

Hark the  
Herald

Silent  
Night

OAKS

---

PARISH

## Our Mission

To abide in Christ Jesus for the renewal of all things.

## Our Core Values

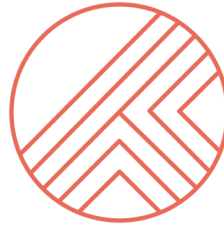
### Gospel of Grace



The gospel of grace is the foundation of everything we are and do at Oaks Parish.

At Oaks Parish, we experience holistic flourishing through the person and work of Christ. The death and resurrection of Christ has redeemed us individually, and collectively as a church; we try to mirror that grace in all we do.

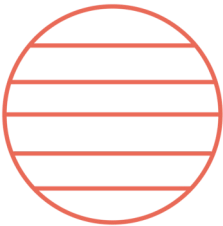
### Faithful Presence



We are committed to Portland and aspire to be a church woven into the fabric

of the city. Oaks Parish is a uniquely welcoming and inclusive place. We greet our neighbors, friends, families, and co-workers with infectious hospitality, faithfully showing the love of Jesus in Portland.

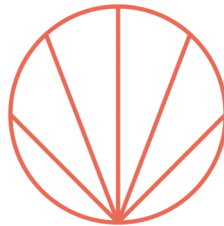
### Formative Rhythms



The rhythms of our life shape our character, and at Oaks Parish we anchor our

practices in Scripture and the historical church. Our liturgical and expressive practice of gathered worship on Sunday pervades and shapes our rhythms of prayer, study of Scripture, and gatherings throughout the week. This process of intentional formation, or discipleship, shapes us to be more like Jesus.

### Extended Family



Oaks Parish is intensely relational. We strive to live together as a diverse,

multi-generational extended family—not just on Sunday, but throughout the week. We share our stories and how God is redeeming them even as we work, play, and serve together. We want everyone to experience being known and loved in Christ.

## Quotes for Reflection

### C.S. Lewis, *The Last Battle*

In our world too, a stable once had something inside it that was bigger than our whole world.

### John Chrysostom, *Nativity Sermon, 386 A.D.*

The birth of this little boy is the beginning of a confrontation between the kingdom of God – in all its apparent weakness, insignificance and vulnerability – and the kingdoms of the world. Augustus never heard of Jesus of Nazareth. But within a century or so his successors in Rome had not only heard of him; they were taking steps to obliterate his followers. Within just over three centuries the Emperor himself became a Christian. When you see the manger on a card, or in church, don't stop at the crib. See what it's pointing to. It is pointing to the explosive truth that the baby lying there is already being spoken of as the true king of the world.

### Thomas Merton, "The Hope Faith Gives Us," *A Year with Thomas Merton*

It seems that we all have to face one sad thing after another. But let us not forget the hope our faith gives us. God is our strength and no amount of trouble should make us fail to realize it. On the contrary, trouble should help us deepen and confirm our trust. This is an old story, but as far as I am concerned, it is the one we always get back to. There is no other.

# The Fourth Week of Advent

## Candle of Love

### O Come, All Ye Faithful

Words & Music by John Francis Wade; tr. Frederick Oakeley (1841)

CCLI License # 11355776

### Lesson 1: Jeremiah 33:14-18 NRSV

14 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 15 In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. 16 In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The Lord is our righteousness." 17 For thus says the Lord: David shall never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel, 18 and the levitical priests shall never lack a man in my presence to offer burnt offerings, to make grain offerings, and to make sacrifices for all time.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Words by Charles Wesley and Rowland Hugh Prichard © Public Domain

CCLI License # 11355776

## Lesson 2: Luke 1:26-38 NRSV

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." 34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 35 The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. 36 And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Meditation: Ave Maria by J. S. Bach and Charles Gounod**

## Responsive Reading

### from Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;

**Those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.**

For a child has been born for us;

**A son given to us!**

Authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named Wonderful Counselor,

**Mighty God,**

Everlasting Father,

**Prince of Peace!**

His authority shall grow continually;

**And there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.**

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

**The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this!**

## Lesson 3: Luke 2:1-14 NRSV

1 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 All went to their own towns to be registered. 4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6 While they were

there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. 8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!”

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Angels We Have Heard on High

Words by James Montgomery; Music by Edward Shippen Barnes © Public Domain  
CCLI License # 11355776

### Lesson 4: Luke 2:15-20 NRSV

15 When the angels had 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.” 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Song of Reflection: Mary's Lullaby

Sleep my child, sweet child of mine, for the days ahead will be full of life.  
Tonight my child, close Your eyes. I will hold You; close Your eyes.

You're my lion; you're my lamb. You'll lead us all by Your hand.  
But tonight my child, close Your eyes. I will hold You; let me hold You.  
I will hold You; close Your eyes. Close Your eyes.

Words and Music by The Brilliance © 2012

## Artistic Reflection

*Adoration of the Christ Child, Gerard Honthorst (1619)*

## Passing of the Peace

### Sermon

Bryan Buck: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
Lessons in Carols

---

## Notes



## Confession of Sin

God of grace and truth,  
your prophets told of your promises – of restoration and salvation.  
We confess that we have not believed your promise,  
that we have preferred brokenness to restoration,  
and have lingered with disease, rather than welcome wholeness and  
renewal. Forgive our stiff necks and renew our hearts, so that we may  
receive the fullness of your promise, and live into that joy. Amen.

## Assurance of Pardon

### Isaiah 55:6-7 NRSV

6 Seek the Lord while he may be found,  
call upon him while he is near;  
7 let the wicked forsake their way,  
and the unrighteous their thoughts;  
let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them,  
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

## Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Words & Music 18th century English Carol © Public Domain  
CCLI License # 11355776

## Confession of Faith

We believe in God, the father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

We believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended to heaven

and is seated at the right hand of God the father almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.

## Communion

We do not dismiss in any set order, come forward when you feel ready.

Form two lines down the center aisle, return to your seats by the side aisles.

Take the elements and consume them at your seat at your discretion.

Bread is locally sourced and gluten free. Choose between red wine and white grape juice.

## What Child is This?

Words by William Chatterton Dix (1865); set to the tune of "Greensleeves", a traditional English folk song

## The Christ Candle

## Silent Night

Words by Joseph Mohr & Music by Franz Xaver Gruber (1818) © Public Domain

# Prayers for Those Not Communing

## Prayer for Those Searching for the Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open me to the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life you promise. Amen.

## Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared confess, but through you I am more loved than I ever dared hope. Thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

## Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, enable me to see in you the fulfillment of all my true needs, and may I turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to see that your Gospel is bigger than my sin, and that your work breaks the power of sin as well as freeing me from its penalty. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the pioneer and author of my faith. Amen.

---

*oaks parish*

Bryan Buck	bryan@oaksparish.org	Lead Pastor
Karen Howells	karen@oaksparish.org	Director of Women's Formation
Martha Van Houten	martha@oaksparish.org	Director of Parish Formation
Alex Wenig	alex@oaksparish.org	Director of Music
OP Kids	kids@oaksparish.org	
Community Life	communitylife@oaksparish.org	

# Oaks Parish: Get Connected

## Welcome to Oaks Parish

Thanks for joining us today - we would love to connect with you! Jot down your name and email address on the postcard found in your worship guide and drop it in an offering basket before you leave so we can get to know you.

## How to Use Postcards

- Let us know you're visiting
- Sign up for the weekly email
- Share a prayer request
- RSVP for an event
- Connect with pastoral staff

Drop your postcard in an offering basket before you leave today!

## No Morning Prayer 12/27

We will resume our regularly scheduled morning prayer on Wednesday, January 3rd.

## Christmas Week Reflections

Our Advent guide, "Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," includes reflections for Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and other days leading up to Epiphany! For Scripture, reflection questions, and prayer, check out the guide on the Oaks Parish Podcast (found on Apple Podcasts or Spotify) or download to read at [oaksparish.org/advent](http://oaksparish.org/advent).

## January Social Hour

Let's kick off the new year together on Sunday, January 14th with coffee, donuts, and connection - after the service in the Parish Hall.