

# THE SHIELD

CHRISTMAS 2021



## THE MINISTER'S MESSAGE

In keeping with a long-standing Anglican tradition of the Episcopal Church, we have foregone singing Christmas carols during Advent. We relent slightly on the last Sunday of Advent, when we end our service with a hymn that is listed in the “Christmas” section of our hymnal: *Lo, how a rose e'er blooming* – number 81.

The hymn is especially appropriate because that is the Sunday when we hear the portion of Luke's Gospel where the angel appears to Mary and tells her that she will give birth to Jesus. With that theme in mind, the last music we sing before Christmas Eve is a 15th-century German hymn about Mary and based on the prophecy of Isaiah – “*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*” [Isaiah 11:1]

This connection between Jesus' ancestry (Jesse was the father of King David) and the young woman of whom Isaiah spoke in an earlier chapter – “*Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*” [Isaiah 7:14b] – opens our way into the vast treasury of hymns, anthems, and carols of the Christmas season.

What is the difference between a hymn and a carol, anyway? I'm glad you asked...

A hymn is any religious or spiritual poem, set to music. Most often, the poem exists first, and a composer (or more than one) adds a tune or fits the words to an existing tune. Sometimes, though, a lyricist likes a particular melody and writes the words to fit the notes. Charles Wesley, the founder of Methodism, did this often, transforming secular and even drinking songs with religious themes. Christian hymns were originally sung in Greek or Latin.

Carols had their origin as songs written to accompany dancing in the 1150s. They came into church usage as processional songs sung during festivals – again accompanying movement. They were often simple and repetitive, as they were sung by uneducated worshipers. Because of their secular origin, carols have been banned from worship at various times in history. Carols were always sung in the local language.

And an anthem? It is a short choral work (as opposed to a cantata or an opera) that was specifically written for a liturgical or patriotic purpose (like a national anthem). They came into existence around 1550 and were sung in the local language and performed by choir and soloists. In the Roman Catholic Church, they were of course in Latin, which technically made them *motets*.

Music is such a central part of our religious experience. The fact that we usually stand to sing contributes to the emotional power of a hymn or carol. The combination of deeply spiritual words and moving melodies stirs some basic human response and draws our hearts and minds to God. We honor special days and seasons with their own particular collections of songs, and we look forward to hearing them again each year.

If you like singing or hearing Christmas hymns and carols, then you should really enjoy our two principal celebrations of this season. On Christmas Eve (Friday, December 24 at 7:00 PM), we will sing verses from nine of them, and at our service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas Sunday (December 26 at 9:30 AM), we will sing ten more.

Christmas is a time for love. Families draw together to celebrate, pray, and enjoy each other's company, even if that enjoyment is sometimes a little forced.

As we gather this year, let us remember the words of Hymn 84, written by the poet Christina Rossetti - [\*Love came down at Christmas\*](#). The Incarnation of Jesus is the most powerful token of God's love for us, and the most powerful reason for us to love one another as he has loved us. More than any other time of year, Christmas reminds us to love and to accept love. Let us capture that feeling and hold tight to it throughout the coming days and months. Let us make love the theme of our entire year, and let us thank God for loving us first and teaching us to share that love with everyone.

May God bless and keep us all!

*Father Tom +*

Love came down at Christmas,  
Love all lovely, Love Divine,  
Love was born at Christmas,  
Star and Angels gave the sign.



Worship we the Godhead,  
Love Incarnate, Love Divine,  
Worship we our Jesus,  
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,  
Love be yours and love be mine,  
Love to God and all men,  
Love for plea and gift and sign.



# CHRISTMAS SERVICES AT SAINT GEORGE'S



**Christmas Eve**

**Friday, December 24**

**7:00 PM**

**Candlelight Family Service**

---

**Christmas Sunday**

**December 26**

**9:30 AM**

**Christmas Lessons and Carols**

Saint George's Episcopal Church  
12811 Saint George's Lane NW  
P.O. Box 655  
Mount Savage, Maryland 21545



### Contact Information

*Links are active in PDF version only*

*St George's Episcopal Church*  
12811 Saint George's Lane  
Mount Savage, Maryland

*Mailing Address*  
PO Box 655  
Mt Savage, MD 21545

*Office/Voicemail*  
301-264-3524

*Minister / Priest in Charge*  
The Rev. Thomas J Hudson, OPA  
[minister@stgeorgesmtsavage.org](mailto:minister@stgeorgesmtsavage.org)  
Cell: 301-616-3967

*Church Email*  
[admin@stgeorgesmtsavage.org](mailto:admin@stgeorgesmtsavage.org)

*Web Sites*  
[www.stgeorgesmtsavage.org](http://www.stgeorgesmtsavage.org)  
[www.facebook.com/stgeorgesmtsavage](https://www.facebook.com/stgeorgesmtsavage)

*The Episcopal Diocese of Maryland*  
[www.episcopalmaryland.org](http://www.episcopalmaryland.org)  
1-800-443-1399

### The Anglican Communion

The Most Rev. and Right Honourable  
Justin T. Welby, *105th Archbishop of Canterbury*

### The Episcopal Church

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, *27th Presiding Bishop*

### The Diocese of Maryland

The Right Rev. Eugene T. Sutton, *14th Bishop of Maryland*  
The Right Rev. Robert W. Ihloff,  
*Assisting Bishop, 13th Bishop of Maryland*

### Parish Officers, Staff & Volunteers

Dee Stallings	Senior Warden, Organist, Treasurer of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson (2022)
Jim Rice	Junior Warden, Worship Leader, Acolyte Leader, Lay Eucharistic Minister, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Ken Preston	Treasurer, Camera Operator, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Lynda Folk	Assistant Treasurer
Peggy Hess	Registrar, Altar Guild, Eucharistic Visitor, Secretary of the Women of St George's, Vestryperson <i>ex officio</i>
Karen Bonner	Altar Guild Chairperson, President of the Women of St George's, Usher, Vestryperson (2022)
Sharon Logsdon	Parish Nurse, Eucharistic Visitor, Parish Secretary, Usher, Vestryperson (2024)
Karen Preston	Altar Guild, Parish Secretary, Vestryperson (2023)
Jeff Hall	Usher, Vestryperson (2023)
Russell Bridges	Bell ringer, Altar Guild (candle oil)
Elliott Stallings	Bell ringer, Vestryperson (2024)