**Nativity Worships**

**Second Lent**

**March 16, 2025**

**The Rev. Kirsten Snow Spalding, Presiding**

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| Prelude | Medley of old hymn tunes: *A la venue de Noel  (ca 1535)*and *Boubon  (ca 1835)* | |
| Opening | O love of God, how strong and true | H  455 |
| Gradual | Kind, maker of the world, O hear   [v.1, v.3 before Gospel; v. 5 after Gospel] | H 152 |
| Offertory | Now let us all with one accord  [vv 1,4, 5] | H 147 |
| Closing | O God of Abraham praise  [ vv 1, 4, 5] | H 401 |
| Postlude | "I Let a Song Go out of my Heart"  E.K. (Duke) Ellington | |

**The Collect**

O God, whose glory it is always to have mercy: Be gracious to all who have gone astray from your ways, and bring them again with penitent hearts and steadfast faith to embrace and hold fast the unchangeable truth of your Word, Jesus Christ your Son; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

**Old Testament**

**Genesis 15:1-12,17-18**

The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, "Do not be afraid, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." But Abram said, "O Lord God, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" And Abram said, "You have given me no offspring, and so a slave born in my house is to be my heir." But the word of the Lord came to him, "This man shall not be your heir; no one but your very own issue shall be your heir." He brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them." Then he said to him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Then he said to him, "I am the Lord who brought you from Ur of the Chaldeans, to give you this land to possess." But he said, "O Lord God, how am I to know that I shall possess it?" He said to him, "Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." He brought him all these and cut them in two, laying each half over against the other; but he did not cut the birds in two. And when birds of prey came down on the carcasses, Abram drove them away.

As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram, and a deep and terrifying darkness descended upon him.

When the sun had gone down and it was dark, a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between these pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates."

**The Psalm**

**Psalm 27**

***Dominus illuminatio***

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;  
whom then shall I fear? \*  
the Lord is the strength of my life;  
of whom then shall I be afraid?

2 When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh, \*  
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who   
stumbled and fell.

3 Though an army should encamp against me, \*  
yet my heart shall not be afraid;

4 And though war should rise up against me, \*  
yet will I put my trust in him.

5 One thing have I asked of the Lord;  
one thing I seek; \*  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life;

6 To behold the fair beauty of the Lord \*  
and to seek him in his temple.

7 For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe   
in his shelter; \*  
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling  
and set me high upon a rock.

8 Even now he lifts up my head \*  
above my enemies round about me.

9 Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation  
with sounds of great gladness; \*  
I will sing and make music to the Lord.

10 Hearken to my voice, O Lord, when I call; \*  
have mercy on me and answer me.

11 You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." \*  
Your face, Lord, will I seek.

12 Hide not your face from me, \*  
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.

13 You have been my helper;   
cast me not away; \*  
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.

14 Though my father and my mother forsake me, \*  
the Lord will sustain me.

15 Show me your way, O Lord; \*  
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.

16 Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, \*   
for false witnesses have risen up against me,   
and also those who speak malice.

17 What if I had not believed  
that I should see the goodness of the Lord \*  
in the land of the living!

18 O tarry and await the Lord's pleasure;  
be strong, and he shall comfort your heart; \*  
wait patiently for the Lord.

**The Epistle**

**Philippians 3:17-4:1**

Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. For many live as enemies of the cross of Christ; I have often told you of them, and now I tell you even with tears. Their end is destruction; their god is the belly; and their glory is in their shame; their minds are set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and it is from there that we are expecting a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, by the power that also enables him to make all things subject to himself. Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

**The Gospel**

**Luke 13:31-35**

Some Pharisees came and said to Jesus, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me, 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you. And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

**The Prayers**

In our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Bishop Austin Rios, the diocesan staff, the diocesan chancellor, the Executive Council and the Standing Committee of the diocese.

We pray for our parish members: Jamie, Nancy B, Nina A, Marian, Norma, Duane, Amanda, Ruth, Steve K, Dick, Barbara B, Uwe and our families and friends: Myles, David, John, Violet & Aaron, B. Y., Justin, John B, Laura, Tanner, Phil, Greg, Nick, Phoebe, Seanna and Stacy.

We pray for those who have died and those who mourn remembering especially Bill Shepherd, Lisa, Ming Huang, Andrea Georgi, Richie Faber and those who have died in the wars in Israel, Palestine, Ukraine and Sudan and those who have died in the fires in Los Angeles.

**Announcements**

Last chance to respond to the Nativity Survey. It only takes 5 minutes and will be part of Nativity Vestry’s discernment process. (It is on the agenda at Vestry meeting today).

<https://berkeley.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_03wc0mIVNZI69Qa>

Stations of the Cross, Monday evenings at 4:30 throughout Lent.

March 17th. Nativity Book Club. *The Ungrateful Refugee* by Dina Nayeri. Mondays at 5 pm. In the Nativity Kitchen. Everyone is invited to read and discuss this book which challenges us to think about how we understand and speak about immigrants in our community. (3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, 4/7)

Lenten Retreat with Bishop Brian Seague at Bishop’s Ranch March 28-30. For more information call St. Stephen’s Belvedere.

Red Door Community Garden boxes available for rent. $50 for a year. Applications due

March 23rd. Notifications by March 31st. Rentals April 1, 2025 to March 31st, 2026. [The application form is here.](https://forms.gle/dZ27SS8BmhgBXuMh6)

Easter Festival Choir Rehearsals 11:20-11:45 at Nativity, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6 and 4/13.

We will with thanksgiving receive offerings of Nativity pledges and plate today. You can contribute by sending a check to the church or by using the “Give” button on our website, [www.nativityonthehill.org](http://www.nativityonthehill.org).

All who participate in this Holy Eucharist virtually receive the full benefits of the sacrament by coming with the intention of being united with Christ and one another.