
Christmas is rest from our labors.*

*Christmas is Christians celebrating
Zoroastrian magi visiting a Jewish baby.
Christmas is diversity.*

*Christmas is the holy family becoming
refugees.
Christmas is concern for the imperiled.*

*Christmas is the enduring hope of peace
on earth and goodwill to all.*



Sacrament of Hospitality

We Remember

Wes Brooks 12/24/2003 - Chuck George 12/24/2004
Ray Dillinger 12/25/1995 - Jeff Adams 12/27/1986
Valariee Morris 12/28/1994 - Kurt Depetris 12/28/1998
George Lane 12/28/2005 - Norman McLean 12/28/2008
Fernando Herrea 12/29/1991 - Bob Astbury 12/29/1996
Arnold Thomas 12/29/1998 - Wayne Bennett 12/29/2014
Paul Bass 12/30/2014

Eucharistic Intentions

Rev Margarita Rodriguez - 7^{PM}
Deacon Ed Huckemeyer 9^{PM}

Minister of the Altar: We celebrate this Eucharist to the glory of God and with special intentions for the Sunshine Cathedral Global Fellowship and local congregation, and with people all over the world we pray,

May peace prevail on earth!

Bidding Prayer

Rev Dr Durrell Watkins

Children of God, let us pray for the needs of the whole world – for peace on earth and goodwill among all people; for unity and concord within this parish and for blessings to flow into our community, our nation, and the whole world.

And because this of all things would rejoice the heart of Jesus, let us remember the poor and challenged, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children, and those who seek spiritual peace, comfort, strength or guidance.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light (+), that multitude which no one can number, who are held forever in the love of God.

We humbly offer these prayers using the words of Jesus which we now sing:

Model Prayer

*Creator which art in heaven, hallowed be thy names.
Thy kin-dom come, thy will be done on earth as it
is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and
forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And
leave us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kin-dom and the power and the glory,
forever. Amen.*

Please be seated.

The Lord's Supper

Rev Dr Robert Griffin

Invitation to Communion

Rev Dr Anne Atwell

One: These are the gifts of God for all the people
of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Communion is Shared

Communion Carols

*+I heard the bells on Christmas Day their old familiar
car- ols play, and wild and sweet the words repeat of
peace on earth, goodwill to all.*

*I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all
Christendom had rolled along the unbroken song of
peace on earth, goodwill to all.*

*And in despair I bowed my head, 'There is no peace on
earth,' I said, 'for hate is strong and mocks the song of
peace on earth, goodwill to all.'*

*Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not
dead, nor does God sleep; the wrong shall fail, the right
prevail, with peace on earth, goodwill to all."*

*Till, ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from
night to day, a voice, a chime, a chant sublime of peace
on earth goowill to all!*

The Truth of Myths

by Rev. Dawn Hutchings

Don't ever make the mistake of thinking that myths are not true. Myths have the power to communicate truth. A myth is only untrue when it is presented as a fact. Myths are so much more than just mere facts because myths have the power to tell us the truth about the deepest mysteries of life. Myths are metaphors about the very stuff of life and they have the power to help us to understand what it means to be human...

According to [mythologist Joseph] Campbell, myths derive their power to communicate truth because they are really stories about the things that go on inside of us; in here, right now...

The difficulties with myths occur when we get hung up on believing in them as facts. When we refuse to look beyond the metaphors to see the truth to which they point. It's kinda like standing in front of a painting. We don't stand there and ask is this painting true or false? Did this scene really happen? These kinds of questions miss the whole point of the artist's work. We need to approach myths in the same way as we approach art. Does this painting touch me? Does this music move me? Does this movie inspire me? How does this work of art change the way I think about life? Great myths like great art move us, touch us, and transform us in the deepest realms of our being.

...In the stories of Jesus' birth, we learn that this Mystery we call God is intimately involved with the stuff of life. In the stories of the child born in Bethlehem, we learn that our God is born among us and dwells among us. Over and over again, within the myth of Jesus' birth we see people struggling with both the horrors and the joys of this life, and over and over again the message comes clearly and profoundly to us, the message that we long for, in a few simple but oh so powerful words: "Do not be afraid."

...With his life Jesus personified the Love of God and so, when the people came to tell of this amazing life, they remembered him in the way that their neighbours always remembered exceptional lives and they cast a star in the sky, described an incredible union between the human and the divine, and a birthing filled with challenges, and set the whole thing to music sung by a celestial choir.

...The stories of Christmas are not about miracles. The stories of Christmas are not concerned with facts or reason. The story of Christmas is about the LOVE that is God interacting with human life to create in human life wholeness, the ability to live fully, the capacity to love extravagantly, the courage to be everything that we are capable of being. The story of Jesus birth points us toward the truth that lies in the power of LOVE to enable us to live and love and to be.

...The story is so powerful, so true that our various holiday rituals move us beyond ourselves to the heart of the story where we too can awaken to the reality of our God who is Love. By embodying the LOVE of God, Jesus of Nazareth changed the world. The stories of the birth of Jesus remind us that we too are called to embody this LOVE that is God.

...Do not be afraid, for the MYSTERY that we call God is with you now and always.

Mistletoe

by Walter de la Mare

Sitting under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
One last candle burning low,
All the sleepy dancers gone,
Just one candle burning on,
Shadows lurking everywhere:
Some one came, and kissed me there.

Tired I was; my head would go
Nodding under the mistletoe
(Pale-green, fairy mistletoe),
No footsteps came, no voice, but only,
Just as I sat there, sleepy, lonely,
Stooped in the still and shadowy air
Lips unseen—and kissed me there.

Holiday Thoughts

from Washington Irving

Christmas is a season for kindling the
fire for hospitality in the hall, the genial
flame of charity in the heart.

Holiday Thoughts

from Agnes M. Pahro

What is Christmas? It is tenderness for
the past, courage for the present, hope for
the future.

Holiday Thoughts

from Brigham Young

Love the giver more than the gift.

Holiday Blessing

Let the spirit of love gently fill our hearts
and homes. In this loveliest of seasons
may you find many reasons for happiness.

*+It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of
old, from angels bending near the earth to touch their
harps of gold; 'peace on the earth good will to all, great
news of joy we bring.' The world in solemn stillness lay
to hear the angels sing.*

*+Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace; sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight,
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ the savior is born; Christ the savior is born.*

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Rev Kevin Tisdol

Please rise as you are able.

Prayer of Protection

*The light of God surrounds us;
The love of God enfolds us;
The power of God protects us;
The presence of God watches over us.
Wherever we are, God is!*

Benediction

Rev Dr Durrell Watkins



Recessional Hymn

Joy to the World

*Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth her praises bring,
let every heart prepare Christ room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world, the Savior reigns!
Let all their songs employ;
while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*Christ fills the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of God's righteousness,
and wonders of God's love,
and wonders of God love,
and wonders, wonders of God's love.*

Dismissal

Our worship has ended. Let our service begin.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Barbara Ramcharitar



Holiday Thoughts

"There are three stages of humanity: we believe in Santa Claus; we do not believe in Santa Claus; we are Santa Claus."
Bob Phillips

Holiday Thoughts

"May the spirit of the holidays be with you throughout the New Year."
Anonymous

Holiday Thoughts

"You can tell a lot about a person by the way they handle three things: a rainy day, lost luggage and tangled Christmas tree lights." Maya Angelou

Holiday Thoughts

from Ann Garnett Schultz

Let us keep Christmas beautiful without a thought of greed.

Holiday Thoughts

from Charles M. Schulz

Christmas is doing a little something extra for someone.

Holiday Thoughts

from Peg Bracken

Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas.

Holiday Thoughts

from Irving Berlin

Happy holiday! Happy holiday! While the merry bells keep ringing, happy holiday to you.



The Cathedral Staff

1480 SW Ninth Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315
954.462.2004
SunshineCathedral.org

Executive Leadership Team

Rev. Durrell Watkins, DMin, Senior Minister
Rev. Robert Griffin, DMin, Executive Minister
Rev. Anne Atwell, DMin, Minister of Connections
Rev. Kevin Tisdol, Minister of Education
Mr. Darren Loli - Director of Communications
Mrs. Sara Burns, Co-Director of Worship Arts & Vocalist
Ms. Barbara Ramcharitar, Co-Director of Worship Arts & Organist

Artists-in-Residence

Jessica Borbone, Vocalist
Gabe Salazar, Vocalist
Aaron Ball, Vocalist
Teresa Flores, Percussion
Felipe Diaz, Percussion
Laura Gonzalez, Violin
David Suarez, Flute
Jihong Adams-Park, DMA, Pianist
Kurt Litzenberger, Set/Sound & Lighting

Support Ministries Leaders

Rev. BK Hipsher, DMin, Virtual Minister
Rev. Kurt Krieger, Seasonal Members Chaplain
Rev. Marian Cavagnaro, Hospice Chaplain
Rev. Ren Bell, Hospice Chaplain
Rev. Lynda Pantoja, Interfaith Spirituality
Rev. Margarita Rodriguez, Minister of Spiritual Companionship
Deacon Ed Huckemeyer, DD, Diaconal Minister of Pastoral Care
Deacon Jean Johnson, Community Chaplain
Deacon Lydia Chapman, Women's Ministries
Deacon Michael Karban, Diaconal Minister of the Chancel
Deacon Sue Gallagher, EdD, Teaching Associate
Peggy Brereton, Usher Team Leader
Trevor Stewart, Bookkeeper

Consultants

Rev. Elder Don Eastman, Systems & Leadership

CATHEDRAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gary Grieve	Chair
Rev Dr. Durrell Watkins	Vice-Chair
Lynda Pantoja	Treasurer
Linda Edin	Secretary
Cathy Tullo, Lewis Nicholson, Penny Sanfilippo, Rick Brown, Twila Wilson	



Phil McChesney	Chair
Keith Muller, PhD	Vice Chair
Cory Hagopian	Treasurer
	Secretary
Brian Flanagan, Chuck Lane, Santiago Madrinan Corinne Hogan, Rozen Patterson, EdD, Rev Durrell Watkins, DMin	



954-764-5150

NOBLE A. McARTOR ADULT DAY CENTER

Lisa Peters	
Program Director	954-764-5055

