



St. Francis' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023

The Season of Advent takes its name from the Latin words adventus, meaning "coming" or "visits." Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. This is an unusual year, as Christmas Eve is a Sunday. So we celebrate the fourth Sunday of Advent in the morning and Christmas Eve in the evening of the same day.

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

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

ARR. JOEL RANEY

LORI SCISSIONS AND LYNNE GLICKERT, PIANO DUET

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

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

Leader Advent is a time to watch.

People **We watch in hope for the Lord; O come, Emmanuel.**

Leader During Advent we watch for hope in the midst of despair.

People **We watch in hope for the Lord; O come, Emmanuel.**

Leader During Advent we watch for forgiveness in the midst of rebellion.

People **We watch in hope for the Lord; O come, Emmanuel.**

Leader During Advent we watch for peace in the midst of conflict.

People **We watch in hope for the Lord; O come, Emmanuel.**

Leader During Advent we watch for the presence of God in the midst of a fallen world.

People **We watch in hope for the Lord; O come, Emmanuel.**

The congregation listens as prayer is offered.

All join in singing.

(1st Sunday) We wait in
(2nd Sunday) We watch in
(3rd Sunday) We pre - pare in
(4th Sunday) We praise with
(Christmas Eve) We pro - claim with

hope_____ for the morn - ing Light,
for the love of Christ to il - lu - mi - nate_____ the night._____

We wait with
We watch with
We pre - pare with
We praise with
We pro - claim with

joy_____ for the Sav - ior's birth;
we wait in
we watch in
we pre - pare in
we praise with
we pro - claim with

hope for peace on earth.

Presider God in heaven, as we learn to wait in faith, help us now to watch in expectation. Open our eyes that we might see the ways you are at work around us, within us and through us. 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 Isaiah.	40:1-11
	Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him;	

his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

People

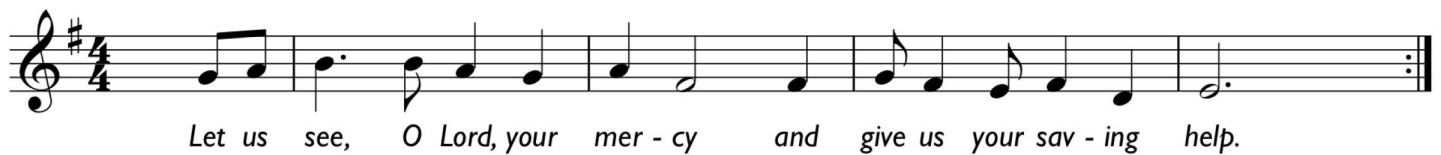
Thanks be to God.

THE PSALM OF THE DAY

PSALM 84

At 8am, spoken. At 10:30, cantor sings antiphon one time through and then congregation joins.

Antiphon:



I will hear what the Lord God has to say,
a voice that speaks of peace, peace for his people
His help is near for those who fear him
and his glory will dwell in our land **ANTIPHON**

Mercy and faithfulness have met;
justice and peace have embraced.
Faithfulness shall spring from the earth
and justice look down from heaven. **ANTIPHON**

The Lord will make us prosper
and our earth shall yield its fruit.
Justice shall march before him
and peace shall follow his steps. **ANTIPHON**

THE SECOND LESSON

Reader	A reading from the second letter from Peter. 3:8-15a
	<p>Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed.</p> <p>Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.</p> <p>Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.</p> <p>The Word of the Lord.</p>
People	Thanks be to God.

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

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,
who orderest all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.

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

THE GOSPEL

Deacon	The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark. 1:1-8
People	Glory to you, Lord Christ. The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. <p>As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way;</p>

the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,"'

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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. LAURIE ANZILOTTI

After the sermon, silence is kept for a time.

THE ADVENT CREED

Our Advent Creed seeks to affirm our trust in God found in Jesus Christ.

Deacon Let us stand and affirm our hope in the light of Christ.

Do you believe and trust in God?

People **We believe and trust in God, eternal, almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Deacon Do you believe and trust in Jesus Christ?

People **We believe and trust in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of all, the Only Begotten One; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, lived and loved among us, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; who descended to the dead, and on the third day rose again; Jesus, Our Savior, ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of the loving God, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Deacon Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

People **We believe and trust in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic and apostolic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and life everlasting. 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

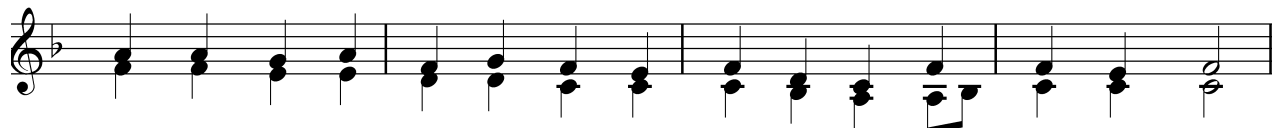
We return with thanksgiving the gifts God has given us. This includes bread and wine of the earth and financial offerings from our labor.

MEDITATION HYMN *8:00am*

COME THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS PERFORMED BY JENNIFER HAINES



1 Come, thou long - ex - pect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
 2 Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art:
 3 Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,
 4 By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;



from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.
 dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
 born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
 by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

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 the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Music: From *A Community Mass*; Richard Proulx (b. 1937). Copyright © 1971, 1977 GIA Publications, Inc.

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

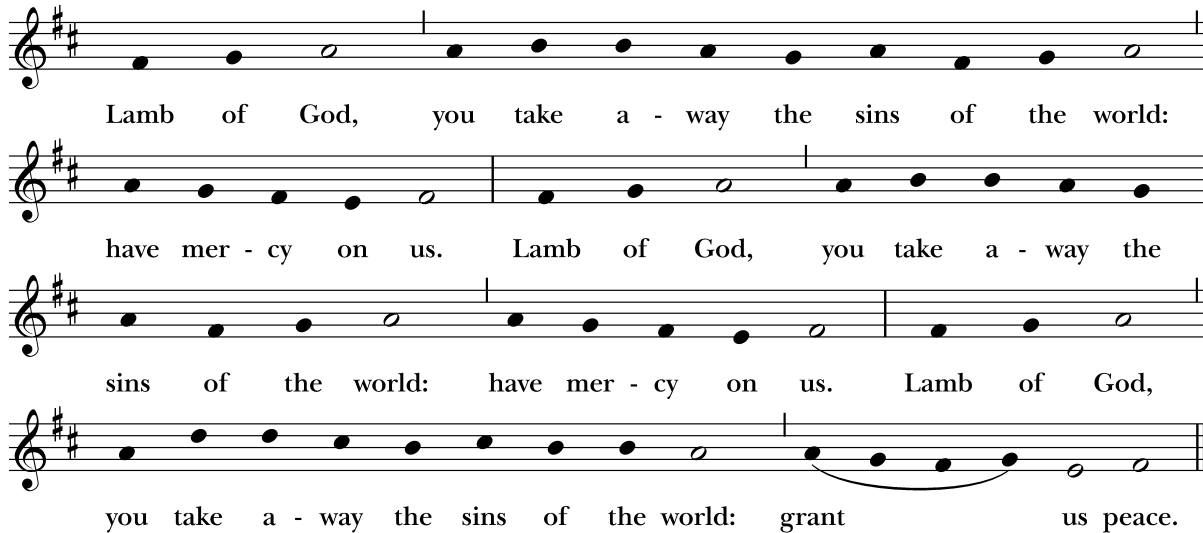
The Presider breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.

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.

Our bread is gluten-, dairy- and nut-free. 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.

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd.

He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in His bosom,
and gently shall lead those that are with young.

He shall gather the lambs in His arm, and carry them close to His heart;
and gently, so gently, so gently shall lead those with young.

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.**

Stay awake, be ready.

You do not know the hour when the Lord is coming.

Stay awake, be ready. The Lord is coming soon!

Alleluia, alleluia! The Lord is coming soon!

Change your lives, he's coming.

The one who is the light of the world is coming.

Change your lives; he's coming. The reign of God is near!

Alleluia, alleluia! The reign of God is near!

SENDING HYMN 10:30am ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST'S CRY

H 76



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an -
 2 Then cleansed be ev - ery breast from sin; make
 3 For thou art our sal - va - tion, Lord, our
 5 All praise, e - ter - nal Son, to thee, whose



1 noun - ces that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
 2 straight the way for God with - in, and let each heart pre -
 3 re - fuge, and our great re - ward; with - out thy grace we
 5 ad - vent doth thy peo - ple free; whom with the Fa - ther



1 for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings.
 2 pare a home where such a might - y guest may come.
 3 waste a - way like flowers that with - er and de - cay.
 5 we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit ev - er - more.

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*

THE LITURGIES OF ADVENT

There are several significant shifts 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 nor do we say "Alleluia." 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.

"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.