

PAX (Pilgrims After Christ) is a Catholic Christian inclusive community committed to planning and celebrating meaningful liturgies, developing community, and responding to the needs of our world in justice, as those needs are revealed to us in liturgy and community dialogue.



THEME: **Beginnings and Blessings**

**Prelude:** **Prepare the Way of the Lord** *Taiže Community* (PAX Music Ensemble)

**Welcome** (Charlie Hookey)

**Candle Lighting:** **I Will Light Candles** *Howard Thurman* (Shane MacCarthy)

I will light candles this Christmas; Candles of joy, despite all sadness.  
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch. Candles of courage where fear is ever present.  
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days, Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens.  
Candles of love to inspire all our living. Candles that will burn all the year-long.

**Song:** **O Little Town of Bethlehem** *Brooks, Redner*

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie.  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth, the everlasting light.  
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above.  
While mortals sleep the angels keep their watch of wondering love.  
Oh morning stars together, proclaim thy holy birth.  
And praises sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of the heav'n.  
No ear may hear his coming, But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

Text: Phillips Brooks (1835-1893); Tune: Lewis Redner (1831-1908). In the Public Domain.

**Greeting, Opening Prayer** (Fr. Vince)

**First Reading:** Isaiah 9: 2-7 (Megan & Charlie Hookey)

**Responsorial:** **Today is born our Savior, our Savior Christ the Lord.**

**Second Reading:** Isaiah 61: 1, 2, 10, 11 (Myrtle Hendricks-Corrales, Mary Lou Melley)

**Gospel Acclamation:** **A light has shone upon us this day; for the Lord, our Savior is born for us.**

**Gospel:** Luke 2: 1-14 (Fr. Vince)

**Gloria:** *The Gospel reading concludes with the familiar refrain:*

**Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo. Glo-ria, in excelsis Deo.**

(Gloria song continues next page)

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains.  
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains. (*Refrain*)

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
Say what may the tidings be, which inspire your heavenly song? (*Refrain*)

*French Traditional Carol; English lyric: James Chadwick, 1862. In the Public Domain*

**Homily:** Vince Cushing, OFM

**Creed:** (Chris Johnston)

We believe in God, omniscient, mysterious, and eternal, creator of all there is and all that we are. We believe God set in motion the unfolding star-filled universe, with its warm summer breezes and cold winter nights, the soaring eagle and the lowly worm, the genius and the simple. We believe God desires that we all live as brothers and sisters of one great family.

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Wonder-Counselor, Prince of Peace, born as a baby in a stable to Mary, part of a poor, refugee family. We believe he preached God's word and was crucified by those who did not understand. He died and rose from the grave in glory, and will reconcile the whole world with God, tearing down the walls that divide us.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the breath of God, the promise of the coming Kingdom, who gives us the strength to tell, nay, proclaim the Good News of salvation.

We believe in the resurrection of the dead, and a new life with God forever. Amen.

**Song:** **Silent Night** *Mohr/Gruber*

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 Al-le-lu-ia! Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light; Radiant beams from Thy holy face;  
With the dawn of redeeming grace; Jesus, Lord at Thy birth; Jesus, Lord at Thy birth.

*Joseph Mohr, Franz Gruber; 1818. In the Public Domain*

**Prayers of the Faithful** (Patty McGrath)

**Lord's Prayer**

**Virtual Kiss of Peace, Spiritual Communion** (Fr. Vince)

**Meditation:** **Beginners** *Denise Levertov* (Marian Klymkowsky)

But we have only begun to love the earth. We have only begun to imagine the fullness of life.

How could we tire of hope? So much is in bud.

How can desire fail? We have only begun to imagine justice and mercy, only begun to envision

How it might be to live as siblings with beast and flower, not as oppressors.

Not yet, not yet – There is too much broken that must be mended,

too much hurt we have done to each other that cannot yet be forgiven.

We have only begun to know the power that is in us if we would join our solitudes....

So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture, so much is in bud.

**Closing Prayer, Blessing** (Fr. Vince)

**Song:** **Joy to the World!** *Watts, Handel/Mason*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come; Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him 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 us our songs employ; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains;  
Repeat the sounding joy; Repeat the sounding joy; Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace; And makes the nations prove; The glories of His righteousness.

And wonders of His love; And wonders of His love; And wonders, wonders, of His love.

*Isaac Watts, 1719; G.F.Handel/Lowell Mason 1848. In the Public Domain*

**Planners:** Ann Brown, Charlie Hookey, Chris Johnston, Marian Klymkowsky, Shane MacCarthy,  
Patty McGrath, Mary Lou Melley, and Vince Cushing, OFM.

**Musicians:** Mary Ann Ahearne-Ray, Ann & Steve Brown, Dale Chambers, Suzanne Brown Davis, Charlie Hookey, Catherine Maresca,  
Amanda Messinger, Dan Mulholland, Eric Niedringhaus, Mike Schaeffer, and 'mixmaster' Kevin Messinger.