



# The Holy Name

Holy Eucharist - B

1 January 2023

**The Episcopal Church of the  
Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio**

Seeking to know and serve Christ  
in loving service to the campus, the  
community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

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## Lessons

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### Lessons for Holy Name

Old Testament – Numbers 6: 22-27

Psalm 8 (Said)

New Testament – Galatians 4: 4-7

Gospel – Luke 2: 15-21



<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

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## The Collect

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ETERNAL FATHER, you gave to your incarnate Son the holy name of Jesus to be the sign of our salvation: Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, our Lord Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

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## The Gospel

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## Luke 2:15-21

WHEN THE ANGELS HAD LEFT left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

### Gospel Engagement Question:

Today's Gospel is the same as the one we read on Christmas Eve except for the last sentence. In that last sentence we see Joseph and Mary followed the tradition of having Jesus circumcised and named eight days after he was born. Why do you think it is important that Joseph and Mary followed that tradition?

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## The Sermon Holy Name

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### Holy Name

In the early 1980's, Hollywood producers were attending the Broadway show *Preppies* when they heard the song they thought was perfect for their new TV sitcom. But the producers of *Preppies* refused to sell the lyrics for the song titled *People Like Us*. So, the Hollywood producers hired the original song writers – Gary Portnoy and Judy Hart-Angelo - to write new words to the same tune. Neither Gary nor Judy had written a song before writing *People Like Us*, yet the producers and creators of the upcoming TV show believed they could capture the essence of the show

about a cast of characters that owned and frequented a watering hole in Boston.

After quite a few attempts were rejected, Gary and Judy began to lose heart. However, the creators and producers believed in them, and gave them as much time as they needed to find the words they were searching for. As Gary recalls, it wasn't so much finding the words that was challenging, it was getting into the state of mind for the words to find him. After more failed attempts, one afternoon he was sitting at his piano playing the opening bars of the song and thinking about the type of people the song was about: people who face struggles, who try to get by but often don't, yet are genuinely good people. He thought about what a person like that might want. An escape? Not quite. A place to rest? Certainly, but what makes a place restful? What makes a place one where an outsider became an insider? A place where they mattered. A place of welcome, sort of like every Episcopal parish promises on the signs we put outside our church buildings that proclaims, "The Episcopal Church Welcomes You".

As Gary reflected on what makes a place welcoming, it came to him: a place where everybody knows your name. After that, the words came effortlessly. Perhaps, if you watched TV in the early 1980's you already know the words to the *Cheers* theme song: *Making your way in the world today takes everything you've got, taking a break from all your worries sure would help a lot, sometimes you wanna go where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came, sometimes you wanna go where everybody knows your name.*

In 2013 this song was voted the best TV theme song. Perhaps because instead of being urgently upbeat, as if trying to force the listener to feel something, the *Cheers* theme song has an intimate feel to it and anybody can relate to the hopeful promise of a welcome where no one is a stranger, where everyone is happy to see you, where everybody knows your name.

Our names are an important part of us, as individuals and as families. Most parents spend a great deal of time carefully considering the name they will give to their child. People also consider what name they will give a pet. There is power in giving a name, and sometimes there can be a lot that goes with a name, like the legacy or reputation of the parent or family. Sometimes close friends or spouses give each other special names nick names only they use when they are together as a sign of their intimate or collegial relationship. Other times we use formal names as a sign of respect. Names matter, and Jesus' name is no different.

Today the Church reflects on the name of Jesus; not because it is the first day in the calendar year, but because it is eight days after the celebration

of his birth, which makes today the eighth day of Christmas. As we heard in the Gospel, that was the traditional time for a child to receive their name.

Linguists and scholars among us can tell us the name translated Jesus in our Bibles was pronounced Yehashua in the language spoken at the time the Gospels were written and when Jesus lived. The name Jesus is usually said to mean "God saves" and the name Yehashua is more literal: "Yahweh is salvation." Remember, Yahweh was the word used for God because it was believed God's name was too sacred to say out loud. But the actual meaning of Jesus' name may not be the point of today's celebration. At the time, the name Yehashua was quite common, a reflection of the hope people had for God to rescue them once again from oppression.

There is nothing in today's Gospel that says the significance of Jesus' name is in its meaning. Instead, the author of the Gospel tells us the significance is in who gave Jesus his name. It wasn't from Joseph or Mary. Today's Gospel reminds us it was an angel who told Mary and Joseph what to name Jesus before he was born. Which means God gave Jesus his name.

He wasn't the only one. There are other people in the Bible who received their names from God before they were born, such as Moses or John the Baptist. These people had uniquely personal relationships with God. But there are other ways people received names from God. Sometimes God changed a person's name to indicate a change in their role or relationship. This is an essential part of the story of Abram, who left his life and the safety and comfort in the city of Ur to follow God's call to go into the wilderness to learn how to be close to God and fulfill God's promise to make a new people through him. It took Abram a long time to learn to trust God, and one of the high points of his story when God changed Abram's name to Abraham to symbolize their relationship and Abraham's role in fulfilling God's plan. What is often missed but is just as significant is at the same time God changed Abram's name, God also changed his wife Sarai's name to Sarah, which indicates her role in the founding of a new people is equal to that of her husband.

These name changes can be found in the Gospels and Book of Acts too, such as when Jesus changed the name of Simon to Peter and Saul changed his name to Paul after changing from persecuting those who followed Jesus to following Jesus himself.

God is still changing names today. When a person is baptized, we are baptized in the Name of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, making us part of the Church, not the institution but the community, the family of God through Jesus. In our other readings for today we are told we are given

the name of Jesus in our baptism. This doesn't replace our personal names; it is added to it. We are adopted into God's family through the name of Jesus, through his death and resurrection we too are now part of the resurrection life, because his name is our name too.

Resurrection life isn't quite like the bar in the TV sitcom *Cheers*, but it is welcoming, healing, restoring, and forgiving; not because of what we have or have not done, but because we bear the name of Jesus.

This means wherever we go and whatever we do, we bring that resurrection life of Christ with us. When we are at our best, that resurrection life shines through us when we empathize with others, when we forgive, when do what we can to make room for the holy in our midst, when we love God and each other, whenever we live into our name by helping people feel closer to God.

As we begin a new calendar year in the middle of the season of Christmas, we all know too well that making our way in the world is far from easy, it takes a lot, maybe everything we've got, as a parish and as individuals. Whether you are anxious about 2023 or sad or looking forward to what a new year might bring, today we can perhaps find some rest and restoration in the reminder that no matter what happens in this new year we will not be alone, God is and will be with us. Because God not only knows our name, God has given us the best name God can give us, the name of God's love, the name of Jesus, who delights in sharing his name with us so that we can make his name known in the world.

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A sermon by The Rev. Deborah Woolsey, Holy Name, 1 January 2023, at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, Ohio.

**Sermon Engagement Question:**

What is the story behind your name?

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**Please include in your prayers**

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IN OUR WORLD, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray for the people who



are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and we pray for all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

IN OUR DIOCESE, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

IN OUR PARISH, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community.

THOSE WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED: Al S., Bud and Carol, Chris L., Gloria R., Jean R., Lia, Miriam, Scott, Sharon, T.C., Ann Carswell, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Richard DeNune, Roy DePue, Norm Fox, Lindsey and Regina Golden, Debbie Hunsberger, Bob and Nancy Jackson, Peter Kachenko and family, Ann Lloyd, Christine McGinn, Jeff Maiden, Julie Nehls, Betty Oltorf, Donald Oney, Sandy Oney, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Virginia Richards, Flo and Jack Roach, Michael Vaughn, Mary-Anna Welch, Emily Woolsey and we pray for all who care for them. \*\*

BIRTHDAY: Laura Spero Wiener (1/2), Elizabeth Sayrs (1/4), Bob Shelly (1/5), Sophia Karageorge (1/7), Julie Spero (1/7)

ANNIVERSARY: Nadia Yisa-Doko and Jeffrey Ugim-Adie (1/2), Rev. Deborah Woolsey and Michael Luelloff (1/7)

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\*\* Full names are normally not published online. However for the Sunday 10:30 service we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or [grahammowery@aol.com](mailto:grahammowery@aol.com).

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## At-Home Worship

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Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched anytime later.

<https://cincinnatiathedral.com/ccj/online/>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's

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## Coming up on the Calendar

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**Monday, January 2, - - Adm. Office Closed**

**Sunday, January 9, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist**

**Sunday, January 9, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal**

**Sunday, January 15, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist (Discretionary Sunday)**

**Sunday, January 15, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal**

**Thursday, January 19, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting**

**Sunday, January 22, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist**

**Sunday, January 22, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal**

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### Notes & Announcements (additional items in the Friday Bulletin)

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**The Church Administrative Office will be closed Tomorrow, January 2**

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**Statement from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry on the death of Pope Benedict XVI**

**[Follow this link - The Episcopal Church](#)**

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**For Bishop Transition News and Updates**

**[-- Follow this link --](#)**

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If you want to help the folks who have been negatively impacted by climate disaster and war anywhere in the world (including Ukraine) please consider contributing to [Episcopal Relief and Development \(ERD\)](#) which is the official ministry of the Episcopal Church.



The Diocese  
of Southern Ohio

## Apply to Serve on the Bishop Transition Committee by January 4

The Standing Committee is now accepting applications from people who want to serve on the Transition Committee. The deadline to apply is 6 p.m. on January 4.

[Learn more HERE](#)

[Apply online HERE by January 4.](#)



The Diocese  
of Southern Ohio

## Trinity, Capitol Square launches fundraiser for families made homeless on Christmas Day Bishop Smith pledges matching funds December 30, 2022

Trinity Episcopal Church on Capitol Square has launched a fundraising campaign to support more than a hundred families, former residents of the Latitude Five25 apartments in East Columbus, who were forced to evacuate their homes on Christmas Day without their belongings when pipes throughout the building burst.

Bishop Wayne Smith has pledged \$5,000 in matching funds from the diocese to kickstart the campaign, and Trinity has pledged \$2,500 from a designated outreach fund.

Donate now to support Trinity's ministry with [Latitude Five25 families](#) and your gift will be be doubled by matching funds contributed by Bishop Smith and Trinity, Capitol Square.





**Above:** The much appreciated warm up the past few days has melted the ice surface on the pond across from the Foster's which makes for interesting reflections. **Below:** Even in the gray (U.S. spelling) winter the sitting areas on the north side of the Church seem inviting for quiet reflection.





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## Contacts, Information

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### Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

### Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Staff](#)

[Campus Interest](#)

[E-News Guidelines  
and Back Issues](#)

[Diocese Southern Ohio](#)

[Bishop Transition](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal News Service](#)

[Episcopal Journal & Café](#)

[for in-person worship](#)

In light of local conditions we request all persons wear masks inside the church building **regardless** of vaccination status.

**Office Hours:** 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office hours the thrift shop and chapel are available for individuals. Masks are required.

CrossRoads Café is temporarily closed.

## Contact Information

**For pastoral needs**, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at [revdebwoolsey@gmail.com](mailto:revdebwoolsey@gmail.com).

**To find out more about Good Shepherd** and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at [macbuck@yahoo.com](mailto:macbuck@yahoo.com).

**For maintenance matters**, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at [carlsondana@hotmail.com](mailto:carlsondana@hotmail.com).

## [DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

The above takes you to the Parish page where you can find instructions or donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the

**For emergencies**, please call  
The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at  
937-689-8895.

**NON-emergency messages**  
can be left on the church's  
answering machine (740-593-  
6877).

**The parish office  
administrator** is Barbara  
Martin (740-593-6877) or  
barbara@chogs.org.

**The Episcopal Church of the  
Good Shepherd**, 64 University  
Terrace, Athens OH 45701

740-593-6877  
chogs@chogs.org  
[www.chogs.org](http://www.chogs.org)

Church's  
[YouTube  
Channel.](#)

LIKE us on Facebook  
[Episcopal Church of  
the Good Shepherd  
45701](#)

**Office Hours:**  
Masks are required.

10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Monday - Thursday  
740-593-6877  
chogs@chogs.org

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**Blessings !**

Church of the Good Shepherd | 64 University Terrace, Athens, OH 45701

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