



St. Francis' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 8, 2024

The Season of Advent takes its name from the Latin word adventus, meaning "coming" or "visits." Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve.

For Christians, Advent is the beginning of the liturgical year. We prepare for and anticipate the coming of Christ. We remember the longing of our Jewish ancestors for a Messiah and our own longing for forgiveness, salvation and a new beginning.

PRELUDE 10:30am only

BREATH OF HEAVEN (MARY'S SONG)

CANTOR SOLO

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

At 10:30am, the lighting of the wreath begins with the congregation singing.



Leader Advent is a time to turn away from meaningless distractions.
 People **Prince of Peace, clear our minds and calm our hearts.**

Leader Advent is a time to notice and count our many blessings.
 People **Prince of Peace, help us recognize all that is good in our lives.**

Leader Advent is a time to let go of bitterness and resentment.
 People **Prince of Peace, make us slow to anger and quick to forgive.**

Leader Advent is a time to spread peace to the world around us.
 People **Prince of Peace, open our eyes to the needs of others.**

The congregation listens as a prayer is offered and the candles are lit.

Leader Today we light two candles—the candle of hope and the candle of peace. This second candle reminds us that in sending Christ, God sent us peace that passes all understanding. Peace of heart and mind, because through God’s grace, we were given a Savior. Because of Christ we can live our lives with a sense of calm reassurance, and we can be instruments that spread that peace out into the world.

All join in singing the music on the previous page. Then, the Presider offers a closing prayer.

Presider God of light, we thank you for the sacrifice you made in sending your Son, and we pray today that you will fill us with a deep sense of peace. Lighten our anxious moments. Help us keep our minds focused on your love and take away our feelings of hopelessness and despair. May we remember that we are your instruments of peace and help us to spread that peace to the world around us.

People **Amen.**

THE GREETING

Presider Blessed be the Holy One whose coming we await,
 People **And blessed be the One who comes to set all people free. Amen.**

THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Deacon Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence is kept for a time.

People **Most merciful God,
 we confess that we have sinned against you
 in thought, word, and deed,
 by what we have done,
 and by what we have left undone.
 We have not loved you with our whole heart;
 we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
 We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

Presider Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us all our sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen us in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life.

People **Amen.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

WE HEAR THE SACRED STORIES *Seated*

THE FIRST LESSON

Reader A reading from the Book of Baruch. 5:1-9

Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem,
and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God.

Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God;
put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting;
for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven.

For God will give you evermore the name,
"Righteous Peace, Godly Glory."

Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height;
look toward the east,

and see your children gathered from west and east
at the word of the Holy One,
rejoicing that God has remembered them.

For they went out from you on foot,
led away by their enemies;
but God will bring them back to you,
carried in glory, as on a royal throne.

For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low
and the valleys filled up, to make level ground,
so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.


The woods and every fragrant tree
 have shaded Israel at God's command.
 For God will lead Israel with joy,
 in the light of his glory,
 with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.
 The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.


THE RISING SUN, DERIVED FROM ZECHARIAH'S CANTICLE

Refrain

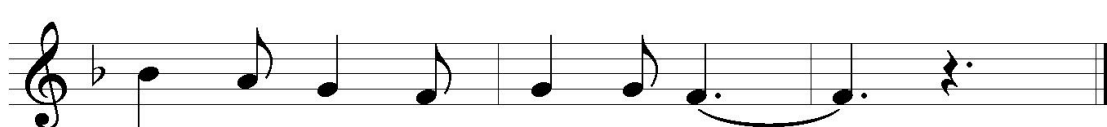
All



The Ris - ing Sun of joy and jus - tice lights the way that




leads to peace. As the day de - scends from heav - en,



so does love that sets us free.

Verses

Cantor



1. God rais - es up a child to save,
 2. God re - news the co - ve - nant,
 3. You, my child, will pre - pare God's way,

All



1.-3. Bless the Lord, bless the Lord!

Cantor




2. So

2. So

Prom - is - es safe - ty from ha - tred's hand.
 we might wor - ship with - out fear.
 Tell of God's free - dom and mer - cy.

All



1.-3. Bless the Lord who sets us free!

THE SECOND LESSON

| | | |
|--------|---|--------|
| Reader | A reading from the letter to the Philippians. | 1:3-11 |
| | <p>I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.</p> <p>The Word of the Lord.</p> | |
| People | Thanks be to God. | |

GOSPEL SEQUENCE *Stand* **O COME, O COME EMMANUEL**

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

THE GOSPEL

| | | |
|--------|--|-------|
| Deacon | The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. | 3:1-6 |
| People | Glory to you, Lord Christ. <p>In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,</p> <p>"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low,</p> | |

and the crooked shall be made straight,
and the rough ways made smooth;
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.'"
The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

GOSPEL SEQUENCE *Stand* **O COME, O COME EMMANUEL**

*Refrain: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

SERMON

THE REV. DR. GARNITA PLEAS

After the sermon, silence is kept for a time.

THE NICENE CREED

Deacon We affirm our faith in the One, Holy and Living God.

People **We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Deacon O God whose Messiah's coming we await, keep us awake and alert to watch for the signs of your coming. As the fig tree puts forth its leaves and the portents of the new day dawns, keep us awake and alert for the second advent of Christ our Savior. "May the Light of Christ; **shine in our hearts.**"

People's response **Shine in our hearts.**

The Presider offers a concluding prayer.

Presider Shine forth O God of Hosts, encourage, embolden and energize your people to keep awake and alert to the coming of Jesus the Christ, that he, at his second Advent, may find us ready to greet him and eager to serve those in need; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God for ever and ever. Amen.

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

We invite you to extend the peace of God to those in the congregation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS *Seated*

GATHERING AT CHRIST'S TABLE

We return with thanksgiving the gifts God has given us. This includes bread and wine of the earth and financial offerings from our labor.



1. Gra - cious God of Wis - dom, who hears your peo - ple's
 2. Might - y Voice of Si - nai, whom Mos - es heard in
 3. Fra - grant Bud of Jes - se, whose bloom - ing Kings re -
 4. Da - vid's Key of Heav - en, un - lock us from our



cry, teach us ways of pru - dence, O
 awe, Ad - o - nai, now lead us with
 vere, root your words with - in us, God's
 sins. Freed from er - ror's pris - on, our



Breath of God Most High.
 ho - ly arm and law. Ma-ra -
 words for all to hear.
 life in you be - gins.

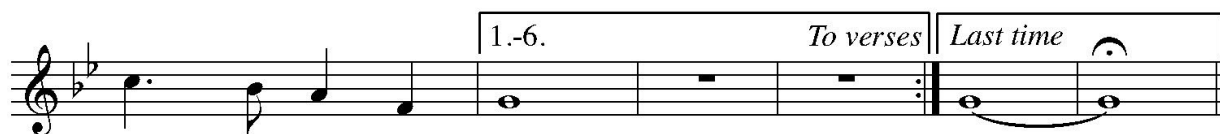
Refrain



na - tha, Lord Mes - si - ah, long a - wait - ed from a -



far. Come and make your home a - mong us. Let us



see your birth - ing star. star.

As the gifts are brought forward, the congregation stands.

Presider Everything comes from you, O God,

1 Chronicles 29: 14

People and we have given you only what comes from your hand.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING *Stand*

Presider The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Presider It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, God Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.
Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever proclaim the glory of your Name:

Say at 8am:

People **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed the One who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

SANCTUS *10:30am*

S 125

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Presider We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

People Therefore, according to his command,
We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;

Presider And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with St. Francis, St. Clare, and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever.

AMEN



A - men.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

Presider Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People Therefore let us keep the feast.

FRACTION ANTHEM *At 8am, spoken*

S 161

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sins of the world:
have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sins of the world: have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God,
you take a - way the sins of the world: grant us peace.

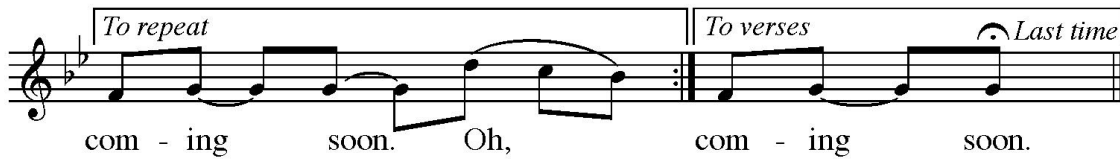
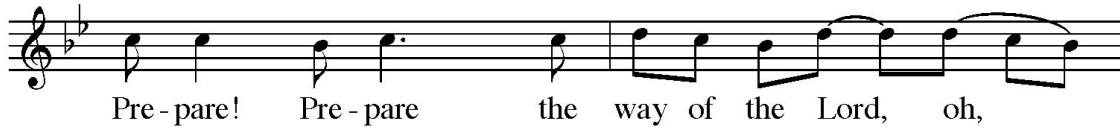
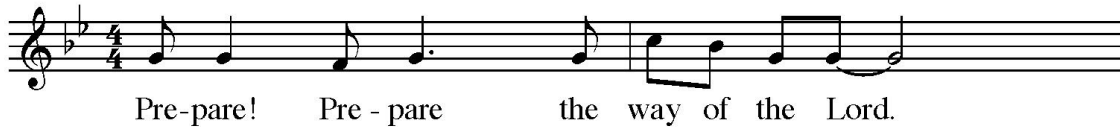
Music: From *New Plainsong*; David Hurd (b. 1950). Copyright © 1981 GIA Publications, Inc.

Presider The Gifts of God for the People of God.

This is Christ's table and all are welcome and all are fed. For gluten free wafer, please indicate as you walk forward to receive. This Eucharistic table does not belong to the Episcopal Church or to St. Francis'. This is God's table, and all are welcome. In the Episcopal Church, we receive both the bread and wine, the Body and Blood of Jesus. If you choose not to receive communion, please come forward and cross your arms over your heart to receive a blessing.

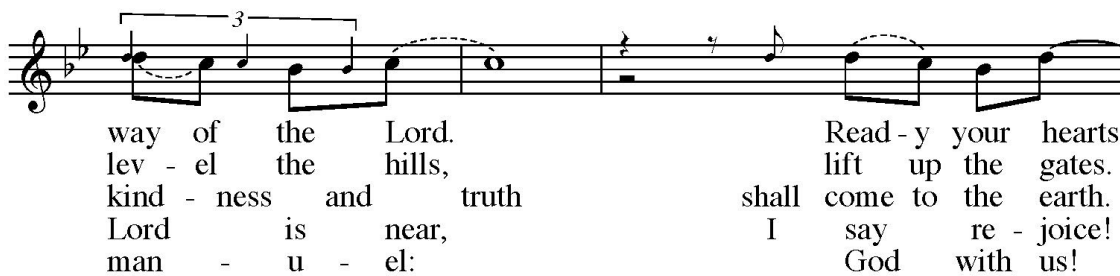
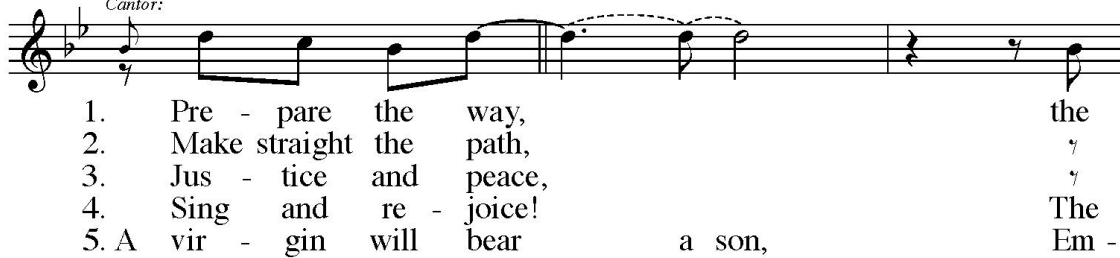
COMMUNION HYMN

PREPARE, PREPARE



Verses

Cantor:



POST COMMUNION PRAYER

After all have received communion the Presider says

Presider God is with you.

People **And also with you.**

Presider Let us pray.

People **Eternal God, whom we await, you have fed us with the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation: keep us ever watchful, that we may be ready to stand before the Son of God, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

BLESSING

Presider Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you,
scatter the darkness from before your path,
and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory;
and the blessing ...

People **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

STAY AWAKE BE READY

Refrain:



The musical notation is for a refrain in 4/4 time, written on a single treble clef staff. It begins with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some measures containing rests marked with an 'x'. Above the first measure, the instruction '(clap)' is written. The lyrics are written below the staff, aligned with the notes. The refrain is repeated three times, ending with a double bar line.

Stay a-wake, be read-y. You do not know the hour when the
Lord is com-ing. Stay a-wake, be read-y. The Lord is com-ing
soon! Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia! The Lord is com-ing soon.

Verse 2

Go back. Tell John all that you have heard and have seen me doing.

Go back. Tell John, the wonders that you see.

Alleluia, alleluia! the wonders that you see.

Refrain

DISMISSAL

Presider Our worship is ended, our service in the world begins. As we await our coming Savior, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE *10:30am only*

THINGS TO NOTICE IN ADVENT

There are several significant shifts to notice in the four liturgies of Advent.

COLOR

Because the Episcopal Church's roots are in the Church of England, we follow the old English tradition of using blue as the color of Advent. Blue is the color of Blessed Mary, and Advent is all about Mary as we await with her the arrival of the Incarnate God. Blue is the color of hope, expectation, confidence, and anticipation. These are all adjectives which describe the season of Advent.

SEATING

Advent is a penitential season, a time of expressing sorrow and regret for having done wrong. Therefore, in our seating, we face one another to confess our need for God and the ways in which we have not loved God and our neighbors with our whole hearts.

LITURGY

The liturgy also highlights that Advent is a penitential season. We confess that we have "sinned against God in thought, word and deed" at the beginning of our liturgy. We do not sing the Gloria. We open our liturgy singing of our expectant waiting for God.

LECTIONARY READINGS

The Advent readings, and what they say to us, are well explained in this excerpt from "Naming Where We Are" by Debie Thomas.

"Like some of you, I didn't grow up observing Advent. Since my childhood church didn't follow the liturgical calendar, my family went straight from Thanksgiving turkeys and pumpkin pies to Christmas trees and 'Jingle Bells' — one consumer feeding frenzy pressing hard into the next. It's only in the past few years that I have come to value what Nora Gallagher calls the "counterweight" of liturgical time. "One time set against another." It's only recently that I have embraced the stark, hard-edged gifts Advent provides. As ever, I believe we need these gifts desperately.

According to the week's readings, we enter this first season of the Christian New Year — if we dare enter it at all — in lamentation. Eschewing all forms of denial, polite piety, and cheap cheer, we allow the radical honesty of Scripture to make us honest, too. "How long will you be angry with your people's prayers?" asks the Psalmist in desperation. "Because you hid yourself, we transgressed," cries Isaiah. During Advent, we stop posturing and pretending. We quit trying to make God's hiddenness okay. We shed our greeting card assumptions about the Divine. We get real.

LECTIONARY READINGS, CONTINUED

"Our world is not okay," is what these Advent readings declare in stark, unflinching terms. God's apparent absence is not fine — it hurts. It hurts so much we can barely breathe from the agony of it. We are surrounded by evil and suffering, we're not sure our faith can endure what our eyes reluctantly witness each day, and though we long for a Savior to rend the heavens and come down, the very ferocity of that longing is wearying our souls. Hope itself has become a grind.

The first gift of Advent is the permission to tell the truth, even if that truth is laced with sorrow. We are invited to describe life "on earth as it is," and not as we mistakenly assume our religion requires us to render it. Into our surrounding cultures of denial and spin, apathy and hedonism, we are called to speak the whole truth: we need God. We need God to show up. We need God to stay. We need God to love, hold, deliver, and restore us. We were created for intimacy with a just, gracious, and profoundly compassionate Savior, and when that intimacy is missing, we suffer.